

Job Description

Role: Policy Researcher

Reports to: Executive Director

Location: Remote, with regular meetings in London

Contract Type: 4 days a week. Permanent.

About us: Sustainability First is a leading UK think tank and charity that acts as a critical friend to businesses, regulators, governments, and civil society, to create more sustainable energy and water sectors in the UK. We work tirelessly to advocate for policies that support environmental and consumer protection and to engage the public through accessible and impactful communication. We believe that it is possible to create a thriving economy that respects environmental limits and enables social equity.

Role Overview: We are seeking an analytical thinker with a curiosity-driven mindset and a collaborative approach to working. This role will be central to our ongoing success as a highly regarded independent research organisation, building an evidence base in favour of embedding sustainability principles into business practices, regulatory and public policy thinking. You will help to amplify our voice with decision-makers, including business leaders, senior officials in central government, regulatory bodies, and amongst politicians, helping to shape public policy and legislation for a socially equitable and environmentally sustainable economy.

The ideal candidate will have a sector-specific understanding (energy and/or water utilities), including familiarity with key policies and strategies, such as Net Zero targets, climate adaptation strategies, and consumer vulnerability protections. You will be able to draft practical policy recommendations, informed by evidence and stakeholder input, and be familiar with key players, including government departments, regulators, consumer groups, industry bodies, and environmental organizations. This is an excellent opportunity to develop a core role in our charity, as well as make a tangible impact on the environment and social equity in the UK.

Key responsibilities

- **Research:** liaising with the Director and Associates to carry out research on specific projects and Sustainability First initiatives. This will include desk research, interviews, surveys, quantitative and qualitative data analysis, developing practical recommendations for change and writing reports, consultation responses, checklists, blogs etc to convey research findings and proposals.
- **Communicating and advocating Sustainability First's messages:** designing and taking part in workshops, conferences, roundtable discussions and other external events and presenting Sustainability First's key messages to a wide range of audiences.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** Tracking the implementation and outcomes of policies, measuring their effectiveness and suggesting improvements.
- **Keeping up to date with developments in the field of sustainability:** Attending events, reading materials, and proactively sharing information with the wider Sustainability First team.



Selection Criteria

Qualifications and Experience

Essential:

- Qualified to at least degree standard – ideally in a discipline related to sustainability (e.g., social or environmental policy or economics).
- Fluent in English (written and spoken).
- Proven research experience: desk research, interviewing people, use of surveys, drafting reports, drawing conclusions, formulating practical proposals for change etc.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the UK energy and/or water industries, including market structures, governance, and regulatory frameworks (Ofgem, Ofwat).
- Familiarity with key policies and strategies, such as Net Zero targets, climate adaptation strategies, and consumer vulnerability protections.
- Awareness of technological developments, such as renewable energy, smart grids, digital twins, and water efficiency technologies.
- Familiarity with key players, including government departments, regulators, consumer groups, industry bodies, and environmental organizations.
- Demonstrable skills and experience in using Word, Power Point, and Excel.
- Proven experience and understanding of the fields of sustainability or public utilities.

Desirable:

- Understanding of policy development processes and regulatory mechanisms, including price controls (RIIO, PR24).
- Knowledge of distributional impacts and equity considerations in policymaking.
- Knowledge of citizen and consumer engagement practices in public utilities.

Essential Personal Attributes & Skills

The ideal candidate will have the following attributes:

- Ability to conduct high-quality desk research and literature reviews.
- Proficiency in data analysis, both qualitative and quantitative, to derive actionable insights.
- Strong report-writing skills, capable of producing concise, clear, and well-structured documents.
- Skills in drafting practical policy recommendations informed by evidence and stakeholder input.
- Capacity to evaluate the effectiveness of existing policies and propose refinements.
- Ability to present complex ideas clearly to diverse audiences, including policymakers, industry professionals, and the public.
- Ability to manage multiple projects and meet tight deadlines.
- Skills in coordinating cross-disciplinary teams and aligning activities with organizational goals.
- A mature, reliable, and proactive self-starter with a can-do attitude who is comfortable working both independently and as part of a small team.
- A professional and polite person who can form good working relationships with a wide range of people.
- Empathy with the objectives of Sustainability First.

Location

The post will be primarily based remotely, working from home, but with access to shared office space in Camden and Monument in London. Our board of trustees meet twice a year in person in central London (and twice more online), and our Executive Director is often in London for meetings once or twice a week. The candidate must also be able to attend occasional meetings in central London and be willing to travel (infrequently) within the UK. The candidate must be able to work in the UK.

Pay and term of office.

The remuneration for this part-time (4 days/week) role is £37,400 p.a. pro rata

The term of office is permanent pending successful completion of a probationary period.

How to apply

To apply please submit a CV (no more than three pages of A4) and covering letter that sets out how you meet the selection criteria for this role. Please also complete our [Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form](#), and send to recruitment@sustainabilityfirst.org.uk.

The deadline for receipt of completed applications is on **Sunday 8th February**.

Interviews will be online via Microsoft Teams in February.

We apologise that due to the expected high levels of applications we may not be able to reply to all candidates. If you have not heard from us by 28th February, please assume you have not been shortlisted.

Sustainability First is an equal opportunities employer and promotes equity, diversity and inclusion through its work, and through its employment practices. You must be able to work in the UK to take up this role.

Start date - Immediate.