Executive Director
Partnerships & Advocacy



citizens advice

Want to chat about this role?
Please contact Kieran Hughes **kieran.hughes@starfishsearch.com** and we will be happy to arrange a call

Starfish

Welcome from our CEO

Dear applicant

Thank you for your interest in becoming our new Executive Director, Partnerships & Advocacy.

We are in an ambitious period of change. We are reshaping our national and service wide operating model to support our missions and our purpose - shaping a society where people experience far fewer problems. At the heart of our vision is a Citizens Advice that shapes society for the better, and works openly and collaboratively with others who share our values.

Creating the new Directorate of Partnerships & Advocacy is central to this. The focus of the Directorate is on maximising our impact through all of our external relationships - influencing the policies and laws that define our clients' experiences, acting as statutory advocate in key markets, and ensuring that the services that support them are built, commissioned and delivered with people in mind.

We are looking for an experienced leader for the new Directorate who shares our ambition. Someone who can build from our strong starting point to develop deeper and more impactful partnerships, extend our influence, shape markets and grow our income, and who can do all of that with our clients and the experiences of the most vulnerable and marginalised at the heart of their thinking.

As our Executive Director, Partnerships & Advocacy you will provide outstanding leadership, vision, and a relentless focus on purpose. This is a role for someone who can build effective trusted relationships, with strong communication skills and high emotional intelligence, and who can lead a significant and dispersed team.

Your background may be in policy and advocacy, fundraising/income generation, or you may have been a CEO of a smaller organisation who is interested in the opportunity to impact on a larger platform and motivated to contribute as part of a wider leadership team. Whatever the roots of your experience, you will need the strategic capability and leadership skills to mobilise a talented multidisciplinary team and to engage and influence across a complex organisation and external operating environment. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is of strategic importance and integral to all we do as a service. Our aim is to broaden diversity at executive team level and we particularly welcome applications from people who represent the breadth of people and communities who we support

If you are motivated to make a difference and believe you can bring the experience, capability and leadership attributes we're looking for, I very much look forward to hearing from you.



Dame Clare Moriarty
Chief Executive

About us

We are a charity working for the whole of society - whoever you are, whatever your problem.

We help millions of people every year with free, independent and expert advice across the broadest range of areas - from money and debit, to benefits, housing, energy, work and so much more.

This gives us a unique and unmatched understanding of the issues that are affecting people in our society. And this insight is valued by businesses, other charities and the government.

We're a voice for the people we help. Using real time data from millions of our clients we can advocate for changes to the government policies and industry practices that we know make life hard for people. We can identify emerging issues, understand what is causing them and make recommendations to policymakers on how to fix the problem.

That's why we are The People's Champion.

But we can't do this alone. Times are tough for everyone and more people than ever desperately need our help but our services are stretched to the limit.

In 2022-2023 we helped **2.66 million** people one-to-one, by phone, email, webchat or in person.
Our advice website had over **42.7 million** visits and **60.6 million** page views
We supported **80,000** witnesses in courts through the Witness Service and gave pension guidance to people aged over 50.

To be there for everyone that needs us it's vital that we can rely on financial support, from generous individuals to corporate partners. As a charity, fundraising is our life blood.

We've been giving expert information and advice for 85 years and will continue to be there for the whole of society - whoever you are, whatever your problem.



Our strategic direction

Recent years have been a period of particular hardship for the people we support. It's especially worrying to see the rise in the number of people who simply can't make ends meet and need crisis support in the form of food bank vouchers.

The successive challenges of COVID-19 and the cost of living crisis continue to have deep and widespread ramifications.

Against that background, while our service is never more needed, it is never more difficult to make the difference. When people are living on empty, sadly, our advice isn't always enough.

Combined with the financial pressures that we face, this means that in spite of our best efforts, we are not able to meet the increasing demand for advice. We are not reaching as many of the people who face barriers and inequities in society as we should. We've been around a long time and we're no strangers to challenging times.

Throughout the history of Citizens Advice we've adapted to changes in the lives of the people we support, changes in the advice they need and how we provide it. Faced with current realities we need to adapt again. In doing so, though, we mustn't lose sight of what makes Citizens Advice unique, our advice so effective and our impact so great.

We have defined three missions, long term challenges that we are using to align the work we do and to experiment and learn to give more advice to more people, to reduce gaps in access and experience among our most marginalised clients and to help prevent problems from reaching crisis point.

Moving to mission-based working is a practical response to the need to focus our efforts on where we can have the greatest impact, and an expression of how we can harness the power of being one service with many leaders.
By working across teams, forging new relationships across national and local boundaries, and with partners in other organisations, we aim to realise three fundamental missions. This new approach will capitalise on the ideas and energy of our local offices, by scaling up initiatives that work and providing a framework for working together, experimenting, and innovating.

> **"I was nearly in tears when I first spoke with Citizens Advice. But they've been over-the-top supportive. I would have crumbled without them."**
>
> - Client

Organisational context

This newly envisaged role will play a pivotal and influential part in a broader agenda of transformation as Citizens Advice moves to an ever more integrated approach to digitally enabled service delivery across the network of Citizens Advice organisations.

As part of a multidisciplinary executive team you will partner with colleagues in working through what it means to deliver modern services in a digital age which provide positive client experience across all channels; developing the conditions for success across all organisational domains, from capabilities, to design, culture and ways of working.

The new mission based living strategy clearly has significant implications for how we work moving forward and the Executive Director, Partnerships & Advocacy will be central in codesigning how Citizens Advice, as a system, adapts to deliver the missions. This will involve promoting effective collaboration, providing the freedom that a complex and adaptive service requires and delivering in line with our means.

It is underpinned by a commitment to developing a dynamic ‘one system, many leaders’ operating model which better enables devolution of choice and influence across the network, and which is enabled by shared principles, common capabilities and cultural ways of working where important.

Generally, the organisation is adopting a more adaptive approach to working, learning from doing, responsive to feedback, changing needs and available funding - a living strategy.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is integral to all we do as a service, not only for the people we help, but also for our volunteers and staff.

We know that marginalised communities face greater difficulty accessing our advice and they sometimes have a poorer experience when they do. Given the pressures on our service, we need to work hard to ensure that we really are reaching those who need us most, and putting a real focus on people and communities we want to do better for.

Our data is clear that a higher proportion of white people using our services said we were easy to access compared to people of colour and that white people are more likely to view Citizens Advice positively. This isn't good enough and we want to make sure we provide an inclusive, accessible experience for everyone. We also know that there are lots of people we are not yet reaching or are not yet accessing our services, including disabled people.

In our work we prioritise the needs of marginalised people and actively challenge disparities and inequalities both in how we provide our services, but also in how we advocate for change. We are building on recent work supporting more inclusive access for people of colour and disabled people, as well as centring lived experience in the work we do. We also continually review data and insights to keep our focus on new and emerging issues as well as entrenched ones, such as how we might better support young people.

We are aware that equality disparities lead many clients to seek our service and an equitable and inclusive workforce is key to ensuring we provide an effective service. This is why EDI is of strategic importance within the organisation and recognised as integral to all we do as a service.

Find out more

- Our impact report
- Our annual report
- LinkedIn
- Citizens Advice public-facing website
- Find out more through blogs, insights and 'how we help' stories
- When we say we're here for everyone we mean it
- Lessons we learnt when starting a TikTok channel
- How our data provides a unique, frontline insight into the cost-of-living crisis
- Why Citizens Advice is a great place to work

The role

The Executive Director of Partnerships & Advocacy will work closely with our CEO, Executive Committee and Board of Trustees, and will lead our work on policy influencing, fundraising and partnerships at Citizens Advice.

The role will operate across three inter-linking spaces:

1. Providing strategic, corporate leadership

as an integral member of our executive leadership team at Citizens Advice.

2. Providing collaborative, visionary leadership

to ensure we benefit from the combined power of our insights, reputation and reach to position ourselves as a leading voice for societal change and help shape a world where people face far fewer problems.

3. Providing strategic and people management leadership to the Partnerships & Advocacy directorate,

bringing together our ambitions to drive impactful policy outcomes and shape the future of our service provision, through our policy, income, energy and external affairs work.



Role profile

Band:
Executive Director

Reporting to:
Chief Executive Officer

Proficient salary:
£132,159

Location:
Blended between office and home (England and Wales).

It is expected that Executive Directors will spend a minimum of 2 days per week in the office. Some travel required.

There are three inter-linking spaces where this role operates:

1. Corporate leadership

The Executive Director for Partnerships & Advocacy will be an integral member of our executive leadership team at Citizens Advice, providing strategic, corporate leadership to the wider service by:

- Jointly owning the establishment, implementation and alignment of our strategy and missions, including playing a visible role in communicating a strong strategic narrative across the wider service.
- Leading and contributing to organisational change and transformation, anticipating and responding to disruption, ensuring change readiness and fostering a culture of innovation, experimentation, learning and collective leadership to enable missions-based working.
- Taking ownership for financial performance and managing risk for their directorate and the national organisation, modelling effective decision-making and empowering others to make evidence-informed strategic decisions.
- Acting as a cultural steward and driving a focus on equity, diversity and inclusion supporting our focus on closing the advice gap, and building a people-focussed culture where diverse perspectives are heard and acted on and colleagues grow and thrive.
- Building and maintaining strong relationships with Trustees, providing updates, advice and counsel and being a trusted advisor to the CEO, and Executive Director colleagues, deputising for these colleagues as required.
- Building and maintaining strong relationships with Local Citizens Advice offices (LCAs) in order to better understand and learn from local contexts, and help to strengthen the capability and capacity of LCAs across the network.

Role profile

2. Collaborative, visionary leadership for/ across their discipline

The Executive Director for Partnerships and Advocacy has a unique and pivotal role to ensure we benefit from the combined power of our insights, reputation and reach to position ourselves as a leading voice for societal change and help shape a world where people face far fewer problems. They will do this by:

- Bringing together our work on driving impactful policy outcomes and shaping the future of our service provision, through a combination of cultivating strategic partnerships, influencing key decision makers and securing sustainable funding.
- Defining the contribution of policy and advocacy in the context of a service-wide ecosystem, in collaboration with the Client and Member Services directorate and the network of local Citizens Advice offices, to ensure we drive systemic change for our clients
- Harnessing the power of our brand to ensure we take advantage of opportunities to maximise our influence and relationships and enable the growth of funding streams, creating a clear strategic vision for market shaping activities aligned with our strategy and missions.
- Being the executive champion for our policy, income and partnerships work, driving a two nations focus to strengthen our work in Wales, through managing executive level external relationships and providing leadership in our response and management of political and reputational risk by guiding the mitigation strategies the organisation puts in place.

3. Directorate leadership

Providing strategic and people management leadership to the Partnerships and Advocacy directorate, overseeing the departments within their portfolio, as shown on the next page, so they deliver to the best of their ability.

The national Citizens Advice organisation is currently working towards a refreshed operating model, which will likely see changes to where teams sit and the boundaries of their work.

The table on the next page shows the current position, however the post-holder will have the opportunity to influence and contribute to continuing design work.

The team

Departments within the Partnerships & Advocacy directorate:

Energy

This department delivers the organisation's role as the statutory representative of consumers in the energy market by ensuring our energy advocacy asks are persuasive, politically astute and achieve concrete change for consumers.

External Affairs

This department combines expertise in brand/marketing, news and public affairs to deliver media coverage, influencing work and the organisation's brand strategy to position ourselves as a leading voice for societal change.

Income

This department supports local Citizens Advice to secure local funding and leads relationships with current and potential funders at the national level, with a focus on retaining contracts, tendering for new opportunities, charitable fundraising and exploring income diversification to support our financial sustainability.

Policy

This department develops and implements a comprehensive programme of policy and advocacy work including policy research, lobbying, campaigning and discharging our statutory responsibilities to drive impactful policy outcomes and shape the future of our service provision.

Wales

This department includes the following teams which are Wales specific:

- Strategy
- Partnerships and Stakeholder management
- Governance
- Business development

Their remit is to develop, deliver, evaluate and innovate the organisation's strategy for Wales and engage actively with stakeholders within the devolved nation, building a strong two nations focus into the work of the organisation.

Person specification

Essential criteria

A = To be assessed at application I = To be assessed at interview

Demonstrable experience, and a proven track record, in at least one of the following:

- Developing and delivering agenda-shaping programmes of influencing and policy work, shaping UK public debate at the highest levels. **(A, I)**
- Developing and delivering an income strategy for an organisation of a comparable size and complexity which contributed to increased impact and financial sustainability. **(A, I)**
- Leading the development and sustaining of partnerships which contribute to the funding, development and delivery of services to clients/customers. **(A, I)**

Note: where the successful candidate has experience in one of these, it is expected that they will be able to quickly develop their knowledge and lead and mobilise the others.

- An astute understanding of the political, policy-making and fundraising context within which Citizens Advice works and a mature understanding of how to manage political and reputational risks, with a sophisticated grasp of risk mitigation strategies. **(I)**
- Strong ability to use evidence to develop a concept, collaborate with and influence stakeholders, build a proposition and follow this through to successful influencing, attracting funding, attaining a contract and/or successful influencing. **(A, I)**
- Strong ability to balance the requirements of different internal and external stakeholders, manage trade-offs and make sound, commercially viable decisions which support our increased impact for clients and organisational sustainability. **(I)**
- Demonstrable experience, and proven track record, of influencing external stakeholders and building relationships (e.g. government funders, senior government officials, partnership organisation senior leaders, possible future funders), with the ability to act as an authentic and authoritative ‘voice of Citizens Advice’ in a range of settings. **(A, I)**
- Proven experience of strategic leadership and operation at a senior level in organisations of comparable scale, complexity and context. **(A, I)**
- A track record of bold, visible and inclusive leadership during transformational change, which connects stakeholders to a common purpose and drives innovation. **(A, I)**
- Strong analytical skills and commercial / financial acumen, with the proven ability to utilise performance / financial indicators and draw on multiple data sets and disparate views to make informed, balanced decisions. **(A, I)**

Person specification

- Excellent communication, and interpersonal skills with the ability to adapt to a range of audiences, using collaborative and consultative approaches from experience of coaching and mentoring others. **(A, I)**
- Proven experience of developing and managing strategic relationships at CEO and Board level, and of acting as an organisational advocate and representative in external relationships with prominent government, sector and funding organisations, you're able to build strong networks, influence and gain confidence of stakeholders. **(A, I)**

Advancing EDI

- Experience of incorporating EDI knowledge into your leadership.
- Track record of working to address equality disparities within your work.
- Experience of proactively seeking to increase and maintain diversity in all its forms within your departments and do not wait for targets or mandates to set goals for performance and practice improvement.
- Experience of creating an inclusive and equitable culture.

Desirable criteria

- Previous experience of working in the advice sector.
- Experience of working in a membership, federated or network-based organisation.



How to apply

We hope you will consider making an application. If you have questions about the appointment and would find it helpful to have an informal conversation, please contact **Kieran Hughes kieran.hughes@starfishsearch.com** and we will be happy to arrange a call.

To make an application, please **visit here** and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A supporting statement (no more than two sides) that sets out why you think this role is the right move for you and how you meet the knowledge and experience criteria.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Closing date:
Friday 1st November 2024

Preliminary interviews:
w/c 11th November 2024

Final panel interviews
9th December 2024

