

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Stories and Participation Officer
Department	Policy, Research and Participation
Reporting to	Participation Manager
Line Manages	N/A
DBS check requirement	Basic
Location	Avonmore Road, London W14 8RR (with hybrid working) or Homebased

Our vision

Every older person can afford to live well.

Our mission

We stand with older people in financial hardship, offering urgent help today, and shaping a fairer, more secure tomorrow.

JOB PURPOSE

The new Stories and Participation Officer role will be a fundamental cross-organisational role. Working directly with older people in financial hardship, the postholder will source, capture and collaborate to share stories experiences, and insights from older people on a low income, while maintaining the highest level of stewardship and safeguarding for this group and supporting organisation wide participation activity.

Reporting into the Participation Manager, the postholder will work with colleagues from across the organisation to champion and deliver meaningful involvement and authentic storytelling to ensure that the experiences of older people are at the centre of Independent Age's work including our communication activities.

As an integral part of our new participation function, the Stories and Participation Officer will work within, and continue to build, our participation process to ensure that they maintain and develop our storytelling expertise and follow good-practice in the sector, including in record-keeping. The role will recruit and induct older people on a low income to our Lived Experience Network, alert them to opportunities to get involved in shaping and informing Independent Age's work, facilitate two way engagement, and work with willing members of the network to share their lived experience and insights, including sharing their story on public and private platforms.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Deliver support to the Lived Experience Network, working with the Participation Manager to build and manage a pool of contributors and storytellers, organising and facilitating input opportunities when needed.
- Take varied approaches to recruitment of older people on a low income into our Lived Experience Network.

- Induct older people in financial hardship who have joined our Lived Experience Network, holding initial conversations, understanding their circumstances, recording consents and areas of interest, and maintaining appropriate records of this on our databases.
- Lead on a 'Storytellers Pathway', understanding participants interest in becoming a storyteller (including if this changes over time), supporting them to tell their story and capturing this in a way which means that colleagues can use stories effectively and according to best practice.
- Lead on improving systems for the effective coordination of stories within our Lived Experience Network, ensuring that people open to this are fully informed of the process and that their story is captured in a way that reflects their own words. Ensure record keeping is accurate and up to date on our databases.
- Steward a positive relationship between Independent Age and the older people in financial hardship in our Lived Experience Network, making sure they remain informed and willing to get involved.
- Design and deliver resources and ongoing communications to update and engage Lived Experience Network members and ensure they are supported to take part whilst maintaining appropriate professional boundaries and resolving any problems or issues which arise.
- Support the Participation manager in developing, improving and managing the wider processes and infrastructure to support involvement, ensuring compliance standards are met (e.g. data, expenses).
- Identify any safeguarding concerns and follow Safeguarding processes, with support from relevant managers.
- Work closely with functions and teams (eg. Campaigns, Media, Fundraising) to ensure the effective involvement of older people on a low income in a variety of cross organisational projects, events and initiatives, developing a wide range of opportunities and ensuring these are inclusive and accessible. Remain the key contact for the older person during this time.
- Champion Stories in the organisation, ensuring powerful authentic stories which reflect the diversity of the people we support play a central role in communications for the organisation, by encouraging their use.
- When required, produce and edit inspiring, engaging content about storytellers and the network for a range of publications and channels.

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:

- **Trusted** - a culture based on reliability and mutual respect
- **Empowering** - an inclusive approach that helps people thrive
- **Transformative** - a commitment to meaningful, intentional change towards shared goals

To put our **EDI Principles** into practice, we will:

- proactively challenge ageism and all other forms of inequality and discrimination throughout all our work
 - celebrate and champion diversity within and outside our charity
 - create a culture where everyone knows that they belong
 - ensure our leaders act as role models and champions
 - promote equity of opportunity for our staff, volunteers and the people who use our services
 - ensure our EDI plan is integral to our annual planning processes to ensure that we deliver our goals
 - collect data on diversity and inclusion to enable us to inform our work and review our progress and impact
 - be accountable and transparent about our progress
 - use our influence to proactively champion EDI internally and with external partners
 - continuously improve, adopt best practice and learn from and share with others
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PERSON SPECIFICATION

- A demonstrable passion for, and affinity with, our cause.
- Strong verbal communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to speak to people from all walks of life in person, by phone and over email.
- Proven experience of clear written communication, adapting style for different audiences.
- Exceptional organisational skills with proven experience of working to deadlines on concurrent tasks. Demonstrable ability to lead and proactively drive work forward.
- An understanding of what barriers to taking part in activity there might be for older people living on low incomes, and experience in designing ways to overcome those barriers in order to support people to tell their story in a way which works for them.
- Knowledge of best practice processes to support and coordinate effective lived experience participation, particularly in storytelling, including experience of a broad range of content compliance requirements, including safeguarding and data governance.
- Experience working with people who have lived experience of an issue and supporting them to share their story on public platforms e.g. in the media, in reports, at events.
- Demonstrable ability to maintain relationships based on trust and confidence whilst maintaining professional boundaries.
- Demonstrable ability to co-ordinate online and offline events, groups and meetings, with an emphasis on creating listening spaces and supporting people who have lived experience of an issue to be heard.
- Demonstrable commitment to collaborative teamwork, including working effectively across teams from the whole organisation.
- Ability to use expert judgement and clear focus in challenging situations.
- Ability to sometimes work under time pressure to meet short deadlines.
- Strong IT skills including use of Microsoft Office packages and CRM systems (e.g. Salesforce).
- Willingness to travel to support older people on low incomes to participate in activity and to take part in key Independent Age events.