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Job Description

Post title: **Specialist Policy Officer - Sustainability and Resilience**

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School / Department: Sustainability & Resilience Institute (SRI)

Faculty / Directorate: Research Innovation Services

Job Family: Management, Specialist and Administrative (MSA)

Grade: Level 4

Post reporting to: SRI Collaboration Manager

Post line report(s): Not applicable

Post base location: Hybrid: Campus / Home **:** Highfield Campus

Job purpose: This role will contribute to the successful delivery of Sustainability and Resilience Institute’s (SRI) vision by overseeing the delivery of specialised policy engagement support to researchers within the interdisciplinary SRI. The role will enable the Institute to identify and engage with relevant policy makers in the UK and overseas to enhance future research bids and the impact of its strategic research themes which cover decarbonisation, climate change, health and wellbeing, and nature based solutions, across regional (e.g. devolved authorities), national and international (e.g. United Nations CoP process) scales.

This role will typically involve managing and delivering short and medium-term projects in alignment with policy priorities and researchers’ interests, providing specialist advice, guidance and recommendations to both internal and external partners, acting as a broker to connect policy audiences with relevant research. The Specialist Policy Officer will use their experience and knowledge to provide training, guidance and horizon scan to seek to create new opportunities.

## Key accountabilities and indicative time allocation:

1. **25%**

Apply a full understanding of the relevant policy landscape to be the central point of contact for policymakers seeking to engage with researchers around sustainability and resilience topics. To be the similar focal point for enabling researchers and their collaborators to design and deliver research projects which answer key sustainability and resilience related questions being asked by policymakers across local, national and international levels.

1. **15%**

Manage and deliver short and medium-term projects, including the assessment and analysis of a changing policy landscape and existing policy relevant relationships to identify opportunities and challenges, including the production of reports and delivery of briefings and presentations, as required.

1. **15%**

Manage and deliver opportunities for PhD and researcher secondments to relevant policy making bodies working with internal and external partners. Define, develop, review and refine working practices to meet service and/or quality standards and objectives.

1. **10%**

Proactively work with and influence peers and other colleagues through the provision of expert guidance on how to plan for policy impact in external applications for research funding including delivering capacity building training.

1. **10%**

Analyse, evaluate and interpret specialised information to provide support to the strong partnership between SRI and the Civic University team at the University which aims to make the University of Southampton the preeminent source of applied research serving the newly emerging devolved authority in Hampshire and the isle of Wight. Identify themes, consider implications and propose or develop solutions as appropriate

1. **10%**

Prepare and deliver briefings, presentations, written reports etc. for a range of audiences. Develop and coordinate communications as appropriate, including professional social media communications such as LinkedIn and blog posts.

1. **5%**

Monitor and maintain appropriate records and reports to meet internal and external requirements (e.g., management information, audit reports, service level agreements, key performance indicators).

1. **5%**

Manage or oversee assigned resources, monitor relevant budgets and contribute to short and medium-term resource planning processes. Provide strategic advice to SRI on its core offering to external partners.

1. **5%**

Any other duties as allocated by the line manager following consultation with the post holder.

Internal and external relationships:

Directors of Sustainability and Resilience Institute

Researchers within the Sustainability and Resilience Institute

Members of Public Policy Southampton and their operational team

Wider Research and Innovation Services Department

Doctoral Training Partnerships and Colleges

University of Southampton Civic Directorate

Elected officials (incl Ministerial) and senior civil servants including (but not exclusively) with Defra, Natural England, National Parks, Cefas, Met Office, ONS

UK Parliament, Senedd and Scottish Parliament, particularly POST and relevant Select Committees

Think tanks and NGOs

Local government elected officials and officers

Officers of the United Nations

Special requirements:

Willingness to work occasional non-standard hours, sometimes locally off University campus, and travel on business as required.

# Person Specification – Skills and Competencies

All essential and desirable criteria outlined in this Person Specification will be assessed through a combination of recruitment application and CV, and where applicable numerical or written assessment.

**Knowledge, Experience and Qualifications**

Essential

* Substantial and authoritative practical knowledge and experience in the required operational discipline, supported by general theoretical understanding.
* The required level of knowledge and understanding will normally have been gained through some or all of the following:
	+ Considerable work experience
	+ Vocational training
	+ Formal qualification(s) equivalent to Level 5 or 6 of the [Regulated Qualifications Framework](https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels) e.g. foundation degree or degree with honours, or Level 5 or 6 award, certificate, diploma, NVQ.
* Sound understanding of the role of evidence in policy making in a UK/overseas context.
* Proven experience of planning and progressing work activities within broad professional guidelines and/or broad organisational policy.
* Strong externally facing orientation, including demonstrable negotiation skills with internal and external stakeholders.

Desirable

* Able to apply an awareness of principles and trends in a policy engagement space and an awareness of how this affects activities in the University.
* Recent experience working in government (local or national), Public Affairs, Higher Education, advocacy, think tank or other non- governmental organisation.
* Recent experience working with international policy organisations.
* Knowledge of the sustainability challenges facing society, at a range of geographical scales.

**Teamwork and Communication**

Essential

* Delegates and/or collaborates effectively, understanding the strengths and weaknesses of colleagues.
* Works proactively with colleagues and other stakeholders, within and beyond the University, to achieve outcomes.
* Communicates effectively to develop understanding and achieve cooperation.
* Provides clear specialist advice, guidance and recommendations on complex issues.
* Excellent personal profile, interpersonal skills, a “can-do” attitude, able to command respect and credibility at Board level.
* Ability to work as part of a team but with initiative to work alone when required
* Excellent interpersonal skills and an ability to persuade, influence and collaborate with a wide range of people of different backgrounds and expertise, internally and externally.
* Excellent and accurate writing skills with ability to present complex issues in a focused, succinct, professional and persuasive manner.
* Excellent presentation and verbal skills, with ability to communicate at a variety of levels.
* Able to use influencing and negotiating skills to develop understanding and gain co-operation.

Desirable

* Experience of working with senior civil servants
* Experience of using LinkedIn

**Planning, Organisation and Resource Management**

Essential

* Plans and progresses a rage of work activities within broad professional guidelines and established University policies and procedures.
* Formulates development plans to meet current skill requirements.
* Ability to take strategic view in a fast-moving and dynamic environment.
* Strong organisational and project management skills and coordination of several stakeholders and simultaneous projects in sometimes complex relationships and to multiple deadlines.
* Ability to lead projects, driving activity to completion while managing detail, and reporting on progress to date.

Desirable

* Experience of successful government/parliamentary stakeholder management

**Problem Solving and Initiative**

Essential

* Develops detailed understanding of long-standing and/or complex problems and applies professional knowledge and experience to resolve them.
* Demonstrates an awareness of principles and trends in a professional or specialist field and awareness of how this affects activities in the University.
* Ability to proactively respond to events to achieve goals.
* Self-sufficient, able to demonstrate initiative, capable of target setting and monitoring, actively seeking information from internal or external sources as required.

Desirable

* Experience of working with experts from a variety of disciplines to achieve a common goal.

# Job Hazard Assessment

A full health clearance is required for this role where any hazards marked “**^**”, using the agreed Occupational Health referral template [available from here](https://sotonac.sharepoint.com/teams/HealthWellbeing/SitePages/Occupational-Health.aspx). Where a full health clearance is required, this will apply to all role holders, including existing members of staff.

## Physical Environment

Working outside **^** Not applicable

Exposure to noise levels >80dbA **^** Not applicable

Working with dust or fumes **^** Not applicable

Working with skin irritants **^** Not applicable

Working with chemicals (industrial or cleaning) **^** Not applicable

Working in a confined space **^** Not applicable

Working at height **^** Not applicable

Working with sewage **^** Not applicable

Contact with cytotoxins **^** Not applicable

Exposure Prone Procedure (EPP) work **^** Not applicable

Contact with clinical specimens or pathology work **^**  Not applicable

Direct patient care or patient contact Not applicable

Exposure to temperature extremes Not applicable

Frequent hand washing Not applicable

Ionising radiation Not applicable

## Psychological and Social Environment

Working shifts **^** Not applicable

Working nights **^** Not applicable

Lone working Occasionally <30% Time

Working with children Not applicable

Exposure to persons with challenging behaviourNot applicable

Working with larger groups Not applicable

## Equipment, Tools and Machines

Working with vibrating machinery or tools **^** Not applicable

Driving duties e.g. LGV, PCVs, forklift trucks **^** Not applicable

Food handling Not applicable

Contact with latexNot applicable

## Physical Abilities

Prolonged physical movements or actions e.g. walking **^** Not applicable

Prolonged Standing or Sitting **^** Not applicable

Moving or handling heavy loads **^** Not applicable

Repetitive pulling or pushing **^** Not applicable

Repetitive climbing (steps, stools, ladders, stairs) **^** Not applicable

Repetitive crouching, kneeling or stooping Not applicable

Repetitive lifting Not applicable

Fine motor grips (e.g. pipetting) Not applicable

Repetitive reaching below shoulder height Not applicable

Repetitive reaching at shoulder height Not applicable

Repetitive reaching above shoulder height Not applicable

# Behaviours

Our [Inclusion and Respectful Behaviour Policy](https://www.southampton.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations-policies/policies/inclusion-respectful-behaviour) describes the expectations of everyone who is a part of our community.

Our **Southampton Behaviours** (below) outline the responsibilities we each have in working collaboratively to achieve our University strategy.

**Personal Leadership**

 - I take personal responsibility for my own actions and an active approach towards my development.

 - I reflect on my own behaviour, actively seek feedback and adapt my behaviour accordingly.

 - I demonstrate pride, passion and enthusiasm for our University community.

 - I demonstrate respect and build trust with an open and honest approach.

**Working Together**

 - I work collaboratively and build productive relationships across our University and beyond.

 - I actively listen to others and communicate clearly and appropriately with everyone.

 - I take an inclusive approach, value the differences that people bring and encourage others to contribute and flourish.

 - I proactively work through challenge and conflict, considering others’ views to achieve positive and productive outcomes.

**Developing Others**

 - I help to create an environment that engages and motivates others.

 - I take time to support and enable people to be the best they can be.

 - I recognise and value others’ achievements, give praise and celebrate their success.

 - I deliver balanced feedback to enable others to improve their contribution.

**Delivering Quality**

 - I identify opportunities and take action to make improvements.

 - I plan and prioritise efficiently and effectively, taking account of people, processes and resources.

 - I am accountable for tackling issues, making difficult decisions and seeing them through to their conclusion.

 - I encourage creativity and innovation in others, to deliver workable solutions.

**Driving Sustainability**

 - I consider the impact on people before taking decisions or actions that may affect them.

 - I embrace, enable and embed change effectively.

 - I regularly take account of external and internal factors, assessing the need for change, and gaining support to move forward.

 - I take time to understand our University strategy and communicate this to others.