

INNOVATION UNIT

**Creating impact
Reducing inequalities
Transforming systems**

Application pack for
Senior Innovation Consultant - Children & Families
June-July 2022



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www.innovationunit.org

Contents

About us 3

Our mission 4

Diversity and Inclusion..... 5

Senior Innovation Consultant (SIC)6

SIC job description7

SIC person specification 10

SIC contract details13

SIC how to apply 14

NICE TO MEET YOU

[Innovation Unit](#) is a not for profit, social enterprise – this means that, above all else, we are an organisation that is deeply committed to making a positive, social impact in the world.

Our mission is to grow and scale the boldest and best innovations that deliver long term impact for people, address persistent inequalities and transform the systems around them.

We have fifteen years experience of doing this work with ambitious partners in local and central government, schools and hospitals, voluntary and community sector organisations, trusts and foundations.

We are proud of the impact of our projects. We have supported the design of new solutions to complex problems in Children's Services. And we have supported the scaling of innovation across the UK. Most recently we have worked with Greater Manchester to Spread and Scale innovation across the sub-region, including leading on [Scaling No Wrong Door](#). From 2014 to 2020 we were part of a partnership supporting the delivery of the Department for Education's [Children's Social Care Innovation Programme](#), coaching both the design, delivery and scaling of innovation across England. Since 2020 we have been part of the partnership supporting the delivery of the [Strengthening Families, Protecting Children Programme](#), coaching the innovators and adopters of three system wide innovation.

Our team come from a wide variety of professional backgrounds and life experiences – researchers, service designers and programme managers work alongside ex-nurses, occupational therapists, social workers, and central and local government professionals, to design new solutions and take them to scale.

People who work at Innovation Unit share a core set of beliefs about enabling change that is owned and driven by the people it affects. We all work with the tools and methods from our tried and tested [formula for innovation and impact](#). If what you see speaks to your values and experiences, we would like to hear from you.

[Find out more](#) about what it's like to work at Innovation Unit

WHO WE ARE

We hold a bold vision: we want to see a world in which all people belong and contribute to thriving societies. To achieve this vision, we must challenge and change the systems that people who experience disadvantage rely on most.

WHAT WE DO

We grow and scale the boldest and best innovations that deliver long-term impact for people, address persistent inequalities, and transform the systems that surround them.

We do this by coaching leaders and their teams as they introduce difficult changes. And we help build local capability to ensure that new ways of working will be maintained long after our work is complete.

We work closely with people with lived-experience and frontline staff. Together, we dig deep to find root causes of problems, challenge assumptions, design and test new ways of working and help implement change.

We help organisations collaborate with one another and build strong partnerships that can transform a system or a place.

The impact is better outcomes and experiences for vulnerable people and better outcomes for the wider system.

Have a look [here](#) for more information about our work.

[Find out more](#) about what it's like to work at Innovation Unit

EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

WELCOME

We are actively seeking to recruit a diverse pool of talent for the available roles. We would like you to consider applying even if you have some, but not all the experience listed for each of the roles. Most important for us, is that you bring energy, insight, creativity and the determination to grow and scale new solutions to big social challenges.

We put lived experience at the heart of the work we do at Innovation Unit – whether through [co-design](#), [storytelling](#) or [participatory research](#). Most of our work is within the mental health, health, children’s social care, and criminal justice systems. We know that staff members with lived or professional experience of these systems make us stronger, and more capable of creating meaningful impact. We would love to meet you if you do.

We value all forms of diversity as a matter of principle, and because innovation thrives on new perspectives, we want our new team members to help us see entrenched social challenges in new ways. We are committed to becoming an [anti-racist organisation](#), and strongly encourage people of colour to apply. We also welcome applications by candidates from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, those with disabilities as well as those who identify with any other underrepresented group.

Our recruitment process for all roles are anonymised up to interview and we will ensure there is diversity of experience in our shortlisting processes and interview panels. Please get in touch at winnie.armah@innovationunit.org with any questions on our equity, diversity and inclusion policies.

[Find out more](#) about what it's like to work at Innovation Unit

Senior Innovation Consultant



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JOB DESCRIPTION

THE DETAIL - Senior Innovation Consultant

We are looking to attract a new Senior Innovation Consultant - Children and Families: to lead elements of our work across children's social care as well as community based support.

Our [competency framework](#) ranges from aware, do, adapt, to coach. For this role we expect that you are at least 'adapt' against 70% of the competency framework.

At Senior Innovation Consultant level the practical work we do spans across six main areas :

1. Leading significant client projects (up to £200k in value)

- Ensuring that the project is focussed on impact – clear on success criteria, outcomes, and how success will be measured
- Successfully managing relationships with clients at a senior level, managing complicated stakeholder relationships, and taking responsibility for our reputation
- Designing and planning projects with clients
- Delivering projects to time and budget
- Using judgement to adapt the project plan to respond to complex and evolving contexts
- Establishing and managing small to medium project teams (3-7 people) who are well-suited to the project, work well together, and work efficiently
- Designing and facilitating high quality workshops and other large group activities with up to 30-50 people
- Generating insights and learning, and communicating these with clients, colleagues and external audiences
- Delivering high quality products and outcomes for our clients
- Taking responsibility for Innovation Unit's methodology on the project, and using our formula for innovation and other organisational assets
- Collating evidence of the impact of our work, and communicating it publicly
- Working with the project sponsor to ensure the objectives and success criteria are met, and the project is delivered on time and budget

We ask you to comment on the person specification in your application, rather than the job description. We do not expect applicants to have experience in all of the outlined activities: this is intended to give you a sense of the role.

THE DETAIL - Senior Innovation Consultant (*continued*)

2. Team member on larger more complex projects (up to £600k in value)

- Working as a member of the project team on large complex projects where the project lead is a Principal Innovation Consultant or Director
- Contributing to the development of project methodology and plan, and taking responsibility for owning part of that methodology and plan
- Managing a workstrand and relevant team members as part of the bigger project
- Designing and facilitating high quality workshops and other large group activities with up to 30-50 people, managing others to ensure their delivery
- Developing high quality products and content, and managing team members to deliver them
- Bringing in additional expertise where required for effective project delivery
- Working with the project lead to ensure the objectives and success criteria are met, and the project is delivered on time and budget

3. Winning new business, independently leading on specific opportunities

- Taking responsibility for specific business development opportunities
- Leading and managing a team of people working on the same opportunity, ensuring there is a plan and roles are clear
- Developing our methodology and bid approach
- Exploring winning partnerships in pursuit of opportunities
- Writing proposals and tenders for new projects that are on time and of high quality
- Taking responsibility for budgets in proposals ensuring the proposal is deliverable and profitable
- Taking responsibility for interviews, presentations and 'pitches'
- Negotiating contracts, terms and budgets with clients that are commercially feasible for Innovation Unit
- Working with market leads to help deliver the business plan

THE DETAIL - Senior Innovation Consultant (*continued*)

4. Winning new business, independently developing and maintaining great relationships with clients

- Establishing and cultivating sustained relationships of trust with senior leaders from potential and existing client organisations
- Articulating the value and impact of our work to existing and potential clients
- Creating opportunities to deepen our impact through collaborations with clients
- Developing collaborations with partners who can help us win work
- Engaging with potential clients and innovators to build our understanding of the climate and system in which they operate

5. External engagement and communications

- Developing our collective thinking and knowledge about innovation and new solutions that contribute to a thriving society
- Contributing high quality content for publication externally on our website, blog, social media platforms and mainstream media, that raises our profile and enhances our reputation with target audiences
- Engaging with policy and policy makers to understand the future policy direction and political/economic context for our potential clients

6. Helping the organisation improve

- Supporting the development of our team - providing constructive feedback, and sharing skills and knowledge with colleagues
- Understanding and communicating clearly our vision, mission and core narrative
- Contributing to whole organisational processes including developing strategy, business planning, performance management, recruitment, office management
- Managing projects budgets in line with set financial targets and understand how it links to the whole organisation's financial picture
- Using our financial and project management systems and contribute to improving its function to better support projects
- Being mindful of organisational financial sustainability
- Committing to your own learning and development, set development objectives, and invest time in acquiring new skills and knowledge
- Be ready and happy to think on one's feet and offer up one's analytical, strategic, creative and relational talents to respond to challenges and develop solutions

PERSON SPECIFICATION

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES - Senior Innovation Consultant

- We need people who can work flexibly and creatively, beyond their area of expertise, navigating the boundaries of, for example, children's and adult social care, or health and social care
- We are actively seeking diversity of experience, including lived experience of our areas of work within our staff team as we know that this enriches our work. We would welcome someone bringing fresh energy and insight to Innovation Unit, challenging the organisation to work differently.
- This work is never dull, often demanding and often challenging. You will be happy working remotely as well as on your feet at the flipchart, enjoy working with diverse groups of people, be comfortable with ambiguity, offering up your analytical, strategic, creative and relational talents.
- This role will require a combination of working from home, hot desking at one of our offices and visiting clients all over the UK. You will be happy on the telephone, on conference calls and webinars, at events, and working across Google Drive, as well as face-to-face with clients, partners and colleagues.
- You will be committed to your own learning and development, set development objectives, and invest time in acquiring new skills and knowledge.
- You will be comfortable contributing to the development and learning of our team as well as contributing to whole organisational processes including performance management, recruitment and office management.

In your cover letter, we ask you to comment on this person specification. This is your opportunity to demonstrate what you can bring to the role. Please address each section.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

EXPERIENCES - Senior Innovation Consultant - Children & Families

We support the delivery of improved outcomes for children and families in our work across children's social care in England. Our work ranges from: supporting coaching and learning on large scale, national innovation programmes for central government; working with and across regions to support the scaling of innovation from one locality to many new localities; and working with individual authorities to design new solutions to local challenges faced by families and their communities.

For example:

- We have worked with authorities across the country to design and scale new solutions as part of the [DfE Children's Social Care Innovation Programme](#)
- We have supported Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the ten Greater Manchester children's services teams and to deliver 23 new innovations into Greater Manchester in two years, including leading on [scaling No Wrong Door](#)
- We are continuing to support Greater Manchester, regards [place-based transformation](#) and to contextualise initiatives accordingly e.g. an 'early family help' offer, a refreshed adolescent safeguarding strategy as well as working with adults with complex needs - all of which are building upon insights from our [GM Covid learning](#) work
- We are currently supporting the DfE [Strengthening Families Protecting Children Programme](#), helping to scale three large system wide approaches.

For this position we are looking for people who understand children's social care and can apply that knowledge in the context of place-based transformation, both of which require working at a system wide level. You may have experience in working directly with children, young people and families in any capacity, or you may want to apply / channel your innovation, research or policy expertise into this area of impact.

IU's other key areas of impact are:

- Mental health
- Health and social care
- Education and learning
- Criminal justice

Experience or knowledge in these areas is not essential for this role, however we would love you to tell us about it if you have it.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ABILITIES, SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE - Senior Innovation Consultant

1. Project lead and manage complex social innovation projects and programmes

- Ability to lead projects including; managing teams of mixed skills and seniority, meeting objectives and success criteria, reporting and monitoring, budget management, managing risk and managing communications
- Ability to manage the relationship with the client and establish what success will look like, and how success will be measured
- Ability to work as a member of the project team on large-scale complex projects. This may include:
 - Managing a key workstrand as part of the bigger project.
 - Contributing to the development of the project methodology and plan
 - Managing and undertaking research, co-design work and prototyping
 - Designing and facilitating engagement workshops for larger groups (30-50 people)
- Ability to use financial and project management systems

2. Coaching Support

- Skilled at building relationships and coaching clients and/or practitioners to achieve their goals successfully
- Ability to coach and develop junior staff members

3. Innovation Methodology

- Skilled at designing and using different methods and tools used in innovation projects or the ability to develop this knowledge quickly and effectively adapt it into projects

4. Business Development and Communication

- Ability to win new business, including independently identifying and leading on specific opportunities and writing successful bids and proposals
- Ability to grow portfolio of work with existing clients, including independently developing and maintaining great relationships with clients
- Ability to apply knowledge, learning and insight from our projects to new projects and identify new business development opportunities
- Ability to help the organisation to spot emerging business development opportunities, rooted in sound market knowledge and insight
- Ability to develop high quality products and write content for publication about our work

CONTRACT DETAILS

LOCATION

We have colleagues in London, Edinburgh, Greater Manchester, Yorkshire and places in between. We have office space in London and Manchester. This role requires a combination of working from home, hot desking at one of our offices and visiting clients all over the UK.

SALARY

£48K - £68K p.a. depending on experience

TYPE

Permanent

HOURS

37.5 hours per week, but we are open to part time working

HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENT

27 days holiday plus bank holidays. In addition, we close the office for three days between Christmas and New Year.

REPORTS TO

One of our Directors

BENEFITS

4% pension contribution
Pension salary exchange scheme
Life cover
Childcare voucher scheme
Cycle scheme
Flexible working

HOW TO APPLY

If you have any clarifying questions about the role of Senior Innovation Consultant, or would like to discuss any adjustments that would support you in the application process, please email us at contact@innovationunit.org and we'll do our best to help.

To apply for one of the roles, please email your CV and covering letter to marlijn.wijkhuizen@innovationunit.org. Your cover letter should explain how you meet the person specification and why you are interested in working for IU in the capacity of Senior Innovation Consultant - Children & Families.

We also ask that you complete our anonymous [diversity survey](#). Please note this is optional and simply to help us understand a bit more about who is applying for the roles.

DEADLINE

The deadline for receipt of applications is midday on Monday the 11th of July 2022.

INTERVIEWS

Interviews will take place the week commencing the 1st of August 2022.

All candidates will receive an email confirming that their application has been received. After this, we will only contact the applicants that have been selected for interview. Due to the volume of applications expected we will not be able to offer personal feedback on applications.

Due to the nature of our work with children and vulnerable adults, Innovation Unit operates a Safer Recruitment policy. All offers of employment will be made on the condition of a DBS check being carried out and we will ask for two references.

We look forward to hearing from you.