

Come and join our team!

Associate (in the Policy Strand)

Part-time role, 3 days per week (0.6 FTE)

£32,000 - £35,000 FTE depending on experience (£19,200 - £21,000 pro rata)

We are looking to recruit an energetic and ambitious individual with a background in research and experience working in or around education and youth policymaking or political communications.

We foster an inclusive culture at CfEY and are committed to building a diverse team. Therefore, we particularly welcome applications from people from people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, disabled people, neuro-diverse people, and people that have taken non-traditional routes to get where they are today.

About us

The Centre for Education and Youth (CfEY) is a 'think and action-tank'. Our vision is of a society that ensures all children and young people receive the support they need to have a great childhood and make a fulfilling transition to adulthood.

CfEY works with a wide range of organisations and people who share this vision, helping them make wise, bold decisions about how best to support young people. We are committed to social justice and are acutely aware of the interaction between power imbalances and inequality. We work with a wide range of clients across corporate, government and third sectors [as learning, investigation, action, and communication partners](#). In doing so, we shape debate, inform policy and change practices, helping to create systems where all young people, but especially those most at risk of poor outcomes and marginalisation, thrive.

Our approach is unique because...

1. We **occupy the space between education and youth**. We share learning across the divide and advocate for the change that cross-sector collaboration can bring. We bridge policy, practice, and academia, and work with a diverse network of organisations and people, including MATs, schools, colleges, universities, government, businesses, youth organisations, and charities.
2. We are **'constructively critical'**. We avoid unhelpful cynicism, focus on how things could be better, and are analytical and intellectually rigorous. We always seek pragmatic ways of helping people take action grounded in evidence and experience. We are optimistic about the future and believe in the power of brilliant practitioners to realise the potential of all young people.

3. We are **grounded**, using our front-line experiences as former teachers, teaching assistants and youth workers and our ongoing positive relationships with diverse young people and practitioners to grapple with complexity and understand what's happening.
4. We do not rely on a set catalogue of solutions. Different approaches and strategies are appropriate in different situations and settings. It is our job to have the **emotional and intellectual competence** to identify what will work where.
5. We are **a social enterprise**. Everything we do is guided by our view of society's responsibility, as well as being committed to delivering high-quality projects for our clients. We have no political or party allegiances. Income generation and social impact are mutually reinforcing for us.

About the job

The Policy Associate role covers a wide range of activity at CfEY. You'll design and conduct research into a wide range of pressing education and youth topics, while using a wide range of strategies to shape the big conversations of our time on education and youth, as well as growing our organisation's visibility and influence on key policymakers and decision makers.

Sitting within CfEY's Policy strand, you will work closely with the Head of Policy and alongside the Head of Engagement, Director of Partnerships and CEO to develop a strategic approach to growing CfEY's voice, visibility and influence. You will then be instrumental in leading on the execution of this strategy.

The Policy strand at CfEY is responsible for:

- Leading the organisation's work on monitoring developments in the world of education and youth policy and commenting on these developments through a range of media (including writing for press, speaking on broadcast media and through social media)
- Growing the number and strength of the organisation's relationships with key policymakers, decision makers and influencers. This includes key figures at the Department for Education and within central and local government, but also adjacent to government and in other roles of influence
- Providing training and leadership within the organisation on the state of the art in education and youth policy as well as effective policy shaping and influencing practice
- Setting the agenda for and researching CfEY's 'Policy Investigations' series, a set of timely research reports with the explicit aim of informing and shaping the country's policy agenda
- Broadly leading on taking the findings of our research and advocating for them to influence education and youth policy in England

You will also work closely with the rest of our team, seeking out and delivering research, action, organisational development and communications projects for our clients. You will have a good level of autonomy over your work and will be in regular contact with senior leaders within client organisations. As a small and agile team, you may be asked to

occasionally undertake tasks outside your role description to support the wider work of CFEY.

You can be located anywhere in the United Kingdom, but ideally you will be within comfortable travelling distance of London as there will be an expectation to spend approximately one day a week in London, in particular to attend in person events and meetings in Westminster and beyond. Our office is in Hackney, London, and the team gathers there every other Monday. Everyone works from the office for at least one other day every fortnight. We offer an employer contribution pension (following a three-month probation period) and 20 days' holiday per year (including bank holidays).

We will want to speak to at least two references and you will need to undergo an enhanced DBS check. Although we must ensure the safety of the children and young people we work with, we understand that people have different life experiences and come to the sector from different pathways. Please talk to us if you have concerns about a DBS check; we may still consider your application.

Ideally, we would like someone who can start in November 2023, but please talk to us about when you might be able to start if it's sooner or later.

Role description

Support the Policy strand:

- Work with the Head of Policy to develop a 2023-2024 strategy for growing CfEY's influence over policy discourse and policy making in England, particularly with an eye to influence 2024 General Election manifestos
- Closely monitor occurrences and developments in the world of education and youth policy, working proactively to respond to and comment on these in a range of public media (writing, broadcast, through social media)
- Being an energetic, external-facing member of CfEY who sets up meetings, networks at in-person events and seeks out opportunities to grow CfEY's overall network and web of influence on the education and youth sectors
- Provide support to the wider CfEY team on doing the same policy commentary and influencing

Design and deliver research and evaluation projects:

- Plan and conduct high-quality, ethical research and evaluation through investigative projects, impact measurement, and action-focused work on the ground with practitioners and young people
- Gather, analyse and write up qualitative and quantitative data
- Support the team to explore new research opportunities by developing ideas for projects, approaching potential partners, and securing funding
- Assist team-wide approaches to income generation, seeking opportunities, writing bids and proposals, and delivering pitches where necessary

Take a positive and proactive approach:

- Pursue our vision and social mission and embody our ways of working.
- Work with us in an enjoyable and productive way, challenging and supporting the rest of the team and making working together fun
- Work fast but flexibly, managing your own time and producing high-quality work.

- Build and sustain close, positive and friendly relationships with our clients and wider network by understanding and responding to their needs
- Having an energetic and entrepreneurial approach to our work, planning and enacting new opportunities to grow CfEY as an organisation
- Create a niche for yourself as your role expands. After a couple of months of learning the ropes, we would like you to develop your own interests, ideas and specialisms and use these to further your own development, increase our social impact goals and generate income

About you

We get that life is complicated. If you've taken an unusual, less travelled path to get to where you are now, get in touch. We're keen to hear from you whether or not you have a university degree and years of experience.

Almost all of our staff are former teachers or youth workers, so we value some experience working with young people and a desire to continue engaging with them through your work.

We know that there are many elements to a policy role at CfEY, which, when coupled with research, make for a broad skill set. **We do not expect applicants to have expertise and prior experience in all these areas but enthusiasm to learn with support from others.**

<p>Experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working on analysing, developing and/or drafting policy in a political or governmental environment. This experience could take a wide range of forms, from working within government, for an MP or political party or working at a campaign organisation among others. • Working to influence policymakers or decision makers through presentation of research evidence, stakeholder engagement or influencing public narratives • Meeting and talking to new people in a professional capacity with the end goal of adding them to your (or your organisation's) network of stakeholders, supporters and potential clients • Writing for a wide range of audiences, including audiences with a research and technical background, busy policy and decision makers and the general public • Designing or delivering research projects, developing methodologies and tools (e.g. surveys, interview scripts), collecting data (e.g. conducting interviews) and analysing data (qual and/or quant). • Writing research and/or evaluation reports that use data to set out the main findings and recommendations for future work. • Managing projects and delivering tasks to deadlines while working on multiple projects. • Securing funding for work, e.g. through sponsorship or writing bid tenders.
--------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p>Personality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An energetic and entrepreneurial attitude, keen to create new opportunities for yourself and your organisation • Affable with strong interpersonal skills, able to comfortably network with new people • Committed to, and passionate about, improving children and young people’s life chances, with an interest in what education and youth services look like ‘on the ground’. • Able to work both as a team player and autonomously. • Able to build rapport quickly and listen well, responding sensitively to the needs of clients from a range of backgrounds while adhering to CfEY’s values and procedures. • A keen eye for detail and a positive, constructive, solutions-focused approach to work. • A positive approach to challenges - happy to work to deadlines and across multiple, varied strands of work and find balance between practicality and rigour.
<p>Skills and competencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organised and able to work flexibly from different places, effectively managing your time as well as coordinating activities involving others. • Able to work autonomously, efficiently and effectively under pressure - self-motivated and confident. • Excellent writing skills - able to identify key, compelling messages and tailor them to different genres and target audiences, including media (traditional and social), blogs, impact assessment and research reports. • Excellent interpersonal skills - comfortable proactively networking with new people, making connections, speaking publicly, engaging with unfamiliar and sometimes high-profile audiences, and a clear, informal and friendly communication style that works well when chatting to young people. • High levels of technical literacy - confidence in using Microsoft Office packages, social media platforms, and a willingness to learn new software and processes quickly

The Process

To support equal opportunities and minimise the risk of bias, we ask candidates **NOT to include their names** in their CVs, cover letters and file names.

Please send your application to our Operations Officer, Lee-Ann Jacobson, at: lee-ann@cfey.org.

1. CV and letter

Please send a **two-page CV tailored to this role** (including two referees we can contact by phone) and a **one-page letter** explaining why you think you are suited to this job and would like to work with us by **Sunday, October 1st at 10pm**.

2. Accessibility

Please note that we are happy to make reasonable adjustments to support disabled or neurodivergent applicants. We will share suggestions of adjustments we can make throughout the process, should you be selected for interview, but **if at any time you would like to make a request or share any details of your needs**, please do email baz@cfey.org. Baz will treat your request with

confidentiality (if needed) and will work out the best way to ensure our processes work for everyone.

3. Interview

We will inform you if you have been shortlisted as soon as possible. **Interviews will take place in person on either 9th, 10th or 11th October (tbc), at our office in Hackney, London.** Please ensure that you have flexibility around these dates so you are able to accept an invitation when extended.

4. References and DBS check

We will inform candidates who have been successful at interview as soon as possible before contacting referees. Appointments will be confirmed once we have received satisfactory references and DBS checks.