



## Head of Influencing, Policy and Research

**Thank you for your interest in the role of Head of Influencing, Policy and Research at Church Urban Fund (CUF).**

Church Urban Fund has a proud history of being good news within our low-income communities across England. We partner with churches, social action charities and different faith communities to end poverty together.

For almost 40 years, Church Urban Fund has been enabling and supporting mission and ministry amongst the lowest income communities. Over the years we have developed several programmes which have made significant grassroots impact. Despite this work, and the work of many others, levels of poverty and engrained inequality remain desperately severe, despite living in one of the wealthiest countries.

This role seeks to help shape and maximise our influence, policy and justice priority in a collaborative way. Our renewed vision to end poverty together, with an objective to speak the truth about poverty is much more than rhetoric, and this postholder will enable us to speak and write strategically, boldly and prophetically.

Our core mission is shaped by the drive to end poverty in all its forms, by developing partnerships and programmes to create a movement of love, justice and mercy. We are inspired by Jesus' ministry to be with and alongside and serve the most marginalised and vulnerable in society, and follow his teaching to love our neighbours as ourselves.

We are seeking a skilled, persuasive, energetic and enthusiastic Head of Influencing, Policy and Research to help us better understand the impact that the work that CUF has, to influence key decision makers in the important of the work of ending poverty and to tell the truth about poverty.

If you feel that this role could be for you, we would love to hear from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rob Wickham".

Bishop Rob Wickham  
Chief Executive Officer



## About Us

At CUF, our mission is to tackle complex challenges like poverty and exclusion across England by mobilising people, churches, and whole communities to make a positive difference.

Through programmes like Growing Good, Places of Welcome and Positive Pathways, we aim to transform the lives of those in poverty and strengthen communities by reducing loneliness, increasing self-confidence and building stronger communities.

### The CUF family currently consists of:

#### TOGETHER NETWORK<sup>+</sup>

A network of charities, founded and convened by CUF, that promotes collaborative, local social action through network building, strengthening of relationships and the development and delivery of programmes to tackle social issues including food poverty, loneliness and homelessness. The Together Network currently has 15 core partners, and we are seeking to grow the network.

#### NEAR NEIGHBOURS

The focus of Near Neighbours is on building bridges between people of different faith groups, cultures and backgrounds. By encouraging people to get to know each other and work together, relationships of trust – which transcend difference – are built and neighbours are empowered to improve their communities together.

#### JUST FINANCE FOUNDATION

The work of the Just Finance Foundation is to promote a fairer financial system that equips people to manage their money better.

A key focus is on helping primary-aged children develop a positive relationship with money and embed habits, learning and behaviours that build financial resilience into adulthood.

## Our vision

A future where everyone in England can access a community of support when they need it most.

## Our mission

To tackle complex challenges like poverty and exclusion across England by mobilising people, churches, and whole communities to make a positive difference.

## Our local approach

We understand that local people know their communities best, so we make sure local skills and knowledge are amplified and valued in everything we do. We work with and invest in local people, churches and community groups to tackle urgent issues, provide life-changing support and raise money.

## Our Christian values

As a Christian organisation, we are motivated by a vision of the world as God intends it to be. We are passionate about building communities where material needs are met and everyone feels connected, valued, and loved.

### Our work is guided by the following theological principles:

- We are drawn by the vision of a world as God intends it to be.
- We are driven by the biblical cry for righteousness, justice and peace.
- We are directed by Christ's example to prioritise those experiencing injustice, poverty and inequality.

## Culture and values

CUF is an inclusive organisation with a diverse workforce. Our aspiration is to build a workforce that is truly representative of the communities we serve, and diversity is an asset in helping us create an inclusive, welcoming environment for all.



# Head of Influencing, Policy and Research

## About the role

CUF's strategy has a vision of ending poverty together. Over the next three years we will be developing our relationships with our networks, partnerships, Dioceses and churches to respond, primarily, to relational poverty, recognising its place within the web of poverty. Our work will be mission and community resilience focussed, in the framework of asset based community development.

Through our work we will see more impactful, confident and mission focussed churches who are empowered to serve their local communities. We will witness greater cohesion across Dioceses, schools, Christian denominations and Christian charities as a national movement to love and serve our neighbour, and challenge unjust structures of society. We will also work more strategically with communities of different faiths in our resilience work, facing the challenges of relational and identity poverty. We will work closely with the Church of England who have highlighted ministry in low income communities as a priority for resourcing. We will be more confident in speaking out the truth about poverty, through a renewed influencing, policy and research team, who will take our grassroots and collaborative work to highlight unjust structures on poverty, and shape an ecclesial, political and sociological response.

In this exciting and newly created role you will develop our work on influencing and telling the truth about poverty. You will help build relationships of influence within the Church of England, Government and other decision makers to use our stories and impact to show the difference churches and faith groups can make in ending material and relational poverty. You will develop policy positions on areas of CUF's work in relation to poverty that will give a firm basis for our work, and that we will be able to speak out on with confidence and knowledge based on connection to grassroots churches and organisations. You will develop a robust mechanism for reporting on impact, which goes beyond just evaluating our work but demonstrates the difference that faith based social action can make on ending poverty together. This role will report to the CEO, but work across all of CUF's teams and departments and will be responsible for the line management of the Listening and Learning Officer.

## Job Description

**Location:** Hybrid: Office base is in London with expectation for a minimum of one day per week in the office (The Foundry, 17 Oval Way, Vauxhall, London, SE11 5RR).

**Contract:** Permanent

**Hours:** 35 hours per week (1.0FTE)

**Salary:** £50,000

**Annual Leave:** 22 days per annum plus 3 discretionary days

## Key objectives of the role

- Working with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), you will help to build:
  - Relationships with the Church of England, including the Faith in Public Life team and the Lords' Spiritual of the Church of England to influence policy decisions and work on the role of the Church.
  - Relationships with other such bodies across different denominations, including Joint Public Issues Team and Caritas.
  - Relationships with Government ministers, civil servants and other politicians and relevant decision makers to share the impact of churches and other faith communities with whom we partner in the creation of stronger and more resilient wider communities.
  - A network of policy professionals from Christian social action organisations to share learning and speak with a joined up voice.
  - Work with the CEO and Together Network Facilitator to develop the voice of the Together Network to be a strong voice and advocacy channel for Christian Social Action.

## You will also

- Develop policy positions for CUF that enable us to speak with knowledge, confidence and depth on issues of poverty that directly relate to CUF's work.
- Brief SLT on work and announcements in the wider sector and country that impact CUF's work
- Work with the CUF Communications team to disseminate our key messages that relate to ending poverty, including influencing the digital sphere.
- Work with the Together Network Facilitator to develop the discourse of the Together Network to be the strong and trusted voice of Christian social action in England.
- Develop pieces of research that CUF may wish to undertake.
- Understand and provide briefings on debates in Parliament and General Synod that impact CUF's work.
- Provide support to the CEO and Deputy CEO in preparing briefings for meetings, speaking opportunities, and with the writing of articles.
- Develop a culture of reporting for impact at CUF, so that this is considered throughout the lifecycles of projects and programmes, and goes beyond evaluation and monitoring.
- Work to develop how we gather people's stories and how these are used to create influence, whilst protecting the dignity of those who share their stories, and safeguarding people with lived experience from being re-traumatised.
- Help build CUF's position and brand recognition as a significant and trusted mobiliser of church-based social action.

## Specific objectives of the role:

### 1. Policy

- Work with the Senior Leadership Team to develop research and policy priorities for the organisation, in line with CUF's strategy
- Agree policy positions of CUF in consultation with the SLT.
- Contribute to briefings for meetings and speaking events including writing speeches, talks and preparing articles and documents.
- Briefing SLT and other staff members on research, learning and developing policy positions that are arising from the wider sector as well as those that affect the areas of work CUF is involved in.
- Working with CEO and Deputy CEO to develop theological as well as policy responses to poverty.
- Work with colleagues on developing areas of work that they align with CUF's strategy and policy positions.
- Monitor emerging trends which are likely to impact on – or influence – CUF's work.

### 2. Influencing

- Develop relationships with the Church of England to support, challenge and influence their work on social action and justice.
- Help to provide information and research that can be used for briefings to the Lords Spiritual on matters of poverty, especially relational poverty.
- Help CUF build confidence in the influencing opportunities of the digital platform.
- Build relationships with General Synod members so that the issues of social justice can be heard more clearly in General Synod, and that the role of local churches in ending poverty can be articulated.
- Build relationships with Government departments and ministers to advocate for better resourcing of, and listening to, churches and faith groups in their experience of ending poverty.
- Advise SLT on any campaigns that they may wish to get involved with, or provide a rationale for why CUF should not support certain campaigns.

### 3. Impact and research

- Develop and strongly contribute to CUF's work of telling the truth about poverty.
- Develop a culture of reporting on impact at CUF that goes beyond evaluation of programmes

- With Communications team, contribute to the annual impact report for CUF
  - Amplify the impact and voice of the Together Network to demonstrate the value of Christian csocial action
  - Lead on the re-development of the Church in Action survey, charting the impact that churches have on engagement in social action.
  - Ensure impact reporting is at the heart of all of our programmes and projects and is a key part of the lifecycle of all work.
  - Develop and project / contract manage pieces of research that CUF may wish to commission.
  - Develop further our work on gathering stories from churches and grassroots organisations, whilst being mindful of the dignity and respect due to those with lived experience.
  - Develop a robust impact framework to measure CUF's success by.
4. Cross Team working
- Work with all teams and departments to ensure that impact and research are embedded into the lifecycles of their projects.
  - Input into operational planning processes to ensure plans for impact reporting and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to ensure that workload and resources are adequately planned
  - Work closely with the Communications team on dissemination of information and how we communicate key messages and policy decisions, including any work with media and press.
  - Collaborate with colleagues on the continued development and improvement of CUF's Look Up Tool.

**General Responsibilities.** Other duties as required including:

- Fully engage with department activities, team environment, and organisational culture.
- Attend external events (possible occasional evening and weekend work).
- Support colleagues and carry out tasks to ensure the efficient running of the organisation.
- Attend professional development activities and training as approved.

## Skills and experience

<b>ESSENTIAL</b>	<b>DESIRABLE</b>
Significant work experience at senior research and/or policy development level. While the number of years of this experience is not stated, it is important that applicants can demonstrate that the previous experience has been at a level that has made a significant contribution to the employing organisation	Experience of influencing Government and working with ministers.
Working with senior management to develop policy positions that help underpin the organisational strategy.	Experience of producing items for press and broadcast media.
Excellent communication and collaboration skills. Ability to communicate clearly verbally, and digitally, with the ability to relate sensitively to a range of people and liaise with colleagues across the organisation to gather content.	Knowledge of campaigns, and how to engage a range of organisations in a campaign.
First-class research, drafting, editing and writing skills.	Theological understanding of the issues around social justice and action
Influencing external stakeholders, especially in a political sphere, a digital sphere, and bringing about demonstrable results.	
Briefing senior leaders on policy positions ahead of meetings and events and contributing to speeches and talks.	

Developed research projects and had project / contract management with external consultants or agencies.	
Knowledge of faith based social action / justice approaches to ending poverty.	
Knowledge of the structures and ways of working of the Church of England.	
Working with people with lived experience.	
Developing impact reporting mechanisms.	
Proven capacity to produce high-quality research or policy material to tight and sometimes competing deadlines.	
Capacity to integrate effectively into a small organisation and to work collaboratively with other senior managers and across functions.	
Excellent communication skills typically demonstrated through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Experience of working collaboratively;</li> <li>o Using influencing skills to advantage, especially in dealing with opposing viewpoints;</li> <li>o Experience of communicating complex messages to diverse, relevant audiences</li> </ul>	
Experience of working within agreed budgets/financial parameters	

**This job description is a statement of requirements at the time of writing, and it should not be seen as precluding future changes after appointment to this role.**

## How to apply

**For an informal conversation about this role and for more information, please contact our Deputy Chief Executive, Rev'd Adam Edwards [adam.edwards@cuf.org.uk](mailto:adam.edwards@cuf.org.uk)**

**To apply, please email an up-to-date CV and covering letter (no more than 2 pages) outlining your relevant skills and experience, relating to the listed responsibilities and person specification to:**

**HR Officer, Email: [hr@cuf.org.uk](mailto:hr@cuf.org.uk)**

**Closing date: 17:00 Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March, with interviews to be held on 26<sup>th</sup> March in London.**

***Church Urban Fund is an equal opportunity employer and values diversity.***

**We believe in the power of relationships and community to change lives.**

Church Urban Fund is a registered charity in England and Wales (297483). A company limited by guarantee (02138994)  
Registered address: The Foundry, 17 Oval Way, London SE11 5RR.  
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