

Job Description

Job title	Policy Adviser	Department	Insight & Policy
Reports to	Principal Policy Adviser	Section	JRF
Name of Line Manager	Darren Baxter	Location	York, London or Flexible
Date	July 2026	Grade H	

1. Purpose of job

1. To deliver projects that generate arguments, policies and ideas to address the social and economic challenges that underpin poverty in the UK today and chart a course to a different and better future (and contribute to their development).
2. To seek out and connect with people or organisations developing new ideas and strategies that can contribute to our mission; and to contribute ideas for how JRF should use its platform and resources to support their development and diffusion.
3. To help project JRF's work externally in ways that seek to: shape the national conversation; influence power and decision making at the highest levels; build alliances and partnerships; catalyse social change across society; and nurture the seeds of longer range shifts in thinking and action.

Our Policy and Ideas work is organised around cluster of issues – where change is needed to help solve poverty and improve economic insecurity. The purpose of these programmes is to deliver distinctive and powerful work that makes an impact in areas we care about. These clusters are communities and social security; work, care and families; and housing, land and climate. We also have an economics team working in support of our wider policy work and pursuing its own programme of macroeconomic policy thinking. We expect this role to focus initially on work and care policy. This may change over time as priorities shift.

There is a strong expectation that policy & ideas work will be forged collaboratively with colleagues in other parts of the directorate and the wider organisation, so that it is enriched by other disciplines and ingredients for pursuing change (including through matrix working).

Programmes of work will also integrate a focus on structural disadvantage, equalities and inclusion, in particular to honour JRF's commitment to being an anti-racist organisation.

2. Scale and Scope

1. *Reports to*: Principal Policy Adviser, with management relationships structured around work demands, pastoral support, and personal growth and development.
2. *Budget & People*: opportunity to initiate proposals for how JRF should deploy its resources to maximise impact (across staffing and external spend). No formal line management responsibility, but opportunity to supervise and coach those working with JRF as part of early career programmes.
3. *Decision Making*: expected to contribute to designing and developing programmes of work in advance to formal decisions about approving work and allocating resources.

3. What Defines Success in the Role

1. **Intellectual and analytical contribution**: Analysing challenges and problem solving through clear thinking and critical engagement with data, evidence, practice and values; to inform the development of arguments, policies and ideas.
2. **Producing high quality outputs and interventions**: Undertaking original research, analysis and exploration to inform policy & ideas work. Able to initiate and develop ideas for future work. Strong written output which builds an argument, shares ideas and can engage and persuade.
3. **Working with diverse partners**: Seeking out ideas and inspiration from across relevant policy, research and practice communities. Commissioning external input to policy & ideas work. Engaging with people with direct experience of poverty.
4. **External influence and impact**: Promoting JRF's work with key audiences and decision makers, through direct meetings, events and the media (including on-line). Developing a profile as a knowledgeable voice on poverty-related issues. Contributing to propositions and projects for how JRF can catalyse change through practical experimentation and backing emerging real-world alternatives.
5. **Personal growth and organisational input**: Identifying goals for learning, growth and development and taking active steps to improve. Playing a part in making JRF a high performing organisation that is a happy and fulfilling place to work.

4. Knowledge, Skills & Experience

Knowledge

- Knowledge of policy issues related to the causes and consequence of poverty and the social and economic conditions on which it rests. Knowledge of and experience working on either work or care policy is an advantage but is not essential.
- An understanding of how policy making works across the UK, devolved and sub-national governments.
- An awareness of politics, relevant policy debates and approaches to social change.
- An understanding of how analytical tools and methods can be used to understand and grapple with an issue (either quantitative or experiential).

- Knowledge and understanding of the key elements of a diverse and inclusive organisational culture.

Skills

- Ability to engage with policy dilemmas; drawing on key literature, research evidence, leading-edge practice and everyday experience.
- Ability to think critically and creatively, analyse and problem solve, and contribute to the generation of new ideas and alternative ways of approaching an issue.
- Ability to communicate and persuade, via writing and speaking.
- Ability to seek out ideas, examples, people and perspectives beyond JRF that could enrich our work and contribute to our mission.
- Ability to work in partnership, collaborate with others and commission effectively (working with a diverse range of people, including those with experience of poverty).

Experience

- Experience of working on policy issues relating to poverty.
- Experience of contributing positively and effectively in a team environment.
- Experience of engaging with a range of stakeholders around policy issues.
- Experience of taken steps to learn, develop and improve at work and make a positive contribution to an organisation.

5. Values and behaviours

Role model, champion, support as well as holding others to account for living our values through demonstrating the key behaviours which underpin our values.

Create and champion a culture of trust by:

Acting with Integrity – doing the right thing in the right way and delivering on promises

Always Improving – open to new ideas, feedback and embracing change

Communicating well – listening without judging, sharing information in a way that makes sense to the receiver, asking questions, being curious to ensure understanding and adapting style to achieve the best outcomes.

Create and champion a culture that cares by:

Supportive – giving people time, considering their wellbeing and perspective when acting

Inclusive – actively valuing difference (e.g. behaviour, cognitive, gender, sexuality, ability, religion, race, background, perspective), people are proud of who they are

Respectful – showing polite and courteous behaviour, treating people with the same respect irrespective of their personal circumstances irrelevant of position.

Create and champion a culture that makes a difference by:

Working together – focusing on what's best for the organisation, sharing information, encouraging teamwork and spotting and solving problems

Outcomes focused – focusing on delivering outputs and outcomes through teams in line with business and strategic plans

Resourceful – proactive and regular review to optimise all our resources, finding new ways to deliver value for money through our activities.