

Principal Research Fellow & Head of Children and Young People Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the role of principal research fellow and head of children and young people 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, greener, 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 taking regional inequality to the top of the political agenda, to proposing a windfall tax on energy companies, our research and policy work has put forward practical solutions for the crises facing society - to enable justice, progress and change. In 2004, IPPR North was launched to lead work on devolution and regional inequality and connect our work more deeply with people of the villages, towns and cities too often been neglected by national policymakers. A decade later came the launch of IPPR Scotland, with the aim of shaping progressive policy north of the border as increasing powers were transferred to the Scottish parliament.

We are looking to recruit a principal research fellow to play a pivotal role in creating an optimistic and compelling policy and narrative, setting out a New Deal for children and young people for our flagship programme "State of a Generation."

In this role, you will design, fundraise for, lead and manage a significant research method programme, ensuring that projects are delivered on time, on budget and to the highest standard. A confident and influential communicator with strong media experience, you will represent IPPR at the highest levels across government, politics, business, academia, the voluntary sector and the media. You will also play a central role in developing and managing strategic relationships and influencing public policy.

This is a high-impact role at a key moment for IPPR. The change of government creates a real opportunity to shape and create change for a fairer, more prosperous and sustainable future, working closely with the major political parties as they look ahead to the future. You will be central in positioning IPPR as a leading voice on the challenges and opportunities facing young people and setting out policy solutions.

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

Over the last two years, IPPR has made significant contributions to the AI policy debate. In [“Transformed by AI”](#) we estimated the degree to which the UK jobs market could be impacted by generative AI and outlined the various tools that could be used to manage it. This included the call for a job-centric industrial strategy for AI. In [“the new politics of AI”](#) also called for a [re-think of AI policy](#), to make it more mission aligned and linking it more to democratic deliberation. In [“the direction of AI innovation in the UK”](#) we produced a first-of-its-kind quantitative measure of AI innovation and highlighted where policy currently falls short.

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. Its [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](#), and [The Difference](#). We also incubated [Centre for Cities](#) which became independent in 2007 and more recently, [Workwhile](#), which became independent in April this year.

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: Principal Research Fellow & Head of Children and Young People

Responsible to: Associate Director Public Services and Young People

Responsible for: Senior Research Fellow

Contract: 18-month fixed term contract

Hours: 37.5 hours a week (IPPR is undertaking a six-month trial of reduced working hours from 1 January, with a standard working week of 35 hours)

Salary: £57,128 to £70,524 per year depending on experience, plus benefits

Role purpose:

We are looking to recruit a Principal Research Fellow who will be instrumental in creating an optimistic and compelling policy and narrative, setting out a New Deal for children and young people for our flagship programme "State of a Generation."

You will combine a capacity to develop impactful, high-quality research with the communication skills necessary to influence key stakeholders, and the intellectual and interpersonal skills to successfully manage a significant research method programme. Responsibilities will be broad covering areas such as project design, research, writing, media work, people and budget management, fundraising, project management and delivery, and contributing to corporate planning and activity.

Main responsibilities:

Policy impact & profile

- Contribute to the development of a strategy for IPPR's flagship Children and Young People programme, working closely with the associate director public services and young people and the senior management team to position IPPR as a leader in policy debate and research.
- Lead IPPR's policy development in this area and support the design and delivery of a wider programme of research and policy work on public services.

- Work collaboratively across IPPR to identify and make the most of synergies, overlaps and complementarities with other programmes and projects.
- Generate significant impact across the research programme by developing new projects, achieving project objectives and producing high quality, influential outputs.
- Build and maintain strong subject knowledge, external profile and networks of contacts, playing a key role in shaping and influencing public policy.
- Represent and network for IPPR in the field of children's policy and related areas, including speaking at high-profile events and forums for government, policymakers, practitioners, media, funders and other stakeholders.
- Engage with potential funders including universities, charitable trusts, and local and regional government to deliver research and events on how deliberative democracy can be practically implemented within different contexts in the UK.
- Support IPPR's organisational development, drawing on experience in strategy, change management and operations.

Fundraising

- Fundraise for and deliver policy projects within the public services team, working closely with the associate director public services to develop the team's approach to project and time management.
- Initiate, build and maintain strong working relationships with funders and other key players in this field, including practitioners, academics, policy advisers, politicians, civil servants, and organisations across the private, voluntary and community sectors.

Research & project management

- Oversee the development, funding, management, budgeting, delivery and dissemination of all research projects within the programme, ensuring they are completed on time, within budget and to a high standard.
- Take direct management of the research programme, as well as additional projects within the theme as delegated by the associate director or director of policy and research.
- Ensure there is an appropriate number of projects active and in development within the research programme.

People management

- Line manage research staff, ensuring all direct reports receive regular supervision and performance appraisals in line with IPPR's performance management framework.
- Provide guidance and support to direct reports in fulfilling their own management responsibilities, as needed.
- Hold annual career conversations with direct reports and support their ongoing professional development and career planning in line with wider organisational goals.
- Play a leadership role within the theme and foster a supportive and inclusive environment for all staff.

Corporate role

- Support the associate directors and directors in shaping IPPR's wider research programme, contributing to new project development, planning meetings, research reviews, and providing research support across the organisation.
- Contribute to IPPR's ongoing organisational development, including work on strategy and change management.
- Participate in the Research and Impact Committee and other internal research groups to maintain an overview of corporate issues and contribute to wider discussions on organisational strategy.
- Contribute to IPPR's intellectual capital, both within and beyond own specialism, including active participation in IPPR's research groups.
- Be an effective and collaborative member of IPPR's research team and deputise for the associate director public services when required.

Person Specification

Knowledge, skills and experience

Subject expertise

- Demonstrable expertise in a field of policy research relating to children and young people.

Political insight

- Sophisticated understanding of the political context within which policy is made.

Research skills

- A strong track record of high-quality published research relevant to this role.
- Highly developed research skills.
- Active involvement in, and experience of thinking strategically about research priorities.

Relationships and influencing

- A demonstrable track record of successfully influencing public policy.
- An extensive, established and wide-ranging network of contacts across practitioners, policymakers and academia.

Fundraising

- Experience of securing research funding from a variety of sources.

Project management

- Sound programme and project management experience, including budget setting, financial control and delivery to time and quality.

People management

- Proven experience in people management, including coaching, supervision and performance management.

Communication skills

- Excellent communication and presentation skills, including facilitation experience.
- Wide-ranging media record, with experience writing for and achieving coverage in print media and performing for broadcast media.

Values

- Lived experience of disadvantage and/or a sound understanding of social injustice.
- Experience of, and commitment to, collaborative and inclusive ways of working, including openness to peer review.
- Commitment to IPPR's values and ethos, including equality, diversity and inclusion.

Terms of appointment

Working at IPPR

Joining IPPR means being part of a progressive organisation that values work-life balance, professional development, and employee wellbeing. We offer generous leave allowances, flexible working arrangements, and a collaborative, inclusive culture. Our offices are located in London, Manchester, and Edinburgh, with many staff working remotely part of the week.

Salary

The salary for this role is £57,128 to £70,524 per year, plus benefits, on a full-time contract.

Appointments are typically made at the lower end of the pay scale. Our pay framework is designed to recognise and reward the development of knowledge, skills and experience over time. We support career progression through annual performance reviews, and base pay is reviewed annually.

Contract period

This is an 18-month fixed term contract.

Location

The role is based in our London office, located 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. We are committed to flexible working and will consider a range of arrangements for the successful candidate. We're open to shaping the role around the right person, and all working patterns can be discussed at the interview stage.

Leave

We offer 25 days of annual leave, plus bank holidays and five additional closure days over Christmas.

Pension scheme

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 IPPR will match your contribution.

Probation period

All roles are subject to a six-month probation period, during which notice is two weeks. This is a chance for us to support your induction and development, ensuring you have the tools and guidance to succeed in your new role.

Additional benefits

Wellbeing support: We provide access to occupational health services, Mental Health First Aiders, and a 24/7 Employee Assistance Programme offering in the moment support and counselling, legal and financial advice, and specialist support and signposting services.

Family-friendly policies: 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 support 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 and unexpected events.

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 written task or 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. PRF/DEC**

Closing date for applications: 10 am on Monday 5 January

Interviews will take place in our London office on Tuesday 13 January

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 are unable to accept applications from candidates that cannot provide documentary evidence of right to work in the United Kingdom, and we will not be able to confirm employment until this documentation has been produced. 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.