

Job description: Head of Policy & Influencing

Duration: Permanent

Salary: SME2 £47,430 per annum

Location: Flexible/ London Office

Reporting to: Director of Collective Action

Department: Collective Action

Key Working Relationships: Director and Assistant Director of Collective Action and key roles within the Collective Action Team including Head of Network Engagement and Head of Network Development, CEO and CEO Office, Members of the Leadership and Management Team, Key teams across the organisation including, Comms, Strategy, Research & Impact, Outdoor Learning and Design & Delivery, the UK Youth Movement including networks of youth organisations, supporters and young people, Policy makers including civil servants and Government Departments, Members of Parliaments, Key youth sector bodies and groups. Line management responsibility of Policy & Public Affairs Officer.

Purpose of the job

UK Youth works through networks of youth organisations, young people and cross-sector supporters to galvanise a collective movement in support of our shared vision for all young people to thrive. The Collective Action Department is at the forefront of helping to solve the lack of cross-sector understanding of how youth work makes a difference by transforming the way the system brings cross-sector leaders and young people together to share, grow expertise and solve key issues collectively.

We have recently developed a new Policy and Public Affairs strategy which identifies our approach and priorities for our policy & influencing work and we are looking for a dynamic and experienced individual to lead our Policy & Influencing work to help us increase our policy profile and mobilise our networks of youth organisations, young people and supporters, to have a greater impact. You will have a 'can do' attitude with the ability to quickly develop relationships with key internal and external stakeholders, along with excellent knowledge and experience of the current policy and public affairs landscape, particularly around young people.

You will be joining us at a critical time; youth organisations and young people have been hard hit by the current COVID-19 crisis and require urgent support, investment and a seat at the decision making table. The sector has seen recent investment from Government but we know there's still a long way to go to ensure every young person across the UK has access to vital services and support. This role will be key in helping us to deliver against our strategic priorities as well as identify influencing opportunities, and ensure that our approach to engagement is evidence-driven and youth-led. You will also play a key role in supporting our cross-sector collaborations and partnerships, representing UK Youth, acting as a key point of contact and ensuring key tasks are actioned.

Collective Action is a new, ambitious and friendly team, where you would be supported and encouraged to develop your skills and share your ideas and preferred working style. The role will

be part of the Collective Action Leadership Team and will report directly to the Director and work closely with the CEO.

Why work at UK Youth?

UK Youth is a leading charity that exists to ensure all young people are equipped to thrive and empowered to contribute at every stage of their lives. We work with others to ensure that the youth sector is strengthened, supported, and that provision is youth-led, evidence-informed and delivers high-quality outcomes. UK Youth plays a unique role in addressing; the lack of investment in the youth sector, the lack of cross-sector understanding in how youth work makes a difference and the limited opportunities to embed effective solutions. These factors lead to mass inequality of access to youth services for young people.

Key responsibilities

- Lead on the implementation of a focused and effective policy and public affairs strategy for UK Youth, working closely with the Director of Collective Action, CEO and other key internal roles to achieve this, ensuring it support's UK Youth goals to increase the profile of youth work across sectors.
- Project manage and oversee the development of influencing plans by the Policy and Public Affairs Officer on identified UK Youth priorities
- Identify and build positive relationships with key political and policy stakeholders who UK Youth needs to work with or influence to achieve the vision
- Manage key relationships with external stakeholders, including cross-sector partnerships and working groups, acting as a point of contact on specified projects
- Working with relevant colleagues, oversee the development of responses to key government, policy maker and policy influencer consultations as well as reactive statements in response to breaking news
- Work with the Strategy, Research & Impact Team to oversee the production of external policy reports and publications on key areas of importance to UK Youth's vision.
- Lead and deliver events, roundtables and integrated communications activities to increase UK Youth's voice and influence in tackling inequality related to young people and the youth sector
- To identify opportunities for UK Youth and members of its Leadership Team along with young people and youth workers, to speak on relevant policy areas at events and meet with relevant policy makers and politicians –writing speeches or preparing briefings where appropriate
- To monitor the shifting policy and political landscape, advising colleagues on opportunities and risks for UK Youth and the realisation of the vision
- To work closely with the External Relations Team, ensure that UK Youth's influencing work is effectively integrated into our wider communications plans and channels, e.g. in the media, on the website, via Twitter
- As a member of the Collective Action Management Team, play a key role in the development and championing of the overall UK Youth Strategy, contributing ideas and leading on projects as required

Other area of responsibilities

- Line manage, develop and motivate the Policy & Public Affairs Officer, supporting them to achieve agreed goals and objectives.
- Ensure that all activity and engagement with young people complies with safeguarding legislation, policies and procedures
- Manage the scheduling of activity across project workstreams, ensuring project management processes are in place and reporting progress to internal and external stakeholders via meetings, written reports and presentations
- Maintain data and CRM of all organisations and young people who are part of the UK Youth Movement and provide regular reporting on data, insights and growth of networks within the UK Youth Movement
- Comply with data protection legislation and act responsibly on matters of data disclosure, both internally and to third parties.
- Operate within the agreed business plan and budget to ensure that the Department objectives are met, attending and participating proactively in staff meetings, team meetings and other meetings as required including 121s and annual appraisals
- Work effectively with colleagues to achieve the aims and objectives of the charity
- Manage a budget, ensuring maximum value is obtained
- Ensure strong communication within the team and across the organisation
- Build relationships with aligned organisations; identifying opportunities to work in partnership where appropriate
- Represent UK Youth at events and conferences
- Act as an ambassador for the organisation, contributing to the effectiveness of meetings, the sharing of knowledge and experience and the development of UK Youth and its profile
- Work closely with the Design and Delivery Department, and hold strong relationships with the Strategy, Research and Impact Department, Outdoor Learning Department and the External Relations Department to ensure alignment and a streamlined approach
- Undertake any other duties and reasonable requests that are in keeping with the nature of this post.

Subject Matter Expert behaviours and expectations

All staff at UK Youth will demonstrate their commitment to our mission to ensure all young people are equipped to thrive and empowered to contribute at every stage of their lives.

They will also be able to fulfil the below expectations and behaviours:

- Be committed to safeguarding principles and be willing to put the welfare of children and young people at the forefront of your work
- An understanding and belief in the inclusion of all staff, partners and young people irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, age, religion, ability, identity, and experience
- Actively promotes and embeds an understanding of equity, diversity and an inclusive culture
- Able to provide detailed feedback to direct reports on performance and development areas
- Able to mentor and develop skills in others

- Able to support others to learn from mistakes and support wellbeing
- Able to delegate work effectively and provide practical support

Person specification: Head of Policy & Influencing

Experience

- Experience of working effectively at a senior management level, including representing one's organisation externally, building and maintaining relationships, promoting ideas and influencing decision makers
- Experience of working in the area of policy and public affairs – preferably with young people/youth sector
- Experience of working with diverse networks/ communities across the UK to influence policy
- Experience of designing and implementing clear and focused influencing activities
- Experience of successfully leading a team to transform and embed new ways of working with a proven track record of inspiring and motivating a diverse team
- Experience of managing multiple stakeholders and programmes and implementing systems to share insights internally and externally
- Experience of leading cross-functional teams
- Desirable: experience of engaging/ working with young people and the youth sector

Knowledge, skills and understanding

- A sound understanding of the youth sector, the challenges faced by young people and the impact of youth work
- Knowledge of key parliamentary and political processes and different routes for influencing
- A good understanding of network principles to build and engage cross-sector networks to take collective action
- Strong people management skills
- Proven ability to build and manage relationships with stakeholders at all levels including politicians, policy makers and young people
- Proven ability to convey complex information in an accessible manner to a variety of audiences (including young people)
- Excellent programme management and development skills with proven ability to plan and manage multiple, projects and activities to deadline and budget
- Strong written and oral communication, experience of writing reports
- Good knowledge of the possibilities of digital to connect networks

Personal qualities

- A pro-active approach, self-motivated and enthusiastic with very high levels of initiative, innovative and imaginative thinking
- A passion for young people, youth sector and strengthening the UK Youth Movement
- Robust influencing and decision-making skills
- A 'can-do' and flexible approach with the ability adapt to changing priorities, including a willingness to travel and work irregular hours when necessary
- Inclusive, collaborative and approachable leader who has a natural authority
- Inspiring, motivating and an articulate communicator
- Flexible, with the ability to manage multiple workloads
- Be committed to safeguarding principles and be willing to put the welfare of children and young people at the forefront of your work
- An understanding and belief in the inclusion of all staff, partners and young people irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, age, religion, ability, identity, and experience
- A commitment to effective and inclusive leadership

This post is subject to receipt of two satisfactory references, an enhanced DBS check and Right to work in the UK. Please note, this job description is subject to change. With any significant change, we will ensure this is discussed with you before any final approvals and or commitments.

This job description does not form part of your contract of employment. You may be required by the organisation to undertake any duties within your skills and capabilities, which the organisation reasonably considers necessary to meet business needs.