the POVERTY ALLIANCE
WORKING TOGETHER TO COMBAT POVERTY

Floor 3, 94 Hope Street

Glasgow

G2 6PH

0141 353 0440

Post	Senior Research Officer
Salary	£39,248 - £42,222 (PO1) + 8% Employer Pension
Duration	Fixed term until March 2026
Hours	35 Hours per week
Location	Glasgow, Hybrid
Line Manager	Research Manager

JOB PURPOSE

To contribute to the development and delivery of research activities at the Poverty Alliance. This includes input to the design of qualitative research, the delivery of research fieldwork and the analysis and write up of findings. The Senior Research Officer supports the Research Manager in the development and coordination of research activities across and delivery of partnership projects, including impact activity across Poverty Alliance, its membership and civil society in the uptake of evidence for both policy and practice.

JOB BACKGROUND

The Poverty Alliance is the national anti-poverty network in Scotland, with membership drawn from across the community and voluntary sectors, trade unions, faith groups, statutory bodies and others across civil society. Our vision is of a Scotland free of poverty, with social, economic, environmental justice for all, where everyone can flourish and is treated with dignity, and our purpose is to support the prevention and reduction of poverty by building a strong network of organisations and people that influences policy and changes practice.

Established in 1992, the Poverty Alliance has a long track record in working with our members to achieve tangible policy and practice change. Over the last 30 years we have sought to put the concerns of people experiencing poverty and the civil society organisations working alongside them at the forefront of our approach to addressing poverty. Over that time the Poverty Alliance has initiated and supported a range of projects and programmes to enable the participation of people with direct experience of poverty in policy making. We are now recognized as a leading voice in calls for greater participation in policy development as well as delivering practical projects and processes in this area.

At the heart of our work is the network of civil society organisations that form the Poverty Alliance. With a renewed focus on membership growth and development

since the pandemic, our network has more than doubled since 2020, with more than 500 members. Our members are increasingly involved in all aspects of our work, from campaigning to policy development, research, project delivery and lobbying. As the network continues to grow there will be a need to ensure that the membership offer continues to develop and responds to changing needs.

The work of the Alliance is focused on those areas where we believe we can make a significant contribution to addressing poverty: the adequacy and delivery of social security; the role of the labour market in providing a route out of poverty; how services can more effectively mitigate and reduce poverty. There have been notable successes in all these areas – our lobbying on the use of new devolved social security powers, the establishment of the Poverty and Inequality Commission, securing more than £350m of pay uplifts through Living Wage Scotland, and establishing Challenge Poverty Week as a key vehicle for campaigners in Scotland and, increasingly, across the UK

Producing high quality evidence is a critical element of our work, providing a sound base to influence policy and practice. Central to our approach is working with people with direct experience of poverty. We have worked with people with direct experience of poverty through projects such as Menu for Change and Serving the Future and a range of participatory research projects.

The Senior Research Officer will work across a range of qualitative research projects including supporting peer research with people with direct experience of poverty and on projects that span across different social policy areas relating to poverty including social security, employment and health.

Working collaboratively is a core approach to our research work whether with low-income households or academic institutions. Poverty Alliance has a formal research associate relationship with the Scottish Poverty and Inequality Research Unit (SPIRU) at Glasgow Caledonian University as well as extensive research relationships with academic and community partners both within Scotland, the UK and across the EU.

POVERTY ALLIANCE VALUES

The values of the Poverty Alliance underpin all our activities. They drive the shared approach to tackling poverty, expressing how we behave when delivering social change. Our values should be reflected by all those working for the Poverty Alliance and are values we expect our members to support.

- **Compassion**: we will act compassionately. This means empathising with people affected by poverty, listening to and acting on the concerns of those we work with, not judging. We place kindness, dignity and love at the heart of our work.

- **Justice**: Whilst we act compassionately, we do so in ways that seek to secure social, economic and environmental justice. Our focus on justice means that we aim to address imbalances not only of resources, but of power.

- **Equality**: It is essential to recognise that equal worth of all people. Poverty is a denial of that equal worth. We will work in ways and support policies that secure greater equality.

- **Inclusion:** We recognise that some groups are at greater risk of poverty. We will ensure that our work reflects the diverse experiences of people and communities fighting poverty.

- **Empowerment**: We believe that people who have experience of low income have the right to contribute to the solutions poverty. We put this participation into practice in our own work by ensuring that time and resources are available to allow meaningful engagement in our activities.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Key Responsibilities are:

1. Development and delivery of Poverty Alliance's research activities including:

      1.1 Design and delivery of research activities

      1.2 Reporting and communication of research findings

      1.3 Identify research funding and collaboration opportunities in line with Poverty Alliance's strategic objectives

2. Project management and supervision

3. Strategic feedback and support to PA team

Detailed responsibilities:

1. Development and delivery of Poverty Alliance's research activities including (75%):

1.1 Design and delivery of research activities

- Lead on the delivery of key ongoing research projects including *Serving the Future* and *Rights in Action*.
- Undertake high quality qualitative research using a variety of research methodologies and methods ensuring quality control and commitment to ethical standards.
- Develop approaches to analysis and conduct analysis of qualitative and quantitative data.
- Support the development and implementation of projects that allow for the participation of people with experience of poverty across a range of research areas.

1.2 Reporting and communication of research findings

- Produce research reports and other outputs.
- Present research findings to diverse audiences.

- Plan and deliver dissemination or knowledge exchange events or webinars, and other activities.
- Collaborate with colleagues across the organisation to support use of research evidence.

1.3 Identify research funding and collaboration opportunities in line with Poverty Alliance's strategic objectives

- Build partnerships with academic partners, public and third sector organisations.
- Support the Research Manager in the development of research proposals and responses to research bids.

2. Supervisory and project management (10%)

1. Provide support to less senior members of the Research and Information Team and provide line management when necessary.
2. Co-lead research projects and, working with the Research Manager and colleagues, prepare project applications.
3. Support the Research Manager in monitoring project progress and provide updates to funders, partners and other key stakeholders. Contribute towards project monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning.

3. Organisational research support (10%)

1. Provide research support and advice to staff across Poverty Alliance teams, in particular to support the generation of new evidence and insights from existing activities.

2. Provide ad-hoc support and advice to Poverty Alliance members on research matters.

General

- To ensure compliance with the Poverty Alliance governance procedures, our values, policies and guidelines.
- Contribute to a positive working environment in which equality and diversity are valued and staff are enabled to do their best.
- To carry out other tasks and duties as required.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential Experience

- Experience of conducting and managing research, preferably in an applied research context.

- Demonstrates the ability to develop strong working relationships and high credibility with staff, managers, external partners.

- Experience working with marginalised groups including people with experience of trauma.

- Experience identifying routes to effective uptake and dissemination of research evidence and impact.

- Experiences of presenting complex knowledge effectively and clearly to inform and influence a range of audiences using different methods to suit the needs of the audience non-specialist audiences.

- Demonstrable commitment to inclusive working, ensuring equality and valuing diversity.

Essential Knowledge and Skills

- Knowledge of the full range of qualitative research methodologies and analytical requirements.

- A degree in a relevant subject area, preferably in the social and behavioural sciences.

- Strong knowledge of the evidence base in relation to key aspects of poverty in Scotland e.g. social security, in-work poverty, etc

- Advanced written and verbal communication skills especially in terms of communicating and explaining research data.

- Well-developed skills in engagement, across a range of contexts, with well-developed influencing skills to help achieve required change.

- Strong team player with interpersonal skills.

- Excellent project management, organisational and workload management skills.

- IT skills, in particular MS Teams, SharePoint, Zoom.

Desirable experience

- Experience of financial and budgetary management.

- Experience of working alongside people with experience of poverty.

- Significant experience of developing relationships and networks to bring about social change at the local or national level.

- Understanding of safeguarding policy and practice.