

Job description and person specification

Job title: Senior Practice and Policy Lead

Reporting to: Head of Practice

Status: 1-year fixed term

Salary: £43,500

Location: New Local operates a 'work anywhere' policy but provides office workspace in London for those who require it. Applicants must have the right to work in the UK and be resident in the UK.

About us

New Local has a mission to transform public services and unlock community power. We publish research, lead peer learning, influence government and work with public sector organisations on some of today's most pressing issues, informed by our network of 50-plus local authority members.

All of our work is guided by a belief in community power – the principle that communities themselves have the best insight into their own circumstances and should be able to participate in shaping their places and services. We believe that active, empowered communities should be at the heart of a wider shift towards place-based public services and a system focused on prevention, which can lead to better outcomes and a more sustainable system for all.

About the job

Purpose

This role sits within our Practice and Programmes team and will contribute to the development and delivery of New Local's **practice and policy work**, supporting community-powered public sector reform in partnership with communities, individual councils, strategic authorities, central government, the NHS and other public and voluntary sector bodies.

Our team's work sits at the intersection of policy and practice. We are looking for someone who can bring innovative, community-powered approaches to life on the ground, while helping us draw out and share the learning and insights that can inform wider strategy and policy.

In our practice work, you will confidently lead and contribute to projects alongside public sector partners and communities, using a range of innovation and practice approaches to address complex challenges and support change. This could include programme and service design, facilitation, strategy development, user-centred design, adaptive and collaborative learning, and approaches that help partners test, learn and adapt in practice. You will work with delivery partners

where needed and collaborate closely with other New Local colleagues to deliver high-quality work and impact for our local authority members, wider clients and partners. Crucially, you will help partners not only to develop and test new approaches, but to understand what the learning means for wider strategy, systems and ways of working.

A key part of the role is connecting our practice work to wider strategy, policy and thought leadership. Our thought leadership and policy approach is deeply rooted in the practice we see in places and through our member and peer-learning networks. You will help draw out and communicate learning from pioneering work, developing practical insights and narratives that challenge thinking and inform wider strategy and policy. This could include contributing to blogs and thought pieces, shaping events and member sessions, sharing learning with wider audiences or supporting engagement with key stakeholders. You will identify connections between emerging local practice and national policy agendas and contribute to relationships and opportunities that advance New Local's work on community power and public service reform.

Key tasks and responsibilities

- **Contribute to the delivery of New Local practice projects**, working closely with senior members of the New Local team and using a range of innovation and practice approaches including design, facilitation, strategy development, user-centred design, adaptive and collaborative learning, and approaches that enable partners to test, learn and adapt.
- **Build and maintain excellent relationships with partners** across local government, the wider public sector and communities, placing an emphasis on collaborative working, co-design and building the relationships needed to support meaningful change.
- **Design and facilitate engaging processes and workshops** that help partners explore complex challenges, develop new approaches, test ideas and build shared understanding and action.
- **Help connect practice, strategy and policy**, drawing out learning from innovation and working with partners to translate this into changes in policy, strategy, systems and services, while contributing to wider thinking about the conditions needed to enable and scale change.
- **Ensure effective project management of our activities**, working with colleagues and partners to deliver high-quality work and impact within agreed budgets and timelines.
- **Support the development and growth of our practice work**, including contributing to proposals, project scoping and budgets, and identifying opportunities to develop our work with existing and new partners.
- **Communicate the process, findings and learning from our work**, producing clear and compelling outputs for different audiences and helping to draw out wider insights that can inform strategy, practice and policy.
- **Contribute to New Local's thought leadership and policy work**, identifying connections between emerging local practice and wider policy agendas, and contributing to blogs, thought pieces, events, member sessions and stakeholder engagement.

- **Work collaboratively across New Local**, including with our network and communications teams, using your practice expertise and learning from projects to strengthen the wider impact of our work on community power and public service reform.

Person specification: knowledge and skills required

- A champion for community power, who understands and is committed to its principles.
- Good understanding of local government and the public sector, with confidence working with senior officials and councillors to improve outcomes.
- Experience using different innovation and practice approaches. This might include but is not limited to programme and service design, facilitation, strategy development, user-centred design, adaptive and collaborative learning.
- Strong analytical and writing skills, applied in a practice and policy improvement context.
- Ability to develop and communicate compelling findings, insights and recommendations that support change in practice and policy.
- Strong verbal communication skills, with an ability to present ideas and arguments engagingly to a range of audiences.
- An entrepreneurial mindset, with experience of developing partnerships, identifying opportunities and contributing to business development.
- Strong project planning and management skills, with good attention to detail.
- Ability to work creatively, collaboratively and with a high degree of autonomy.
- Ability to work effectively with ambiguity and support colleagues and partners to navigate uncertainty and work towards clarity.
- Ability to actively contribute to the supportive and friendly organisational culture at New Local.
- Commitment to professional growth and development, including supporting the learning and development of colleagues.
- Knowledge and understanding of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector is a plus.

How to apply

To apply for this role, please email recruitment@newlocal.org.uk including your:

- CV.
- An answer to the following questions:
 - Why are you interested in joining New Local, and what is it about our work on community power and public service reform that particularly motivates you? – max 200 words

- Tell us about a change or innovation project you have played a significant role in. What was the challenge, what approaches or methodologies did you use, and what difference did your work make? – max 300 words
- The government's recent publication on "Rewiring the State" sets out an ambition to change how public services and the state work. Drawing on your own experience of working with the public sector and communities, how do you think New Local's practice and policy work should respond? max 250 words
- Completed Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form (if you wish) N.B. all equal opportunities forms will be separated from the application.

If you require any help applying for this role or taking part in the recruitment process, then do not hesitate to contact us at recruitment@newlocal.org.uk.

New Local will process and store your personal information (this means any information that identifies or could identify you) for the purposes of recruitment, for a period of up to six months after the closing date, after which it will be securely disposed of. For more information, please refer to our job applicant privacy notice.

Recruitment timeline

Post advertised	18 th August 2026
Deadline for applications	9 th September 2026, 9:00 am
Candidates contacted for interview by	15 th September 2026
Interviews 1 st round, online, incl. task	22 nd September 2026
Interviews 2 nd round, in person	30 th September
Start date	As soon as possible

If you are unable to attend interviews on these dates, please let us know when you apply.

Our values and the benefits of working for New Local

Diversity: New Local is committed to being an equal opportunities employer. We don't just 'value diversity', we think it is central to what makes for a high impact, successful organisation. We positively encourage everyone to apply. As such, New Local recruits, employs, trains, compensates and promotes regardless of age, disability, sex, gender, sexuality, race, national origin, marital status, parental status, religion or belief.

Leave and working hours: We operate a highly flexible policy on working hours and leave. New Local's team core working hours are 10am to 4pm but around this, staff are trusted to determine their own working hours and leave consummate with the fulfilment of their job goals to the highest level of excellence. We operate an unlimited leave policy meaning employees are free to take leave beyond their leave allocation as long as it does not interfere with their ability to do their job to the highest standards. To support well-being, New Local staff are expected to take a minimum of 27 days' leave each year (pro rata for PT staff). New Local employees also receive ten days leave over the Christmas and New Year period.

Location: Applications are welcome from candidates no matter where they live in the UK. We operate a 'work anywhere' policy meaning employees can choose to work at home or at any other location that enables them to do their job to the highest standards. New Local has an office in a central London location for those who wish to work in an office environment, and we are currently reviewing our hybrid arrangements. The Practice and Programmes team meet on a regular basis, at least fortnightly in central London. We currently meet as a whole organisation in person regularly in central London and team members are expected to attend this. Travel expenses are covered for team members attending this whole organisation team meeting.

Flexible working: We are happy to discuss highly flexible working arrangements.

Well-being: New Local is extremely committed to staff well-being. Working long and late hours is actively discouraged and all staff at New Local are very strongly committed to creating a pleasant, friendly and supportive environment in which to work. Employees complete a weekly and more detailed annual anonymous well-being survey to allow monitoring of general well-being in the team.

Health scheme: Employees can join the New Local health plan and employee assistance scheme. The subscription to the scheme is paid for by New Local.

Family Friendly leave: New Local offers a range of enhanced parental and family friendly leave.

Pension: New Local will contribute 5% to the New Local group personal pension scheme. This benefit cannot be substituted for any other benefit. We operate a salary sacrifice scheme for pension contributions.

Bonus, salary rises and promotions: We operate an annual bonus scheme based on financial performance. This bonus is shared equally between all team members. A cost-of-living rise is applied

to all salaries each year based on inflation. All bonuses and salary rises are awarded at the discretion of the New Local board.

Death in service benefit: A death in service benefit at three times your annual salary is provided should you die in service. All New Local employees between the ages of 16 and 69 are covered and cover ceases when a staff member reaches their 70th birthday or leaves the organisation.

Probation and notice: This role is subject to a six-month probationary period and a three-month notice period. This job description is not exhaustive and is liable to review following discussion with the job holder. The post-holder will be expected to undertake any other reasonable duties as requested by their line manager and commensurate with their job grade.