

Chief of staff and senior research fellow

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the role of chief of staff and senior research fellow at the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR). IPPR was launched in 1988, with the aim of generating and researching alternative, progressive policy ideas. Over more than three decades since, IPPR has worked to ensure that ideas that once seemed impossible have become reality. We are passionate and committed to working towards a fairer and more prosperous society through our pioneering research as the UK's leading progressive research charity.

From making the early case for the minimum wage and pioneering human rights law, to developing the Child Trust Fund and a windfall tax on energy companies, our research and policy work puts forward bold but actionable solutions to societal problems.

As chief of staff, you will serve as a 'right hand' to the senior leadership of the organisation. You will support the execution of strategic initiatives, facilitate internal communication and help ensure there is alignment across the organisation. You will play a key role in enhancing operational efficiency by prioritising information flow and decision-making, ensuring that staff are well-supported and equipped with the information they need.

By acting as a multiplier, you will enable the executive director and senior management team to focus on high-impact activities by prioritising information and decisions, helping to ensure that staff are supported, have the information they need and get timely decisions from the senior team. You will also work with the executive director and the team on high impact, strategic and cross-cutting research projects, including authoring and co-authoring key IPPR outputs.

Your ability to anticipate needs, manage competing priorities, and support a culture of collaboration will be critical to the success of the leadership team and the organisation as a whole.

This is a pivotal role in the future of IPPR and a unique opportunity to work at the heart of a dynamic, purpose-driven thinktank.

If you believe you have the skills and qualities we are seeking, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

About us

The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) is an independent charity working towards a fairer, greener, and more prosperous society. We are researchers, communicators, and policy experts creating tangible progressive change, and turning bold ideas into common sense realities.

Working across the UK, IPPR, IPPR North, and IPPR Scotland, and through our pioneering participative research, we are deeply connected to the people of our nations and regions, and the issues our communities face.

We have helped shape national conversations and progressive policy change for more than 30 years. Today, our work drives social, democratic, environmental, and economic progress by securing:

- well-funded and reformed public services (health, care, housing, education) and social security that ensures everyone has access to the basics they need to flourish
- a renewed democracy which gives everyone a voice in society and passes power down to people, places, and communities, alongside a fair and compassionate immigration system which supports social integration
- a modern, green economy that delivers prosperity and justice to all people and places through actively shaping markets for social good and tackling concentrations of wealth and power.

LANDMARK RESEARCH

Our landmark reports have included the Commission on Economic Justice, a two-year inquiry to examine the challenges faced by the economy, which brought together leading figures from business, trade unions and civil society, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the City of London Corporation and the general secretary of the TUC. It's [2018 final report](#) won broad support for its bold proposals to fundamentally reform the UK economy, and is still shaping debate today.

IPPR's cross-party Environmental Justice Commission was established to respond to the climate crisis and put forward a Green New Deal plan for the UK to move to net zero. Its [influential report](#), designed to secure public support for the transition because it put fairness at its heart, was published in 2021. A further IPPR [Commission on Health and Prosperity](#) has recently concluded and was lauded by Wes Streeting, the secretary of state for health and social care.

Throughout IPPR's history, the Institute has meanwhile incubated and launched a series of practical initiatives to test and demonstrate our ideas in practice, including [Frontline](#), [Think Ahead](#), [The Difference](#) and most recently [Workwhile](#). We also incubated [Centre for Cities](#), which became independent in 2007.

Across the decades, generations of IPPR leaders, researchers and communicators have helped to transform the climate of ideas and propose practical policies to put them into effect, work which continues today. Our alumni

community have gone on to work at the highest levels of the media, government, parliament, business and civil society organisations.

Job description

Job title: Chief of Staff and Senior Research Fellow

Responsible to: Executive Director, with dotted reporting lines to the Director of Policy and Politics and Director of Finance and Operations

Responsible for: Executive Assistant

Contract: Permanent contract

Hours: Full time (37.5 hours)

Starting salary: £48,436 to £59,793 per year depending on experience, plus benefits

Role purpose:

As Chief of Staff at IPPR, you will serve as a 'right hand' to the senior leadership of the organisation. You will support the execution of strategic initiatives, facilitate internal communication and help ensure there is alignment across the organisation. You will play a key role in enhancing operational efficiency by prioritising information flow and decision-making, ensuring that staff are well-supported and equipped with the information they need.

By acting as a multiplier, you will enable the executive director and other senior management team members to focus on high-impact activities by prioritising information and decisions, helping to ensure that staff are supported, have the information they need and get timely decisions from the executive director and senior team. You will also work with the executive director and the team on high impact, strategic and cross-cutting research projects, including authoring and co-authoring key IPPR outputs.

Your ability to anticipate needs, manage competing priorities, and support a culture of collaboration will be critical to the success of the leadership team and the organisation as a whole.

Main responsibilities:

Policy impact & profile

- Support the executive director (and other members of the senior management team, as appropriate) in preparing for media, events and stakeholder meetings by drafting briefings and researching supporting content. This may also include drafting articles and speeches on the executive director's behalf.

- Attend meetings with key external stakeholders and IPPR teams, ensuring actions are noted and followed up, and sharing information where needed. This will include building direct relationships with some external stakeholders.

Strategy

- Work with the executive director and the director of policy and politics to support the implementation of the organisational strategy and theory of change.
- Facilitate and monitor the implementation of the organisational strategy by working closely with the executive director, director of policy and politics, and teams across the organisation. Act as a central conduit for information flow, ensuring strategic priorities are communicated effectively, decisions are escalated appropriately, and progress is tracked and reported in a timely manner.
- Implement change initiatives to align with organisational goals.

Research

- Work with the executive director to support their research and policy work – including on high priority research projects and publications. This will involve co-authoring research and publications with the executive director and – where appropriate - other staff at IPPR.
- Engage in cross-team research projects, based on organisational priorities, personal interest, and capacity. This offers the opportunity to contribute to and lead wider research initiatives that support IPPR's strategic objectives.

Operations and culture

- To support the executive director with key corporate responsibilities such as Board papers, meeting agendas, staff communications and varied administrative tasks.
- Work closely with the operations team to ensure key decisions and activities on governance, finance, HR and operations are delivered effectively and any challenges are unblocked, escalating to the senior team where needed.
- Support a responsive, action-oriented culture by helping to ensure that teams are getting the support, clarity and information they need from the executive director and the senior management team. Ensure the executive director and senior team is aware of emerging concerns or issues in the organisation.
- Support and promote a positive organisational culture by working collaboratively with the senior management team to ensure that IPPR's

values and ways of working are consistently embedded across all teams. Help foster an inclusive, supportive, and high-performing workplace, helping to make the organisation a great place to work.

People management

- Provide effective line management to the executive assistant to the executive director, ensuring regular supervisions, performance reviews and development conversations in line with IPPR's performance management framework. Support direct reports in their continued professional development and career progression, aligning individual goals with broader organisational objectives.
- To be flexible and to undertake any other duties that are within the overall scope and grade of this post.

Person specification

Essential knowledge, skills and experience

- Excellent understanding of the political context and dynamics in the UK
- Excellent organisational, planning and project management skills
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to build strong relationships with internal and senior stakeholders
- Demonstrated ability to influence, challenge, and build effective networks across all levels of an organisation, even without formal authority
- Ability to stay calm in high pressured environments and manage multiple priorities and competing demands
- Dynamic and proactive approach to problem-solving – a self-starter
- Excellent writing skills, covering multiple formats
- Excellent verbal communication including ability to navigate conflicts or disagreements
- Commitment to the values and ethos of IPPR, including diversity and inclusion

Terms of appointment

Working for IPPR brings a range of benefits, with generous leave allowances and a commitment to work-life balance. We have offices in Manchester, London and Edinburgh and many staff work remotely for part of their week.

Salary

The salary for this role is £48,436 to £59,793 per year plus benefits on a full-time basis.

We generally appoint at the bottom of the pay scale. Our pay scales are designed to reward staff for the knowledge, skills and experience they develop over time, and we are committed to encouraging progression and promotion through our annual performance process. Basic rates of pay are also reviewed annually.

Contract period

This is a permanent contract.

Location

This role is based in our London office, right in the heart of Westminster. We value the benefits of in-person collaboration and ask staff to spend at least 40 per cent of their working hours in the office. As part of our commitment to flexible working, we welcome applications from candidates seeking part-time hours, job-share arrangements, or other flexible options. We're open to shaping the role around the right person, and all working patterns can be discussed at the interview stage.

Annual leave

We offer a generous 25 days of annual leave plus bank holidays and five additional Christmas closure days per year.

Pension

We recognise how important it is to help you save for your retirement and offer a defined contribution group stakeholder pension scheme with Aviva. You can choose to contribute up to 5.5% of your annual salary and we will match it.

Probation period

All appointments are subject to a six-month probationary period. This is a chance for us to support your induction and development, and make sure you have all you need to settle into IPPR and be effective in your new role. During probation you are required to give two weeks' notice.

Additional benefits

Wellbeing at work

We provide a number of ways to support your wellbeing including an occupational health service, Mental Health First Aiders and Employee Assistance Programme which is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This offers in the

moment support and counselling for home-life and work-related issues as well financial and legal support, specialist information and signposting services.

Family friendly

We offer generous carer and parental leave, and family friendly policies designed to support staff with their family commitments, including up to 21 weeks maternity, adoption or shared parental leave at full pay, and six weeks paid paternity leave.

Flexible working

We're open to a variety of flexible working arrangements, allowing staff to adjust their working day to suit their individual needs.

We also offer paid time off to deal with emergencies, unexpected situations and certain other unplanned special circumstances.

Learning and development

We are fully committed to the learning and development of our staff, and as part of our team you can look forward to quality training and development opportunities. We believe in helping all our staff to make the most of their talents and realise their full potential - that's why we provide everyone with the opportunity to develop and offer five days paid study leave per year.

You will have the opportunity to undertake development to meet the needs of your role and for professional and personal development through formal and informal development opportunities and on-the-job training. Everyone has regular career development conversations, with their manager and we encourage learning to be shared.

Union and staff networks

We offer the option to join a trade union and have thriving staff-led networks to make sure everyone has a voice. These provide an outlet for sharing experiences and empowering colleagues to build an inclusive culture across IPPR. Hearing thoughts and ideas from our colleagues about how and where we can improve is key to us being a great place to work and is central to our values, ethos and objectives as a progressive organisation.

Giving back

We offer three days paid special leave to participate in volunteering activities.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

IPPR is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from all sections of the community, and from applicants with a range of professional and lived experiences. As an organisation engaging in critical debate about a wide range of progressive policy issues, we value the creativity and range of perspectives that a diverse team can provide.

How to apply

We hope you will consider making an application. To make an application, please send as **one** document (in PDF format):

- your updated CV (**no more than three sides**)
- a two-page supporting statement that sets out under separate headings why you think this role is the right move for you and how you meet the knowledge, skills and experience criteria

If you pass to interview stage, we will also ask you to prepare a short presentation question.

We would also be grateful if you complete the [equality and diversity monitoring form](#). This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Please send your completed application to applications@ippr.org quoting **ref. COS/OCT**

Closing date for applications: 11:59 p.m. on Monday 27 October

Interviews will take place in our London office on Thursday 6 November

Please contact us at recruitment@ippr.org if you need any help or adjustments to apply for this role or the application materials to be sent to you in a different format.

What happens next

We are committed to informing all applicants of the outcome of their application, but in some cases, due to the large number of applications we receive for certain jobs, this may take a while. Unfortunately we are unable to provide individual feedback to those whose applications have not been shortlisted.

We wish you every success with your application and thank you for your interest in IPPR.

Applicants guide: Right to work in the UK checks

1 Overview

UK employers are legally required to conduct Right to Work Checks. This is done to verify that their prospective employees have the appropriate and valid permission to work in the United Kingdom. This requirement is set out under the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, specifically Sections 15 to 25, and is supported by Home Office guidance that is updated regularly.

You'll need to prove your right to work in the UK before you start working for us, whether permanent, temporary, part-time, or casual. How you do this depends on your nationality and what kind of permission you have to work in the UK.

This process must be applied consistently to all candidates, ensuring non-discriminatory practices irrespective of nationality, race, or ethnicity.

To verify a job applicant's right to work in the UK, the employer is required to check and retain evidence of from a list published by the Home Office. You can access the list [here](#). We will not be able to confirm employment until this documentation has been produced.

Please note, this vacancy does not meet the criteria for skilled worker sponsorship. Therefore, we are unable to accept applications from candidates that cannot provide documentary evidence of right to work in the United Kingdom. You must produce an original document – photocopies are not acceptable under the Act.

2 If you're a British or Irish citizen

If you're a British or Irish citizen, you can prove your right to work in the UK with either of the following:

- a British passport
- an Irish passport or passport card

Your passport or passport card can be current or expired.

If you do not have a passport or passport card, you can prove your right to work with one of the following:

- a UK birth or adoption certificate
- an Irish birth or adoption certificate
- a certificate of registration or naturalisation as a British citizen

You must also give your employer an official letter or document from a previous employer or a government agency.

For example, you could use a letter from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC),

the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) or the Social Security Agency in Northern Ireland.

The letter must show your name and National Insurance number.

3 If you're not a British or Irish citizen

If you're not a British or Irish citizen, you can prove your right to work with:

- a share code - you can [get a share code online](#)
- your [eligible immigration documents](#)

You can choose which option you use.

If you cannot prove your right to work

If you're not a British or Irish citizen, your employer can check if you can work with the [employer checking service](#).

If you're a Commonwealth citizen, you may be able to [get documents to show that you can work in the UK through the Windrush Scheme](#).

If you have any further queries about these provisions, please do not hesitate to ask.