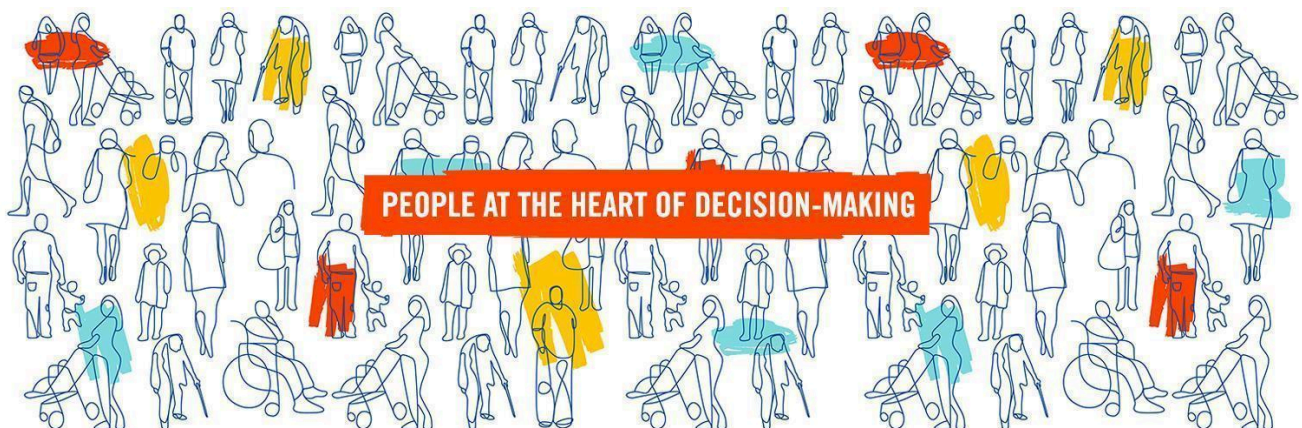




ENGAGEMENT LEAD

CAPACITY BUILDING & STANDARDS

Job Description



Practical details

SALARY BAND: £45,665 starting salary

LOCATION: Flexible. Must be comfortable with regular travel both for project work and Involve team activities. Must be able to travel across the UK.

HOURS: Full time, 35 hours a week with flexible or part time considered

01. Who we are

We're the UK's leading public participation charity, and we want to build a more vibrant democracy, where everyone can have a say in a society that works for all of us.

Since 2003, we have been working with governments, parliaments, civil society, academics and members of the public to create and deliver new forms of public participation that re-vitalise democracy, improve decision-making, and enable people to shape the decisions that affect their lives.

We are realistic about the challenges faced by democracy, but optimistic about how to overcome them. We are committed to ensuring our democracies are vibrant and fit for the future by putting people at the heart of decision-making.

We work across the UK and internationally, with offices in Belfast and London. Many of our staff work from home across the UK or in a hybrid pattern, rather than being based at one of our offices, though we meet up regularly as a team.

02. What we do

Our mission is to lead the UK in making participation and deliberation an everyday part of democracy, to help meet the challenges of the 21st century.

We need to make important choices as a society, but our democracy isn't working as it should. Decision-makers are struggling to get things done. The public are frustrated the system isn't working for them. And everywhere people are feeling divided, distrustful and powerless.

Our work is focused in three areas:

- **Making the case** – demonstrating why participation and deliberation are essential features for a healthy modern democracy, and ensuring that those in positions of power and influence understand and support their use in addressing some of the UK's most intractable issues. [Check out our latest thinking.](#)
- **Embedding change** – building the capacity of public servants and practitioners, and developing the body of evidence, principles and standards that support participatory and deliberative practice. [Check out our resources.](#)
- **Pioneering practice** – encouraging widespread uptake of participatory and deliberative processes, and promoting continuous learning and innovation to improve democracy and deliver lasting solutions in key policy areas. [Check out our practical projects.](#)

All our work builds towards delivering the following six outcomes for our democracy, which we believe will lead to the vibrant, participatory society we want to see.

- **Democratic norms** – Participation and deliberation are recognised as essential features for a healthy equitable democracy by the public, society and decision-makers;
- **Political support** – People in positions of power and influence across society and the political spectrum understand and actively support the use of participatory and deliberative decision-making;
- **Frequent use** – There is frequent use of participatory and deliberative processes supported by the right resources (people and budgets) both inside and outside of political institutions;
- **Evidence and practice** – There is an accessible and well-communicated body of evidence and practice that demonstrates the impact of our vision and how to achieve it;
- **Clear standards** – There are clear principles and standards that support good practice in delivering and embedding participatory and deliberative processes, which are widely understood and followed;
- **Democratic innovations** – There is continuous learning and innovation to improve democracy and work against entrenched inequalities.

Find out more about our work: www.involve.org.uk/our-work/

Our values

- **Collaboration** – because change comes when broad coalitions of people work towards a common vision;
- **Equity** – because everyone in society has an equal right to be listened to and participate in decisions that affect their lives. No one should be held back by societal divisions or prejudice;
- **Independence** - because we are committed to the integrity and impartiality of participatory and deliberative processes;
- **Purpose** – because participation must have an impact. We reject tokenistic or ineffectual engagement;
- **Quality** - because effective participation requires time, attention and commitment.

03. About the role

This Engagement Lead role will sit within our Capacity Building and Standards (CB&S) function. The CB&S function aims to build the capacity of organisations and institutions to embed the processes, skills, structures and cultures needed for effective public engagement in decision making. This includes work in the public, private and third sectors.

As Engagement Lead you will play a central role in our team, which includes:

- Supporting institutions to embed public engagement in their decision making;
- Developing and delivering training courses and mentoring programmes for public servants, practitioners, members of the public and others;
- Setting up and supporting networks (for example through peer learning networks and communities of practice)
- Authoring good practice guides and thought leadership pieces;
- Standards setting work;
- Other programme and project management that supports the embedding of public participation and engagement in the UK.

You will be a proven project leader looking to make your next move and develop your leadership and profile in this interesting and important area of public participation and deliberation. You will enjoy supporting others to develop and embed public participation in decision making, drawing on your own significant experience, for example in delivering deliberative and participatory programmes or designing and running training. You will need to be able to advocate well for the benefits of public engagement in decision making.

You will have an appetite to learn, with strong budget and project management skills. You will have the ability to build and maintain good relationships with a wide variety of people, including senior actors and decision makers in institutions, project partners, internal staff and people in our wider networks. You will be a strategic thinker, and you will be able to develop new areas of work, ideas and fundable projects that will help the CB&S function to deliver its strategic aims.

The first major project that will play a significant part of your role will be the [School for Everyday Democracy](#) - a major project funded by the National Lottery UK Fund. The programme builds the power of people from all walks of life to come together to deliver common good in their communities, and across the country. We want to give participants the power, confidence, connections, skills and opportunities required to affect the things that matter most to them through participation, deliberation, community organising and collective care. You will be the programme and pedagogical lead - directing the strategy of the project, developing and delivering training content, managing governance, budgets and risk, and managing the wider programme team.

04. Key responsibilities

1. Developing and delivering capacity building and standards setting work (80%)

To help embed the processes, skills, structures and cultures needed for public participation in decision-making by:

- Developing and delivering small- and large-scale programmes, including training courses and mentoring for people inside and outside of public institutions;
- Setting up and supporting networks that focus on sharing and embedding good practice;
- Authoring good practice guides and resources and thought leadership pieces;
- Building the evidence base for participation and deliberation, including standards setting and impact assessment;
- Directly supporting institutions to embed public participation in their work, using the good practice approaches that Involve recommends.

To support the above by:

- Undertaking business development and fundraising, including responding to tenders, writing proactive fundraising bids, and cultivating and maintaining positive working relationships with funders;
- Managing, and leading the management of, projects and programmes, including managing project budgets;
- Working collaboratively with other members of the CB&S team – and wider Involve team – including supporting the Director of Capacity Building & Standards to manage and develop the work of the function;
- Supporting other staff – including line management responsibilities, as required – and supporting and managing the work of freelancers;
- Representing Involve to external audiences, including at a senior level;
- Complying with Involve’s internal systems, policies and processes.

2. Contributing to organisational impact and learning (10%)

- Collecting evidence of project impact and helping communicate our work;
- Contributing both internally and externally to Involve’s culture of learning, reflection and development of our practice, to benefit Involve and the wider sector.

3. Contributing to all-team activities (10%)

- Leading significant elements of Involve’s organisational development;
- Participating in team meetings, strategy sessions and away days.

Other relevant duties may be undertaken as agreed with your line manager.

05. Key competencies

Essential competencies

Applicants must demonstrate the following competencies:

1. An excellent, practical understanding of how to develop and deliver a range of participatory and deliberative approaches or methods;
2. A good understanding of the institutional factors that contribute to or block the effectiveness of public engagement in decision making and its uptake;
3. Experience developing and delivering training, conducting mentoring or coaching, and/or authoring good practice guides and resources;
4. Strategic thinking skills: able to understand wider contexts and strategic objectives and apply these to developing and delivering our thinking and work;
5. Excellent project management skills: a proven ability to manage and prioritise a diverse workload, and provide robust management of project timelines, finances, budgets and reporting;
6. Excellent relationship building skills: proven expertise in developing and managing relationships with a range of people at all levels, including senior partners and decision makers;
7. An appetite to learn including the ability to reflect on, and learn from, projects and experiences, and the ability to give and receive feedback in an open and honest way;
8. Committed team player, embodying our values of collaboration, equality, independence, purpose and quality, and passionate about furthering our vision.

Desirable competencies

The following competencies are desirable:

1. Understanding of theoretical concepts and debates relating to public engagement in decision making;
2. Experience of fundraising: identifying and securing grant funding for programmes and projects and/or responding to invitations to tender;
3. Experience of running or participating in a network and/or community of practice, particularly one geared towards peer learning;
4. Excellent written skills: able to write clear and persuasive copy for a range of audiences and purposes;
5. An interest in issues of equity, power and privilege, and an understanding of its application to participation and deliberation;
6. People management and/or line management skills: able to support staff to be their best, and lead effective teams;

We are interested in applications from people with a wide range of different backgrounds. Please don't be put off applying if you don't meet all the desirable criteria.

06. Pay, location and benefits

Job Title:	Engagement Lead
Pay band:	£45,665 starting salary (up to £54,798 at the top of the band)
Hours:	Full time, 35 hours per week, with flexible or 0.8 FTE considered
Start date:	As soon as possible
Location:	Flexible. Must be comfortable with regular travel both for project work and Involve team activities. Must be able to travel across the UK.
Reporting to:	Director of Capacity Building and Standards

Leave: all staff get 25 days annual leave in addition to bank holidays and the period between Christmas Day and New Years Day.

We're actively building a diverse team and welcome applications from everyone. But simply having a diverse workforce is not enough. We aim to build an inclusive environment, where everyone can contribute their best work and develop to their full potential. We offer a flexible working environment so you can adjust your hours to suit your personal circumstances. We celebrate our differences, and recognise the importance of teams reflecting the communities they work with.

We have physical offices in London and Belfast which are always available to work in. We are flexible in terms of either working from home, or working hybrid from home and a physical office. However the successful candidate must be able to travel for both project work and to attend Involve internal meetings and away days. This will involve travel across the UK. We anticipate that this travel would not be every day but would be fairly regular. We cannot say definitively how regularly this would be, but it is likely to be at least 2-3 times per month and to include overnight stays. As such, applicants will need to be comfortable with regular travel.

The following benefits are available to staff:

- Workplace pension with employer contribution of 5%;
- Employee Assistance Programme;
- Childcare vouchers;
- Phone/data allowance of £13.50 per month;
- Enhanced maternity and paternity leave packages for qualifying employees;
- Participation in both external and internal training.