

**Job Title: Senior Policy Officer**

**Location:** Any SMF City (Birmingham, Cardiff, Glasgow, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Newcastle). We are currently operating a hybrid of office and home working for staff across all cities.

**Closing Date:** 23:59 PM on Sunday 27th October we anticipate interviews being held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

**Salary:** £29,900 plus £2,200 London Weighting if applicable

**Reporting to:** Policy Manager

**Contract and hours:** We are looking for the right candidate and we envisage this being a full-time role (37.5 hours per week), but we're open to conversations regarding flexible or part-time work. Permanent contract. Occasional evening or weekend work may be required, for which time off in lieu will be given.

**Benefits:** 25 days holiday per year pro rata, plus bank holidays. 5% Employer contribution to pension calculated using NEST's current thresholds for 'qualifying earnings' following successful probation period, in line with auto-enrolment pension requirements.

**Start date:** As soon as possible.

**About the SMF**

The Social Mobility Foundation (SMF) is a national charity that aims to make a practical difference in social mobility. We want young people from all backgrounds to have fair access to high quality education, career opportunities and progression. Our vision is a society where talent from all backgrounds is nurtured, harnessed, and rewarded. Our mission is to unlock potential, broaden horizons and create opportunities with and for ambitious young people who face structural barriers in education and work because of where they grew up, went to school or the occupation of their parents or guardians. We do this by:

- Directly supporting young people; we nurture the knowledge, confidence, and networks of high achieving young people through our programmes.
- Influencing employers; we influence employers to ensure people from working class backgrounds can get in and get on in professional life.
- Advocating for social mobility; we campaign on structural social mobility issues and amplify the voices of young people from working class backgrounds.

**About the role**

Your role will be central to achieving our three-year strategy, which is focused on:

- I) developing our programme so it makes a bigger difference, and is available to more young people
- II) influencing system changes that lead to progress towards equity of, who gets in, who gets on and who belongs – in education and employment

Based in our Advocacy and Campaigns team the Senior Policy Officer will be responsible for delivering our Social Mobility Employer Index and support the development of our wider policy positions and campaigns work.

Growing the influence and impact of the Index is a key strategic priority within ambition two, and this role will help achieve that by ensuring we continue to develop our knowledge and to influence and improve employer-led social mobility. You'll be responsible for project managing and delivering core components of the Index including the marking, design and delivery of the survey, which we use to gather employer data and the feedback reports, which we share with entrants. You'll ensure the documents evolve with best practice and in line with our work with young people. Working with others you'll deliver the annual key findings report, ultimately helping improve employer led social mobility in the UK.

To achieve this, you will ensure we're across the latest developments in employer-led social mobility, government policy, research from key stakeholders and employers, and we're up to date with the latest best practice. You'll use these insights to develop our positions and recommendations and keep our impact measurement and evaluation up to date so we can ensure we're seeing change over time.

Alongside the Index you'll play a key role in developing policy positions for our political influencing campaigns. You'll support our internal knowledge hub, drawing insights from our Aspiring Professionals Programme, wider research and focus groups with our young people and share external developments to ensure we have robust, youth-led positions. You'll analyse evidence and help carve out our unique point of view on how we can improve social mobility in the UK.

You'll lead on developing our wider policy positions, which will be used to influence government and achieve our end impact. You'll also ensure these positions, and our evidence base, is communicated internally, ensuring colleagues have what they need to be successful with their stakeholders.

Your mindset is as important as your previous experience. Working in an agile way and eager to solve problems, you'll be able to think laterally connecting different areas of work to inform our point of view. Ambitious for yourself and the organisation, you'll be a team player, who is enthusiastic, and passionate about delivering impactful change.

**Key responsibilities:**

- Lead on the project management and delivery of the Index including development of policy positions and best practice, questionnaire design, employer feedback reports.
- Lead the annual review of the Index assessing the impact it's had on driving employer behaviour and update our measurement and evaluation metrics accordingly.
- Ensure documents are reviewed annually and updated to reflect the latest best practice and insights from our wider interventions.
- Co-ordinate the different individuals and teams working across the Index to deliver the annual key findings report.
- Utilising our political monitoring service and our relations with employers, stay across updates from key stakeholders such as the Social Mobility Commission, the wider sector

and employer research, utilising these insights to update our policy positions and develop our advice to employers.

- Undertake rapid scans of various types of data and evidence; produce summaries of the main findings and implications for policy and generate ideas for further policy opportunities.
- Present findings internally and support fundraising colleagues with the insights, tools, and knowledge to develop new products that can influence employer behaviour.
- Create resources for the wider organisation to ensure our evidence base and policy positions are understood, up to date and consistently used across teams.
- Attend relevant conferences, stakeholder meetings and gather intelligence, raising our profile and influencing where appropriate.
- Support the Campaigns Officer (media) and Campaigns Officer (public affairs) with the insights required for political and media interventions. E.g. briefing MPs and creating briefing materials for media interviews.
- Administrative tasks as needed.

### **Essential skills and experience:**

- Experience of developing policy positions for an organisation.
- Experience in translating research into insights and using that to inform positions.
- Experience of analysing and interpreting data sets to develop policy positions.
- Excellent written and oral communication and influencing skills.
- Experience of project management.
- A problem-solving mindset - you assess the quality of your own ideas and ask questions about others' ideas and proposals, devising solution options with costs/benefits and risks where appropriate.
- You set high standards, actively seek and act on feedback and lead the team efforts to continuously improve.
- You are outcome focused - You define your work in terms of outcomes rather than time spent and encourage others to do the same.
- Planning and organising - You manage and work effectively with stakeholders to reach desired outcomes; you identify and escalate potential timeline issues in a timely manner proposing solutions.

### **Desirable experience:**

- Experience of hosting focus groups and co-creating policy positions with young people.
- Experience working in a policy role focused on social mobility.
- Experience working in agile.

### **The values and behaviours we're looking for:**

- **We're mission driven**, we support one another to visualise and work towards our ideal outcomes from our theory of change.
- **We're optimistic** – we're here because we want to, and do, make change for the better, we see the possibilities and we are hopeful.
- **We're ambitious** about what can be achieved and work towards the best possible outcome within our limitations.

- **We're creative** and seek opportunities to test new ways of doing things to make improvements
- **We're collaborative** - we're here because we believe that we achieve more together. We believe partnership is integral to the way we deliver our programmes and we understand the impossibility of achieving system change alone.

#### What you can expect from us:

- **An empathetic environment**, we believe in the importance of kindness and empathy in our organisation and we value the support and generosity of colleagues.
- **A commitment to diversity and inclusion**, we actively seek and listen to a breadth of views and opinions; make people feel safe to contribute their ideas and viewpoints. We value our differences and help create an environment where everyone can experience a sense of belonging and is empowered to achieve their full potential.
- **A dedication to learning**, taking time to figure out ways to improve our practice and learn from our experience.

#### How to apply:

There are two components to the application process. To apply, please submit your application to the link below by 23:59 PM, Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October.

- a) A cover letter outlining your previous experience and your suitability for the role
- b) In no more than 500 words, summarise what works for improving belonging for those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds in the civil service, and what steps you would take to maintain up-to-date knowledge of this and communicate the relevant aspects to colleagues.

**We intend to have one virtual interview lasting one hour** to understand your experience and ambitions for the role and get to know you personally. You will not be required to do a task for the interview. Please let us know if you have any reasonable adjustments. We expect interviews for this role to take place on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November.

Please note that we do not accept CVs or generic applications. If you have any questions about the role, please contact Esther Fisher, Policy Manager, [esther.fisher@socialmobility.org.uk](mailto:esther.fisher@socialmobility.org.uk)