

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Head of Policy and Research
Department	Policy and Research
Reporting to	Director of Policy and Influencing
Line Manages	3 x Policy Managers
DBS/BD/PVG check requirement	Basic DBS
Location	Avonmore Road, London W14 8RR (with hybrid working)

JOB PURPOSE

At Independent Age our influencing goals are grounded in our deep evidence and expertise about older people in poverty, and our knowledge of which systems need to change so that no one faces financial hardship in later life. We raise awareness of poverty in later life and advocate for the solutions that would tackle it.

Working closely with the CEO, the Director of Policy and Influencing and the Head of Influencing, the Head of Policy and Research will lead an ambitious programme of research and policy development - with the experience of older people in poverty at the core - to secure change on reserved policy issues in the UK. The Head of Policy and Research will work proactively, collaboratively and strategically with internal and external stakeholders to secure support for our policy and practice recommendations and make them a reality. They will provide effective, inspirational, transparent and compassionate leadership and line management to colleagues in the Policy and Research department.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Work collaboratively with the Director of Policy and Influencing, and the Head of Influencing to lead the development and delivery of a substantial programme of high quality evidence-led policy proposals to tackle poverty in later life, developing new thinking and solutions that persuade the UK Government, businesses and regulators to change policy and practice.
- Lead the department to conduct and commission innovative research to ensure our policy recommendations are in line with internal and external insight from older people in poverty, and that Independent Age is seen as a thought leader.
- Work closely with colleagues undertaking devolved policy and public affairs activity to ensure they have the opportunity to feed into reserved research and policy developments and that reserved policy outputs are cognisant to the differences in devolved policy, where appropriate.
- Oversee and direct the creation of high quality, powerful, and accessible policy publications that secure the attention of a wide range of external audiences and gain significant media impact, including being a media spokesperson.
- Lead the department – working closely with influencing colleagues - to ensure that persuasive policy outputs evidence and drive proactive influencing work and that

highly responsive policy activity can be undertaken when presented with reactive opportunities.

- Proactively identify, cultivate and maintain relationships and partnerships with key external stakeholders across our priority themes, including attending external events and meetings, and achieving impact through coalition.
- Build close working relationship with the Senior Leadership Team and provide professional advice and guidance at both strategic and operational levels on reserved policy activity, including ensuring they are well briefed ahead of meetings.
- Lead the effective monitoring and evaluation of reserved policy activity, ensuring quality, understanding return on investment of resources and demonstrating impact. Prepare evaluation reports and updates for Trustees, funders and others.
- Play a significant role in the leadership of the Directorate and wider charity, feeding into, and driving forward, cross Directorate and cross-organisational initiatives, including ensuring Policy and Research colleagues support other departments through ad-hoc policy content and expertise.
- Work occasional evening and weekends when needed.

Leadership and Management

- As part of the Leadership Team, provide inspiring, empowering and effective leadership, direction and oversight to maximise the impact the organisation has on older people facing financial hardship.
- Lead and develop a high performing integrated Policy and Research Department which contributes to a collaborative directorate with a collective sense of purpose.
- Work as part of the Policy and Influencing Leadership Team to develop robust and cost effective departmental plans, budgets, objectives, KPI, risk logs, policies & protocols.
- Perform a leadership role in championing and delivering our EDI priorities.
- Be accountable for the relevant directorate budgets, ensure compliance with financial regulations and maintain a focus on value for money.

General Responsibilities

- Embrace diversity and share in our commitment to equality of opportunity and to eliminating discrimination
- Model and embed Independent Age's values and behaviours.
- Share in our commitment to promoting welfare and safeguarding adults at risk of harm and any children or young people connected with them that we may come into contact with through our work.
- Ensure that information is obtained, used and stored in accordance with our Data Protection and Confidentiality policy.
- Undertake any other duties commensurate with the level of the role.

How We Work

At Independent Age, we live by our values and EDI principles.

Our Values are that we are:

- Purpose-driven - the experience, needs and views of older people are central to everything we do
- Compassionate - we listen, care and take action
- Expert - our work is evidence-based and solution-focused
- Collaborative - we work in partnership to maximise our impact

- Accountable - we work with integrity and transparency
- Inclusive - we value diversity and always treat everyone fairly with dignity and respect

To put our EDI principles into practice, we will:

- proactively challenge ageism and other forms of discrimination throughout our work
- celebrate and champion diversity within and outside our charity and create a culture where everyone knows that they belong
- develop our leaders so they can act as role models and champions and our staff so they can embrace these principles and apply them in their work
- deliver equity of opportunity for our staff, volunteers and the people who use our services whether they have a protected characteristic or not
- ensure our strategy, policies and actions are integral to our annual planning processes to ensure that we deliver our goals and that our values are central to their delivery
- commit to setting target indicators for diversity and regularly review progress
- collect data to enable us to track our progress
- be publicly accountable and transparent about our progress
- use our influence to proactively champion the principles of EDI internally and with external partners
- continuously improve, adopt best practice and learn from and share with others

PERSON SPECIFICATION

- A demonstrable passion for, and affinity with, our cause.
- A self-starter, with a can-do attitude, who has significant experience leading and evaluating large and complex programmes of strategic policy work and devising creative and workable policy solutions that are adopted by UK Government, businesses and regulators.
- Experience identifying areas of strategic growth, developing and driving delivery of operational plans and budgets, and reporting against these.
- Experience developing complementary ways of working with a devolved Policy and Public Affairs function, and working collaboratively with an influencing function.
- Significant leadership and line management experience, with an ability to adapt your management style to different team personalities and working styles, and a demonstrable commitment to inclusive working, ensuring equity and diversity.
- Considerable experience commissioning, managing and undertaking policy related research.
- Experience ensuring people with lived experience play a meaningful part in policy and research activity including working with colleagues across the organisation to ensure robust policies are in place to safeguard and support involvement.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills with proven experience of proactively identifying and developing relationships – inc. with civil servants, regulators and think tanks - to further the aims and objectives of an organisation.
- Strong negotiation and decision making skills, often working at pace.
- Proven ability and willingness to work collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders to achieve collective aims and improve outcomes for the people the organisation supports, including working in coalition.
- A track record of being accountable for achieving results, with excellent organisational skills and an ability to manage a large number of tasks and deliver to deadlines.