

Job Description:

Post: Research Officer

Hours: 28 hours per week

Salary: £26,640 - £32,560 pro rata

Location: Glasgow or Edinburgh (Hybrid 2 days a week)

Reports to: Participation and External Relations Manager

Overview

Established in 1944, One Parent Families Scotland (OPFS) is the leading charity working with single parent families in Scotland. We provide expert advice, practical support and campaign with parents to make their voices heard to change the systems, policies and attitudes that disadvantage single parent families.

We work alongside single parents and their families, placing them at the centre of everything we do. Creating ways to overcome barriers, changing their lives and fulfilling their potential. We also celebrate the many achievements of single parents and their children.

Our vision is to see a Scotland where single parent families are celebrated in all their diversity, are treated fairly and live free from discrimination and poverty.

Our mission is to amplify the voices of single parent families in their unique role as sole carers and providers and together challenge stigma, poverty and inequality to achieve change.

Our values are trust, equity, justice, collaboration and compassion. These are the principles or standards that we consider important in life. They shape behaviour and guide our decisions and actions.

Our strategic objectives shape and guide all roles at OPFS. They are the pillars that underpin all our work. We all will:

1. **Support** single parents to build on their strengths and attributes to achieve their goals.
2. **Strengthen** single parent families' wellbeing, enabling children to be happy and thrive.



3. **Influence** policies to eradicate child poverty taking an intersectional, equalities approach to policy making.
4. **Involve** single parents, experts by experience, to co-produce OPFS services and policy priorities.
5. **Challenge** societal attitudes and behaviours to fully support and respect single parent families.

About this role

We're looking for an experience Research Officer to join our Policy, Participation and External Relations team. This is an exciting opportunity to drive forward research projects, produce compelling findings, recommendations and high quality impact reports and webinars that bring our findings to life. We're looking for a creative and insightful person who is passionate about creating a Scotland where single parent families can thrive.

Role and responsibilities

Research and reporting

- Identify and research trends and issues affecting single parent families in Scotland, using data, lived experience and evidence gathered from OPFS frontline services translating findings into clear recommendations
- Ensure single parent families voices and experiences inform and influence all aspects of research and reporting
- Produce evidence informed reports and briefings
- Plan, develop and deliver quarterly impact reports and webinars by gathering and analysing evidence and insight from OPFS frontline services
- Work on a range of commissioned project work, researching and analysing key issues that impact single parents
- Contribute to monitoring, evaluation and reporting our impact for key stakeholders including funders and policymakers
- Attend meetings and events on behalf of OPFS as required



Participation and policy development

- Organise and coordinate participation activities and events with and for single parents
- Work directly with single parents, identifying appropriate and accessible ways for them to participate meaningfully, sharing their experiences, views and expertise
- Support single parents to take part in research and co-design policy solutions that will have a lasting impact
- Work in partnership with OPFS services and other third sector organisations to recruit single parents to take part in participation
- Support work with single parent families and colleagues across OPFS to co-create clear policy positions, grounded in evidence gathered from lived experience and service delivery
- Support single parents to participate in media work
- Take an active role in supporting campaigns, ensuring a joined-up approach between policy, research and participation in advocating for change

Corporate responsibilities

- Contribute to funding bids and reports for key priority areas of policy work
- Align with OPFS strategic objectives and values of trust, equity, justice, collaboration and compassion
- Adopt a trauma informed, anti-stigma approach that embeds equity, diversity and inclusion practice while ensuring all activities and outputs are accessible
- Actively contribute to teamwork and promote a positive, problem-solving attitude
- Regular travel across Scotland to engage with OPFS staff and parents
- Be flexible in approach to work and duties
- Attend relevant training and events
- Comply with policies on safeguarding, confidentiality, health and safety and data protection

The job description is a broad picture of the post at the time of preparation. It is not an exhaustive list of all possible duties, and it is recognised that jobs change and evolve over time.

Personal specifications

Essential experience and skills

- Experience delivering research, evaluation or participation work
- Strong qualitative and quantitative analysis, with the ability to identify what matters
- Confidence facilitating workshops, consultation or engagement with a range of people, including staff and experts by experience
- Knowledge and understanding of Scottish and UK policy areas affecting single parent families, such as social security, child maintenance, child poverty, employment, debt and child poverty
- Experience in adopting an evidence based and participatory approach to research and evaluation
- Experience in working with experts by experience to co-create solutions, adopting a trauma informed approach that builds trust and ensures safety for those taking part
- Proven ability to research and identify trends across advice services and policy landscape
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to tailor communications to a variety of audiences including, single parents, civil servants, politicians and colleagues
- Ability to prioritise workload and manage competing priorities
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills

Desirable

- Degree in social policy and/or research
- Knowledge and understanding of policy environment, political institutions and legislative processes
- Ability to identify unintended consequences of policy decisions for single parent families
- Experience of engaging with elected representatives and civil servants
- Fast learner with the ability to engage with new policy areas

Personal qualities & attributes

- Strong understanding or lived experience of the realities faced by single parent families
- Commitment to anti-stigma, trauma-informed and rights-based practice
- Values driven, aligned with OPFS's strategic objectives and mission to challenge poverty and inequality



- Flexible, reflective and open to learning as the programme develops
- Self-motivated with a commitment to continuous professional development
- Strong commitment to equality, inclusion and diversity in all aspects of work

Terms & conditions

Confirmation of appointment: Confirmation of appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of a 3-month probationary period, two references and a PVG check.

Closing date: midnight on Wednesday 18 November

Salary: £26,640 - £32,560 pro rata

Hours of work: 28 hours per week, worked flexibly to meet the needs of the service. Fixed term to 31 March 2028 in the first instance with the intention to extend subject to funding.

Holidays: Annual leave entitlement is 25 days and 12 Public holidays (pro rata).

Pension: You will be auto enrolled in our pension scheme with a 3% contribution from you and 7% contribution from OPFS.

Training and support and supervision: You will receive induction training and frequent support in the first three months. Thereafter you will receive monthly individual support and supervision and annual appraisals. Regular team meetings will be held, and staff have access to internal and external training.

Equal Opportunities and Family Friendly Employment: OPFS aims to be an equal opportunity and family friendly employer. OPFS has Investors in People Gold status.