



JOB DESCRIPTION

Head of Advocacy and Communications

£42,000 FTE

We think this job requires a minimum of 28 hours per week, and we are flexible about how those hours are worked.

About Little Village

Little Village is like a foodbank, but for clothes, toys and equipment for babies and children up to the age of 5. We've grown to be one of the largest 'baby banks' in the UK, supporting over 11,000 children since we launched in 2016.

About our advocacy and communications work

We have always argued that our work should not only be about providing support to families who are struggling, but also that we should act as a force for change when it comes to the existence of child poverty. That makes our communications work as critical as our operations in terms of impact.

We believe that child poverty can and must be eradicated, and that this won't happen through policy changes alone. The UK also needs to shift its frames around the issues, unpicking current narratives and commonly held ideas about people on low incomes that are reflected in the troubling language, stories and messages we hear all around us.

We know we are a small organisation working on a huge agenda – shifting public attitudes and moving the narrative dial around child poverty are enormous challenges that will require collaboration and co-operation between many different kinds of organisations.

However, we are punching above our weight and attracting national attention through the stories we've been telling about child poverty, which have been featured on Dispatches, C4 News and Newsnight, to name a few. We recently published research, supported by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, which confirmed what we are hearing every day on the ground from families living in greatest need. It highlighted that there are under 1.3 million children under 5 living in poverty in the UK. And London has the deepest poverty of anywhere in the country. On average, children in poverty in the capital live further below the poverty line than children anywhere else in the UK.

Although not designed as a fundraising campaign, the online giving response to that research, when it featured as the lead item on BBC Newsnight, confirms for us the power of telling stories about poverty that centre the families experiencing it, and help viewers, readers or listeners to develop empathy and understanding.

We've learnt a lot this year about where we think we can add real firepower to this work as a grassroots social justice organisation and we're looking for a Head of Advocacy and Communications to help us develop this work further. Specifically, we think that we can:

- Open up our platform and change the power dynamics around who gets to tell the story about the experience of child poverty. We already have a group of Little Village Ambassadors and we want to support others to join them in developing communication and storytelling skills.
- Construct and promote narratives that challenge existing frames, to drive social change.



- Reach out to a different audience who are not particularly engaged with social justice matters or child poverty in their day-to-day life, using our social media reach in particular.
- Further develop our partnerships with baby banks across the country to create a national picture of the need we are all experiencing.

Purpose of the role

With your team, you'll work closely with the Little Village community of families, supporters and volunteers to gather the evidence, stories and voices that mean we can communicate our work effectively.

Through this, you will help us play a part in changing attitudes and beliefs about child poverty, motivating people to take action and opening up spaces for different kinds of conversations.

You will lead the communications team who act as an internal and external resource to promote the Little Village community in a consistent way, amplifying the voices of those with lived experience of the issues we are tackling.

You will also take on an organisational leadership role, as a member of the Little Village Management Team, contributing your expertise and insight to our overall work and ongoing evolution as an organisation.

Key responsibilities

- Overall responsibility for the advocacy, communications and marketing function for LV, creating a **strategy** for our work in this space that helps Little Village to achieve its aims and objectives through timely, relevant and hard-hitting communications and campaigns output.
- Working with the **Little Village Ambassadors**, to identify channels for them to tell their stories in support of LV's campaigns; and supporting the Head of Programmes to identify relevant media and communications training and support.
- **Campaigns:** in partnership with our CEO, Ambassadors and other internal stakeholders, identifying, devising and delivering campaigns on issues that affect LV's families and volunteers.
- **Partnerships and collaboration:** work with our CEO to develop partnerships with baby banks, the child poverty sector and other organisations to support our campaigns and amplify others, including coordinating the annual 'state of the nation' baby bank survey and our annual referral partners survey.
- Develop and deliver a **contact programme**, identifying and creating opportunities for meetings between our team, our parent community and other audiences, including journalists, professionals and politicians with the aim of securing **champions** of LV's work from all backgrounds.
- Develop key **messages**, leading on creating and maintaining appropriate and consistent language and terminology across all media and for all audiences.
- Support the rest of the communications team and other Little Village colleagues with:
 - **Internal Communications:** work with the CEO, Head of People and the communications team to ensure consistency of internal messaging and TOV to staff and volunteers through all channels.
 - **LV brand:** support the Communications team to act as 'brand guardians', ensuring we are consistent in communicating our key messages in ways that put the voices of the families we support at the heart of everything we do.



- Ensuring our **website** reflects our work accurately, is easy to navigate for our key audiences, and collaborate closely with the rest of the organisation to ensure that the website is serving our organisational purpose for recruiting volunteers, donors, and referrals.
- Support the Communications Manager to develop a **press and social media strategy** and **communications planner**, building relationships with media partners and other platforms in order to amplify our messages.
- **Fundraising communications:** ensure the fundraising team are supported with the development of fundraising communications, content and assets, across all media.

About your skills and experience

At Little Village, we know that the way we do things matters as much as what we do. Time and again, feedback from families speaks about how people felt as a result of visiting Little Village, as well as the items they received.

So when it comes to you, we are looking for how you are, as well as what you do. Your behaviours and beliefs matter as much as your previous career experience and what you've done in your life.

Who you are

- You believe that child poverty can and must be eradicated.
- You see justice, not charity, as the end game.
- You have a passion for our cause, our vision and our values.
- You are a natural relationship-builder who builds rapport and trust quickly.
- You combine pace and ambition with a commitment to self-care and reflection.
- You are a natural collaborator who loves to help others shine.
- You are resilient, positive, proactive and have a growth mindset.

Skills and experience

We are looking for a creative and skilled campaigner and communicator with proven success in raising the profile of a cause or organisation, and achieving campaign results. You will need to love working with others, including volunteers, to achieve our goals.

1. A systems thinker who knows how to influence change

- Demonstrable experience in advocacy and campaigning, including building the campaign architecture, narratives, relationships, coalitions and media coverage that affect change.
- A powerful storyteller, who is able to engage people in complex issues in ways that inspire action.
- Clear drive, motivation and appetite for achieving results.

2. An experienced marketing and communications professional

- Experience of developing and delivering an organisation wide communications strategy, narrative, assets, materials and systems.
- Experience of delivering effective and engaging messages in a digital world.

3. A skilled communicator who can build highly effective relationships

- Clear evidence of excellent interpersonal skills, including relationship development with people from diverse social, professional, and political backgrounds.
- A demonstrable ability to bring people together around a common cause.



4. Demonstrable experience of working collaboratively internally and externally

- Experience of managing and developing the leadership of others.
- Experience of working alongside a fast-paced management team to provide organisational leadership.
- Experience of bringing together and co-ordinating organisations and individuals from all backgrounds around a shared goal.

5. A knowledge and passion for our work

- A sound understanding of the issues of child poverty.
- A commitment to using Little Village's platform to give profile and voice to families experiencing poverty.

What we can offer

Salary and pension

We are offering an FTE salary for the role of £42,000 pro-rated to 28 hours a week (our working week is 35 hours). On pensions, we will match your contributions by 3%.

Annual leave

You will be entitled to 28 days of annual leave including bank holidays (these will be pro-rated to reflect your hours). We usually give the team time off between Christmas and New Year that doesn't come off your allowance.

Hours of work

We know everyone's lives are different and that traditional working patterns may not be quite right for you. We think this job requires a minimum of 28 hours per week, and we are flexible about how those hours are worked. If you are interested in the role but cannot commit to the hours above, we are also open to discussing the hours you are able to do. We'd welcome applications from job-share partners.

We're passionate about ensuring our roles work with the grain of family life. All our staff work part-time, with hours ranging from 10 hours a week to 9-day fortnights. We believe it's vital to create roles that enable people to balance purpose-driven work with other priorities in life.

Location

Currently we are all mainly working at home in London. When we go back, we are very flexible about where you work. We have an office in White City and you will be expected to visit our sites and work with the teams across London on a regular basis.

Contract

This is a permanent contract. You will have a probation period of 3 months.



The application process

Little Village operates in London, one of the most diverse cities in the world. We are working towards a goal where our team fully reflects that diversity and difference in lived experiences and strongly encourage applications from under-represented groups including: people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, people with lived experience of poverty either personally or through family, experience of the care system, non-graduates and first-in-family graduates. As part of our commitment to fairer recruitment, all applications will be assessed with names and any protected characteristics redacted.

As we're all working from home this will be a virtual process – using zoom or MS Teams for video interviews. If you need additional support with this then please do let us know what you need and where we can help make this accessible.

We want to know what you think you bring to this role, and the impact you think you could have, so your application will not be considered unless this is included. Please also send us your CV.

To apply, please complete this [online application form](#) by **10am Monday 19th April 2021**. Here, you'll be able to attach a CV. You will also need to respond to the following questions, using up to 500 words for each answer.

- Tell us about your track record on advocacy and campaigning. What skills and experience would you highlight that are relevant to our work at Little Village?
- Tell us about your track record on communications and marketing. What skills and experience would you highlight that are relevant to our work at Little Village?
- How have you successfully juggled multiple priorities and what strategies, systems and processes have helped you to do so?
- How would colleagues and friends describe you? What are your superpowers and where are you still growing?
- What thoughts do you have about the potential for Little Village to re-frame the narrative around child poverty?

We will be looking for concrete evidence of the difference you've made in relation to the questions we've asked: it's your chance to show us the skills and experience you'd bring to this role.

Please note, applications not using the online application form and following the guidelines set out here will not be considered.

We will also invite you to complete an anonymous equal opportunities [form](#). The information contained in this questionnaire will be treated as confidential and will be used for monitoring purposes only. This information won't be seen by any person involved in the selection process for this post. It will enable us to monitor how we are doing against our diversity and inclusion commitments.

Key dates

Applications close: **10am on 19th April 2021**

First round interviews: **27th April 2021**

Second round interviews: **5th May 2021**

Interviews will be competency-based interviews with two members of the Little Village team. We will confirm who you'll be meeting when the interview is arranged.