Job Description

**Job Title:** Policy and Research Officer

**Place of Employment:** Women’s Support Network (WSN)

**Salary:** £27,848.94 (pro rata)

**Hours:** 30 hrs per week

**Contract:** 31 March 2019 **(**subject to funding)

Responsible to: WSN Director

Job Summary:

The Policy and Research Officer will be responsible for leading the policy, advocacy and research work within WSN to support women’s groups/centres living in disadvantaged urban and rural communities. The post-holder will be responsible for building effective working relationships within the wider women’s sector and other stakeholders for the purposes of creating and supporting a strong vibrant women’s sector.

Main tasks

**Policy, Advocacy and Research**

**POLICY**

* To analyse, critique and respond to key policy issues which may impact on the social and economic lives of women living in disadvantaged areas.
* To analyse, critique and respond to key policy issues that may impact on women’s centres/groups delivering services to women living in disadvantaged areas.
* To increase the contribution of women living in disadvantaged areas to policy debates through supporting and/or facilitating policy workshops, seminars and information events as required.
* To increase and support the contribution of women’s centres/groups working with women living in disadvantaged areas to respond to policy debates on key issues that impact on their lives.
* Preparation of submissions, briefings, and responses to consultations.
* To work with WSN Director in supporting women’s centres/groups meet all legislative and policy criteria in relation to good practice.
* Influence key decision makers by building strong relationships with key stakeholders such as elected representatives, Government Departments and relevant agencies.
* Provide relevant policy input to media enquiries and act as a media spokesperson if required.

**RESEARCH**

* Anticipate and monitor current and emerging issues and developments that may impact on women living in disadvantaged areas.
* Anticipate and monitor current and emerging issues and developments that may impact on women’s centres/group supporting women living in disadvantaged areas.
* Plan and deliver robust and relevant research projects within agreed timescales and resource allocation and support the identification of funding for other research projects.

**ADVOCACY**

* Contribute to the development of strategic partnerships and constructive working relationships with a range of organisations and individuals to build the profile of the Women’s Support Network and the Women’s Regional Consortium.
* To meet and liaise with the policy workers within the Women’s Regional Consortium on issues that affect women living in disadvantaged and rural areas.
* To work with WSN Director in supporting women’s centres/groups delivering front line services to women living in disadvantaged areas.
* To work with WSN Director in supporting new and emerging women’s groups.
* To support WSN in the recruitment of volunteers/students in the area of policy and research and supervise their work.

**ADMIN**

* Prepare relevant documents for internal and external audiences including written and oral briefings, reports, campaign materials and media articles
* Preparing briefings for meetings and support with presentations and speeches.
* Represent the organisation at seminars, conferences and other events and sit on external groups or on key stakeholder groups as required.
* Provide work reports to WSN Management Committee.
* Provide high quality reports in a range of formats inclusive of reporting on the Women’s Regional Consortium using an outcomes based approach.
* Support WSN on relevant funding proposals as and when required.

**The duties and responsibilities in this job description are not restrictive and the post holder may be required to undertake any other duties, which may be required from time to time.  Any such duties should not, however, substantially change the general character of the post.**

**Personnel Specification**

**Post: Policy and Research Officer**

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

Qualification(s):

* Educated to degree level or equivalent

**Experience:**

Experience in policy, advocacy and research, to include:-

* Collating and dissemination of information to groups using electronic and written materials.
* Preparation of publications, fact sheets and briefing papers.
* Relevant experience in the area of social policy, responding to consultations.
* Collating and analysing information and research for reports.

**Abilities:**

* Effective communication skills, including the ability to communicate orally and in writing, and the ability to adjust the style and content to suit medium used.
* Presentation and report writing skills.
* Ability to interpret complex information and to compile materials/papers/ reports as appropriate.
* Highly proficient in the use of Microsoft Office.
* Proficient user of the Internet for the purposes of research.

**Knowledge:**

* Knowledge of economic and social issues affecting women living in disadvantaged areas.
* Knowledge of key strategies and policies affecting women’s centres/groups.
* Working knowledge of the Women’s Sector within Northern Ireland.
* Working knowledge of statutory, community and voluntary sectors.
* Working knowledge of fund raising strategies.

**Qualities:**

* Ability to work on own initiative and as part of a team.
* Ability to organise workload to achieve agreed targets and objectives.
* Ability to demonstrate sufficient mobility to carry out requirements on a Northern Ireland basis.

**DESIRABLE CRITERIA**

* Previous involvement in partnership or joint working projects.
* Experience of working in a variety of settings.
* Facilitation of focus groups and delivery of training and information sessions.

**The organisation reserves the right to enhance the criteria for shortlisting**