



Job Description

Job Title: Policy Officer

Salary Scale: £33,671 (FTE) £20,203 pro rata, 5% pension and travel expenses @ 45p per mile

Hours: Part Time, 21 hours per week (3 days week, days to be agreed) with some occasional evening and weekend work may be required

Responsible to: Chief Executive Officer

Contract: Subject to a successful probationary period, post funded to 31 March 2025

Location: Working from home

Practical Requirements

- current driving licence and access to a car for work travel purposes
- able to work flexible hours and location as required
- able to accommodate occasional overnight stays away from home
- subject to a successful Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme record

Background Information

Food Train is a Scottish Charity established in 1995, supporting older people to eat well, age well and live well, through the provision of volunteer led community support services focused on food access. Since 2017, Food Train has led a national malnutrition pathfinder project called Eat Well Age Well Funded initially by National Lottery, and now via Scottish government, the project is in the final phase, focusing activities on malnutrition screening, training and implementation of a new national framework for malnutrition. Food Train holds the largest volume of data collection demonstrating risk and prevalence of malnutrition in older people in the community, in Scotland.

This role will focus on maintaining and growing awareness of the prevalence in, and risk of, food insecurity, malnutrition and loneliness among older people across Scotland. The policy officer will drive momentum and add context to relevant national legislation, policies and frameworks, bringing the voices of Food Train members to the fore, supplemented by evidence gathered over many years by the charity. The policy officer will also communicate all available, high quality and relevant impacts and evidence in the most effective way to ensure the needs of older people and their right to food is represented. The role has its focus in preventative work to support older people access good nutrition and hydration and will involve research and evaluation and policy into practice. The Policy Officer will work collectively with Food Train's Dietitian to promote and evidence the impact of malnutrition in older people and the need for action to be taken at all levels, from individual to family, friends and carers right up to elected members and Government ministers. This role requires a collaborative, flexible and motivated person, who wants to action change to improve the lives of older people across Scotland.

General Outline of Duties

- Work alongside and collaboratively with Food Train's Dietitian as part of the Eat Well Age Well project.
- Build knowledge of malnutrition risk and prevalence among older people across Scotland from present (ongoing) and past data, reports and research.
- Analyse strengths and weaknesses of current data, identify gaps, compare with other data, make suggestions for further data collection.
- Contribute to building and maintaining an accurate picture of malnutrition among older people in Scotland - use that picture to communicate human, social, financial and policy implications, lobby for positive change for older people ensuring adherence to Lobbying Act stipulations.
- Ensure all written work is accessible, relevant and in plain language.
- Create opportunities to hear the views of Food Train members, volunteers and staff.
- Maintain regular contact with the UK Malnutrition Task Force, MAPN group, and any other relevant group, and participate in networking and learning events.
- Build and maintain collaborations with supporting professionals, groups, Councillors, members of the Scottish Parliament and members of Parliament.
- Support the Chief Executive Officer at events, conferences and meetings.
- Link with colleagues across the wider Food Train team to ensure learning from service delivery is captured.
- Any other duties as reasonably requested and related to the position.

Person Specification ~ Essential

- Formal qualification requirements for this role: Postgraduate degree encompassing social research skills or equivalent professional training and work-based experience of recording and presenting evidence and impact.
- You need to have excellent listening and communication skills, with a deep understanding of how to gather data ethically.
- You can demonstrate your understanding of what types of evidence can shape and influence policy development.
- A strong desire to ensure older peoples voices are central to the development of evidence and impact to influence policy.
- You must be able to demonstrate effective negotiating and influencing skills with a variety of audiences.
- You must be a motivated and enthusiastic individual, a real 'go-getter' who can work creatively, responsively and flexibly delivering on positive outcomes for our members, staff, volunteers, partners, funders and other key stakeholders.
- Previous experience of gathering data, reporting outcomes and evaluation skills are required.
- Previous experience working with a broad range of stakeholders including user groups, and managing relationships positively is required.

- You can demonstrate a non-judgemental, flexible and creative approach to working together with others, a real 'people person', with a good sense of humour and a consummate professional.
- An excellent approach to problem solving is required; Food Train requires a cohesive and agile team, whose members want to share best practice and are always open to learning.
- A high standard of administration, IT skills and knowledge of Microsoft Applications including Microsoft 365.
- Experience of using work based social media.

Person Specification ~ Desirable but not essential

- Specialist knowledge and experience of working with older people and / or nutrition acquired through training or practice based experience.
- Knowledge of social care provision and the voluntary sector in Scotland will be beneficial.
- Knowledge and understanding of social enterprise ethos and principles.
- Knowledge of local and national policies and care standards in relation to older people in Scotland.
- Knowledge and understanding of Local Government and NHS structures, in particular Social Work Services and Health and Social Care.