

Deputy Executive Director

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the role of deputy executive director at the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR). IPPR was launched in 1988, with the aim of generating and researching alternative, progressive policy ideas. Over more than three decades since, IPPR has worked to ensure that ideas that once seemed impossible have become reality. We are passionate and committed to working towards a fairer, greener, and more prosperous society through our pioneering research as the UK's leading progressive research charity.

From making the early case for the minimum wage and taking regional inequality to the top of the political agenda, to proposing a windfall tax on energy companies, our research and policy work has put forward practical solutions for the crises facing society - to enable justice, progress and change. In 2004, IPPR North was launched to lead work on devolution and regional inequality and connect our work more deeply with people of the villages, towns and cities too often been neglected by national policymakers. A decade later came the launch of IPPR Scotland, with the aim of shaping progressive policy north of the border as increasing powers were transferred to the Scottish parliament.

We are seeking a new deputy executive director to take on a pivotal leadership role at an important moment for IPPR. Working in close partnership with the executive director and senior management team, you will help shape the organisation's strategic direction, strengthen a values-driven and inclusive culture and ensure our ambitions translate into action.

You will provide strong internal leadership and drive organisational effectiveness, playing a key role in developing our people, fostering excellence, strengthening collaboration and ensuring IPPR continues to influence public debate and policy at the highest level.

This is an exciting opportunity for a collaborative and ambitious leader who combines strategic thinking and political insight with excellent people leadership and the ability to get things done.

You'll be joining a passionate, mission-led team at a time of significant opportunity for IPPR and for progressive politics. This role offers the chance to make a real contribution to the organisation's future and to our work to shape public policy and create lasting change.

If you believe you have the skills, experience and qualities we are looking for, we would be delighted to hear from you.

About us

The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) is an independent charity working towards a fairer, greener, and more prosperous society.

We are researchers, communicators, and policy experts creating tangible progressive change, and turning bold ideas into common sense realities.

Working across the UK, IPPR, IPPR North, and IPPR Scotland, and through our pioneering participative research, we are deeply connected to the people of our nations and regions, and the issues our communities face.

We have helped shape national conversations and progressive policy change for more than 30 years. Today, our work drives social, democratic, environmental, and economic progress by securing:

- well-funded and reformed public services (health, care, housing, education) and social security that ensures everyone has access to the basics they need to flourish
- a renewed democracy which gives everyone a voice in society and passes power down to people, places, and communities, alongside a fair and compassionate immigration system which supports social integration
- a modern, green economy that delivers prosperity and justice to all people and places through actively shaping markets for social good and tackling concentrations of wealth and power.

LANDMARK RESEARCH

Over the last two years, IPPR has made significant contributions to the AI policy debate. In ["Transformed by AI"](#) we estimated the degree to which the UK jobs market could be impacted by generative AI and outlined the various tools that could be used to manage it. This included the call for a job-centric industrial strategy for AI. In ["the new politics of AI"](#) also called for a [re-think of AI policy](#), to make it more mission aligned and linking it more to democratic deliberation. In ["the direction of AI innovation in the UK"](#) we produced a first-of-its-kind quantitative measure of AI innovation and highlighted where policy currently falls short.

Our landmark reports have included the Commission on Economic Justice, a two-year inquiry to examine the challenges faced by the economy, which brought together leading figures from business, trade unions and civil society, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the City of London Corporation and the general secretary of the TUC. Its [2018 final report](#) won broad support for its bold proposals to fundamentally reform the UK economy and is still shaping debate today.

IPPR's cross-party Environmental Justice Commission was established to respond to the climate crisis and put forward a Green New Deal plan for the UK to move to net zero. Its [influential report](#), designed to secure public support for the transition because it put fairness at its heart, was published in 2021. A further IPPR [Commission on Health and Prosperity](#) has recently concluded and was lauded by Wes Streeting, the secretary of state for health and social care.

Throughout IPPR's history, the Institute has incubated and launched a series of practical initiatives to test and demonstrate our ideas in practice, including [Frontline](#), [Think Ahead](#), and [The Difference](#). IPPR also incubated [Centre for Cities](#) which became independent in 2007, and more recently [Workwhile](#), which became independent in 2025.

Across the decades, generations of IPPR leaders, researchers and communicators have helped to transform the climate of ideas and propose practical policies to put them into effect, work which continues today. Our alumni community have gone on to work at the highest levels of the media, government, parliament, business and civil society organisations.

Job description

Job title: Deputy executive director

Responsible to: Executive director

Direct reports: Associate directors

Contract: Permanent

Hours: 37.5 hours a week (IPPR is currently undertaking a trial of reduced working hours, with a standard working week of 35 hours)

Salary: £95,000 to £115,000 per annum depending on experience, plus benefits

Role purpose:

This is a pivotal leadership role at a defining moment for IPPR. Working in close partnership with the executive director and senior management team, you will help shape the organisation's strategic direction, strengthen a values-driven and inclusive culture, and ensure our research and policy work delivers real-world impact. You will help create an environment in which we are bold in our ambition, collaborative in how we work, rigorous in our research and policy, and inclusive in whose voices and experiences shape our work.

You will play a central role in turning strategic ambition into delivery, ensuring that senior leadership decisions are translated into clear priorities and action across the organisation. You will drive organisational effectiveness while enabling innovation, collaboration and excellence across teams, encouraging colleagues to act with confidence and ambition in pursuit of IPPR's mission.

The role has been created to enable the executive director to focus more externally - championing IPPR's work through media, fundraising, and strategic stakeholder relationships - while you provide strong internal leadership and organisational stewardship. As a member of the senior management team, with responsibility for associate directors and research and policy teams, you will play a key role in developing people, fostering excellence, strengthening collaboration and ensuring IPPR continues to influence public debate and policy at the highest level.

Main responsibilities:

Organisational leadership and line management

- Act as deputy to the executive director, providing continuity of leadership and decision-making when they are externally focused or away.

- Work in close partnership with the executive director and senior management team to shape organisational strategy and translate it into clear priorities and delivery, bringing boldness and ambition to how IPPR pursues change.
- Work with the executive director and board of trustees to support strong governance, effective decision-making and shared accountability across the organisation.
- Play a leading role in building an inclusive, mission-driven and welcoming culture in which people feel heard, different skills and experiences are valued, barriers to participation are challenged, and colleagues work collaboratively across teams.
- Alongside the executive director, oversee the effective financial and operational management of the charity, supporting long-term sustainability and organisational resilience.
- Ensure a consistent and effective approach to performance management across research teams, supporting managers to set clear expectations, give regular and constructive feedback, recognise strong performance and address performance concerns promptly and fairly.
- Provide strong, supportive leadership and line management to associate directors and other senior colleagues, enabling them to develop, perform at their best, deliver the organisational strategy and build high-performing, collaborative teams that draw on different skills, experiences and perspectives.
- Work collaboratively with associate directors and senior colleagues to ensure coordination across programmes, make the most of collective expertise, resolve cross-organisational challenges and deliver strategic priorities.

Research and policy

- Work with colleagues to ensure IPPR's research and policy programme addresses the big questions facing the UK, with our research aligned to and advancing our theory of change and focused boldly on achieving progress for the people we are here to serve.
- Support and appropriately challenge colleagues to deepen their policy expertise and develop high-quality, creative and evidence-based policy, combining ambition with intellectual rigour to deliver meaningful change and the outcomes set out in our research strategy.
- Oversee robust processes for quality assurance, methodological standards and research integrity, safeguarding IPPR's reputation and ensuring our research, policy development and publications are consistently rigorous, evidence-led and held to high standards.

Impact and engagement

- Work alongside researchers to identify and develop effective political and influencing strategies for projects and programmes, drawing on different expertise and perspectives and identifying opportunities to maximise impact.
- Build capability across research and policy teams to understand and deliver effective political influencing, embedding clear expectations and accountability for impact and advocacy while encouraging bold approaches to achieving change.
- Work closely with the head of advocacy to ensure influencing strategies are effectively coordinated and implemented.
- Contribute to IPPR's external profile by representing the organisation and promoting our research and policy ideas to a wide range of audiences, including the media, key stakeholders and senior decision-makers, listening to and engaging constructively with different perspectives.

Fundraising

- Work closely and collaboratively with the executive director to secure significant funding from individual donors, corporates, trusts and foundations, including leading on project design, bid-writing and relationship-building.
- Support the continued development of fundraising skills across the Institute, supporting associate directors and the head of external affairs directly with fundraising.
- Oversee the development of a strong and sustainable pipeline of funding opportunities and project proposals, including creating a long-term fundraising plan for research teams.

Person specification

Essential knowledge, skills and experience

- Significant senior leadership experience in a think tank, charity or similar organisation, or clear evidence of the capability to operate effectively at this level.
- Experience of overseeing organisational operations, governance and finances, or of working closely with these functions at a senior level.
- Excellent people leadership and line management skills, with a track record of supporting individuals and teams to perform at their best, develop and thrive.
- Experience of intentionally shaping and building a positive, inclusive and enabling organisational culture in which people feel welcomed and heard, different perspectives are valued and teams are supported to do their best work.
- Demonstrable experience of designing, leading and delivering high-quality, rigorous and evidence-led research with political and policy impact, alongside strong policy expertise in at least one relevant field.
- A strong understanding of UK political and policymaking processes, with the ability to apply this insight to design bold, effective and impactful policy work.
- A successful track record of fundraising from high-net-worth individuals, corporates and/or trusts and foundations, with the ability to play a senior role in developing proposals and building funder relationships.
- Excellent relationship-building and influencing skills, with the ability to build trusted relationships with senior external stakeholders and work collaboratively with colleagues with different skills, experiences and perspectives.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with experience of communicating complex ideas clearly and persuasively through publications, public speaking, media engagement or other relevant channels.
- Lived experience of disadvantage and/or a strong professional knowledge that brings a strong understanding of social injustice.
- A clear commitment to IPPR's mission and values, with the ability to model bold, collaborative, rigorous and inclusive leadership and contribute positively to the organisation's collective leadership and culture.

Terms of appointment

Joining IPPR means being part of a progressive organisation that values work-life balance, professional development and employee wellbeing. We offer generous leave, flexible working arrangements and a collaborative and inclusive culture. Our offices are in London, Manchester and Edinburgh, with many colleagues working remotely for part of the week.

Salary

The salary for this role is £95,000 to £115,000 per year, plus benefits.

Appointments are typically made towards the lower end of the relevant pay scale. Our pay framework is designed to recognise and reward the knowledge, skills and experience colleagues develop over time. We support progression and promotion through our annual performance process, and our basic rates of pay are reviewed annually.

Contract period

This is a permanent contract.

Location and flexible working

We value the benefits of in-person collaboration and ask staff to spend at least 40 per cent of their working hours in our London office, with the remainder able to be worked remotely.

We are committed to flexible working and are open to a range of arrangements for the successful candidate. We are happy to shape the working pattern around the right person, and arrangements can be discussed during the recruitment process.

Annual leave

We offer 25 days of annual leave, plus bank holidays and five additional Christmas closure days each year. Annual leave and Christmas closure days are pro rata for part-time staff.

Pension

We recognise how important it is to help you save for your retirement and offer a defined contribution group stakeholder pension scheme with Aviva. You can contribute up to 5.5 per cent of your salary, with your contribution matched by IPPR.

Probation period

This appointment includes a 6-month probationary period, during which the notice period is two weeks. Our probation process is designed to support your induction and development and ensure you have the guidance, resources and support you need to succeed in your new role.

Additional benefits

Wellbeing support: We provide access to occupational health services, Mental Health First Aiders and a 24/7 Employee Assistance Programme offering in the moment support and counselling, legal and financial advice, and specialist support and signposting services.

Family-friendly policies: We offer generous carer and parental leave and family friendly policies designed to support colleagues with family commitments. These include up to 21 weeks of maternity, adoption or shared parental leave at full pay, and six weeks of paid paternity leave.

Flexible working: We support a range of flexible working arrangements, including flexibility around working patterns and hours. We also offer paid time off to deal with emergencies and unexpected events.

Learning and development: We are committed to supporting the learning and development of our staff through formal and informal development opportunities, on-the-job learning and up to five days of paid study leave each year. Everyone has regular career and development conversations with their manager, and we encourage colleagues to share their knowledge and learning across the organisation.

Union and staff networks: Staff have the option to join a trade union, and our staff-led networks provide opportunities to share experiences, connect with colleagues and help build an inclusive culture. Listening to colleagues' ideas about how and where we can improve is an important part of our values and how we work.

Giving back: We offer three days of paid special leave each year to take part in volunteering activities.

Equality, diversity and inclusion: IPPR is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from all sections of the community and from applicants with a range of professional and lived experiences. As an organisation engaging in critical debate about a wide range of progressive policy issues, we value the creativity and range of perspectives that a diverse team can provide.

How to apply

We hope you will consider applying.

To submit your application, please visit <https://ippr.hrpartner.io/jobs/deputy-executive-director-2zzag>

Closing date: 23:30 BST, Sunday 18 October 2026

First interviews will take place in our London office on 2 & 3 November 2026

Second interview: 9 November 2026 (if required)

Equality and diversity monitoring

We would be grateful if you could also complete our [equality and diversity monitoring form](#). This information is collected for monitoring purposes only and will not be considered as part of your application.

Requesting reasonable adjustments

We want every candidate to have a fair and positive experience and to be able to perform at their best throughout the recruitment process. If you require any reasonable adjustments at any stage - for example, information in an accessible format, additional time for assessments, or support during interviews - please contact us at recruitment@ippr.org as early as possible.

All requests for reasonable adjustments will be treated confidentially and will not affect the outcome of your application.

What happens next

We are committed to informing all applicants of the outcome of their application. However, due to the high volume of applications we sometimes receive, this may take some time. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide individual feedback to applicants who are not shortlisted.

If you are invited to interview, we may also ask you to complete a short-written task or prepare a short presentation.

We wish you every success with your application and thank you for your interest in IPPR.

Applicants guide: Right to work in the UK checks

Overview

UK employers are legally required to conduct Right to Work Checks. This is done to verify that their prospective employees have the appropriate and valid permission to work in the United Kingdom. This requirement is set out under the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, specifically Sections 15 to 25, and is supported by Home Office guidance that is updated regularly.

You'll need to prove your right to work in the UK before you start working for us, whether permanent, temporary, part-time, or casual. How you do this depends on your nationality and what kind of permission you have to work in the UK. This process must be applied consistently to all candidates, ensuring non-discriminatory practices irrespective of nationality, race, or ethnicity.

To verify a job applicant's right to work in the UK, the employer is required to check and retain evidence of from a list published by the Home Office. You can access the list [here](#). We are unable to accept applications from candidates that cannot provide documentary evidence of right to work in the United Kingdom, and we will not be able to confirm employment until this documentation has been produced. You must produce an original document – photocopies are not acceptable under the Act.

Please be aware that IPPR is not a sponsoring organisation. Therefore, you must already possess the right to work in the UK or be able to secure the right to work in the UK independently.

1 If you're a British or Irish citizen

If you're a British or Irish citizen, you can prove your right to work in the UK with either of the following:

- a British passport
- an Irish passport or passport card

Your passport or passport card can be current or expired.

If you do not have a passport or passport card, you can prove your right to work with one of the following:

- a UK birth or adoption certificate
- an Irish birth or adoption certificate
- a certificate of registration or naturalisation as a British citizen

You must also give your employer an official letter or document from a previous employer or a government agency.

For example, you could use a letter from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) or the Social Security Agency in Northern Ireland.

The letter must show your name and National Insurance number.

2 If you're not a British or Irish citizen

If you're not a British or Irish citizen, you can prove your right to work with:

- a share code - you can [get a share code online](#)
- your [eligible immigration documents](#)

You can choose which option you use.

If you cannot prove your right to work

If you're not a British or Irish citizen, your employer can check if you can work with the [employer checking service](#).

If you're a Commonwealth citizen, you may be able to [get documents to show that you can work in the UK through the Windrush Scheme](#).

If you have any further queries about these provisions, please do not hesitate to ask.