

Head of Programmes

Contract: Permanent

Hours: Full-time 35 hours

Salary: £50,000 - £55,000 plus benefits

Location: Old Street, London, and home working

Reports to: Chief Executive Officer

Line Manages: Events and Programme Manager and Grant Programme Manager

How to apply: see final section

Deadline for applications is **Tuesday 22nd April 11pm**

About the Sheila McKechnie Foundation

SMK is here for people working to make lasting change, whether in their community, across society, or for our planet. We support change-makers by sharing the latest thinking and advice. We connect the campaign community to grow solidarity, share ideas, and find common cause. And we act as a powerful champion for the right to campaign.

SMK runs programmes for individuals and groups, offering support, advice, and a place to share knowledge on the key areas of effective campaigning. From strategy, tactics, and targets to evaluating successful campaigns, we equip campaigners with the tools and confidence to drive high-impact change.

Each year, we work directly with up to 300 organisations and well over 1000 people. They are tackling a wide range of social issues across human rights, environment, health, housing, young people, and community.

Whether improving disabled access on local transport, tackling financial inequality, or promoting solutions to global conflict, our mission is to help campaigners succeed through:

- Workshops and Training Programmes that develop new tactics, strategic approaches, and campaign skills.
- Bespoke Consultancy to support organisations and groups in delivering effective, impactful campaigns.
- Celebrating and Promoting Campaigning through our Annual Awards, which highlight the achievements and impact of campaigners from across the UK.

Through this work, SMK continues to strengthen the role of changemakers, ensuring they have the expertise and confidence to make their voices heard and their campaigns effective.

About the role

Overview: We exist to help campaigners thrive. A core part of our work is to build the confidence and capacity of people and organisations - we do this through our training and consultancy and through grant-funded capacity-building programmes.

As Head of Programmes, you will be responsible for developing and overseeing the quality, delivery and impact of all our capacity-building programmes. You will be key in managing our stakeholder relationships, including our pool of Associates, grant funders and consultancy clients. You will be responsible for stewarding and developing our existing training offer securing an annual trading income of up to £140k and a grant income of £300k (60% of which is already secured for 25/26 with more in the pipeline).

Training and Consultancy: SMK is one of the main providers of training to campaigners in the UK and has a popular and growing public training programme and consultancy that you will lead. You will line manage the Events and Programme Manager who is responsible for the day-to-day operations.

You will need to be able to assess and understand clients' requirements and design projects and programmes to meet their needs. You will also need to put together appropriate teams, financial quotes and terms of reference to deliver client work and will be confident undertaking some projects yourself. Working in partnership with the Head of Marketing and Communications you will undertake market research to ensure that our training offer meets sector needs and reaches our target audience.

Grant funded capacity building: This role will also grow and effectively manage our grant-funded training and capacity building operation. You will line manage the Grant Programme Manager and you will be responsible for developing, overseeing and supporting the delivery of grant-funded programmes.

You will work with the CEO on the strategic development of our programmes including representing and championing SMK, writing bids and responding to queries and tenders.

Associate network: Our training and consultancy is primarily delivered by a network of around 20 Associates, with SMK delivering some more strategic consulting projects in-house, for example helping organisations reflect on their campaigning strategy. You will co-ordinate and develop our network of Associates, who are some of the UK's leading change-makers, practitioners and commentators, and ensure that together we deliver high-quality training programmes and consultancy services.

You will build and maintain strong partnerships and networks across the charity sector, and you'll be comfortable working with audiences as diverse as grass roots community activists and senior campaign professionals.

We have some excellent benefits including 25 days annual leave and an additional Christmas closure as part of our commitment to work/ life balance.

About you

There are a number of possible backgrounds that could be a fit for this role, and we are keeping an open mind. You could, for example, come from a consulting, training or programme management role, or have been involved in charity leadership, social enterprise or campaigning.

Your experience could have been gained in a commercial or civil society environment, or both, because this role blends commercial disciplines with social purpose.

But whatever your background you will have the demonstrable ability to get to grips with the social change and campaigning sector if you're not already in it. And above all you will need commercial nous, grant fundraising expertise, the ability to develop and manage programmes, and the confidence to influence and support clients and donors.

Creative and dynamic, you will have the credibility to engage a room full of activists from a range of backgrounds and to build partnerships with prospective funders, commissioners and other stakeholders. Using your knowledge of change and strategy, you will develop creative and agile

programmes and ensure they are continuously being improved in a fast-changing field. You will be intellectually curious and follow campaign trends supporting campaigners to thrive and get results.

You will have a strong track record of collaborative working with stakeholders and will thrive in a small and ambitious team, having the flexibility to handle a broad and changeable workload. You'll not be intimidated by the need deliver on organisational income targets and will be able to work closely with the team.

Ultimately, success for this role is about equipping civil society organisations, campaigners and activists to be more effective in making change happen. So, whatever your background you will need to show that you are ambitious about achieving this and have the skills and aptitude to deliver.

Job description

- Developing and overseeing the quality, delivery and impact of our grant-funded and social business capacity-building programmes.
- Taking responsibility for securing an annual trading income of up to £140k and grant income of up to £300k.
- Business development of our capacity building programme including representing and championing SMK, writing bids, building budgets and responding to queries and tenders.
- Undertaking market research to ensure our training offer is fit for purpose and delivers on our charitable objectives.
- Creating project and programme briefs for consultancy clients to meet their needs with accompanying quotes and contracts.
- Leading organisational impact monitoring and reporting on our capacity building programmes.
- Oversee and develop our network of Associates, including annual reviews, reviewing remuneration and recruiting new associates where necessary
- Managing our stakeholder relationships, including our pool of Associates, grant funders and consultancy clients.
- Work with the Head of Marketing and Communications to create effective strategies to market our training offer to new and existing audiences
- Line management of the Events and Programme Manager and the Grant Programmes Manager.
- Undertake any other duties as agreed with your line manager

Person Specification

We're committed to creating an inclusive culture where everyone can reach their full potential. We welcome applications from people in underrepresented groups. To ensure that everyone can apply and be part of our recruitment processes, where needed we will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate our candidates.

Please read more [here](#) about our commitment to solidarity, equality, diversity and inclusion.

Experience*

*We're interested in experience that's both job-related or gained through other areas of your life

Essential

- A clear belief in the Foundation's [objectives](#)
- An understanding of the civil society and campaigning worlds, with a passion for understanding how change happens and following innovations
- Significant experience of developing, designing and delivering grant-funded programmes.
- The ability to manage a trading operation delivering high-quality training and consulting services
- Commercial skills, including the ability to sell consulting work, and develop and market capacity-building services
- Excellent project management and organisational skills, with the ability to manage your own workload effectively and take the initiative.
- Proven budget and financial management skills
- Understanding of the systems and processes necessary to ensure effective delivery of programmes and services including monitoring and reporting.
Experience of evaluating learning outcomes and impact and driving programme improvement through user feedback.
- The personal credibility and experience to lead consulting projects, and present to senior stakeholders
- Experience of building and maintaining effective relationships with Associates, funders, customers, and other key stakeholders
- Excellent written, interpersonal and communication skills
- A team player, ambitious self-starter and a completer finisher.
- Willingness to work flexibly to meet the needs of a small team.
- A passion for campaigning and change-making

Desirable

- The personal credibility and experience to lead training workshops
- Knowledge of the following software: Office 365, Salesforce, Mailchimp, Google Forms/Sheets/Docs

How to apply:

If you're interested in the role, please apply via [Charity Jobs](#).

You will be asked to submit a CV and a cover letter. Your covering letter should be no more than two-pages (at a minimum font size of 11pt), and should address the following:

- Why you want the job
- How you meet the requirements of the role, as set out in the job description and person specification

Please note that generic application cover letters do not allow us to properly assess an application and will result in the application being screened out.

SMK is committed to being an equal opportunities employer and encourages those under-represented in the sector to apply. Before shortlisting, personal and educational identifiers (e.g. name, age, places of study etc) will be removed

We are committed to equality and providing a diverse and inclusive workplace. We particularly welcome applications from those who are significantly underrepresented in our sector, including disabled people and individuals from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.

- Applications close: **Tuesday 22nd April 2025, 11pm**
- Candidates successfully shortlisted will be notified by **Friday 25th April**, if you do not hear back from us by that date, please assume that your application has been unsuccessful this time.
- Interviews: **Tuesday 29th April 2025 in person**
- This post is currently vacant and ideally the candidate would start as soon as possible or within 2-3 months of the offer.

If you have any questions about the role or process, please email katie.roberts@smk.org.uk We are happy to discuss any accommodations or adjustments needed to support your application or participation in the interview process. Please let us know how we can assist.