MANCHESTER 1824
The University of Manchester

Job Description

Impact and Engagement Manager	
Grade	7
Department	School of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities

Overall Purpose

We are looking for an experienced senior impact and engagement manager to lead the successful delivery of the impact strategy of the Centre for Joined-Up Sustainability Transformations (JUST), a leading national research centre funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC-UKRI).

JUST is a cross-institution Research Centre that brings together world-leading researchers from a range of disciplines and backgrounds, working directly with communities, policymakers, NGOs and businesses to both understand and accelerate socially just transformations towards low carbon living in the UK. This post is central to the delivery of that ambition.

The successful candidate will lead the overall management of the Centre's impact and engagement activities, delivering against the impact strategy and managing the operational plan and lead the development and delivery of activities that both engage and respond to the interest of the Centre's stakeholders. The post plays a vital strategic role in the overall functioning of the Centre with working relationships with all academic researchers and support staff and so will be a member of the senior leadership team, working closely with the Director, Deputy Director and Centre Manager. This post will be line managed by the School of Social Sciences Head of Grant Management, but day-to-day management and supervision will be delivered by the Centre Manager.

About the Team

The JUST Centre has been funded for five years under the ESRC's Sustainable and Equitable Low Carbon Living call, part of UKRI's Building a Green Future theme. It is based in the School of Social Sciences at the University of Manchester (UoM) and its interdisciplinary team comes from five universities (Manchester, Newcastle, Liverpool, Leeds and Lancaster). A range of other non-HEI partners and stakeholders are also involved in the Centre's programme of work.
JUST is a Research Centre dedicated to generating the knowledge, evidence and capacity needed for sustainability transformations within communities, organisations and sectors and moving public debate on net zero beyond current tensions and resistances towards the productive joining-up of decarbonisation and social justice so that no one is left behind. The JUST Centre uses an innovative mix of data science and participatory action research methodologies to undertake place-based research in areas across the North of England. Information on JUST is here: just.ac.uk

Key Accountabilities

- Lead the overall impact and engagement strategy of the JUST Centre, which involves supporting the JUST Leadership Team to develop impact and engagement plans, setting out clear objectives on research-led policy impact.

- Develop monitoring and evaluation plans and manage the collection of evidence to produce narratives demonstrating the impact of the JUST Centre research programme to funders, policy-makers and the wider publics.
- Build and maintain relationships with policymakers and shapers across government, with the Centre's impact partner organisations, and with our university's academic and research community.
- Undertake horizon scanning the policy landscape to identify emerging opportunities where research and evidence can make a difference.
- Coordinating responses to calls for evidence and consultations from government bodies (e.g ARIs, Select Committees, GO Science).
- Act as a strategic facilitator for communication between the Centre and external stakeholders in politics, policy, business, and civil society and between the Centre and other policy units at the University of Manchester (namely policy@manchester) and the policy units a the other four universities in the consortium.
- Design and deliver an events programme which engages our internal and external partners.
- Provide guidance and support for all of the impact and engagement work of Centre's members, from early career researchers to senior academics.
- Work with the Centre's communications officer to deliver and continuously review the Centre's Communications Strategy.
- Work with the Centre's communications officer to establish and cultivate relationships with communications teams relevant communication resources and channels.
- Represent the Centre and the University in a creditable and professional manner, using all communication methods, e.g. e-mail, virtual, and at face-to-face external meetings and events.
- Represent the Centre at meetings of relevant external groups.
- Develop and present monthly progress report to the Centre's leadership team.
- Present progress updates on all aspects of the engagement strategy to executive group meetings, including the Advisory Board, International Academic Critical Friends Group and the Research Strategy Group.
- Ensure that all personal data (engagement activities by their nature generate personal data) is captured stored and processed in a GDPR compliant manner.
- Write and regularly update such data management plans, privacy notices, data protection impact assessments as are required and appropriate with respect of engagement activities.
- Monitor compliance with the ESRC grant conditions with respect of impact and engagement to ensure that all contractual obligations are met.

Person Specification	
Essential	• Graduate level education or equivalent experience in communications, public relations, journalism (or related fields)

	demonstrating substantive engagement with environmental policy issues. • Knowledge of policy issues related to the core areas of the JUST Centre's social science research: environmental sustainability, decarbonisation/net zero, and social justice. • Experience of successfully developing and maintaining excellent working relationships at all levels across multiple types of stakeholders, but especially with policy makers in national government. • Experience of building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders working in the core areas of the JUST Centre's research within the North of England, specifically in some/all of the five study areas: West Cumbria, Merseyside, Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire and the Northeast. • Experience in leadership and strategic management of impact and engagement work relating to academic research. • Ability to organise collaborative pieces of written work with short turnaround time. • Experience working at a senior level in an organisation, delivering, developing and managing large and complex programmes of work. • Track record of systematically monitoring and evaluating progress towards impact goals, using key indicators/evidence of impact (e.g. as used in the Research Excellence Framework). • Significant experience of meeting and event planning, organisation and delivery. • Demonstrable analytical and problem-solving skills. Be innovative in finding creative solutions when unforeseen challenges arise. • Proven ability to think creatively and contribute to strategy / contingency planning for projects. • High level of written and oral communication skills with experience of writing and presenting clearly to varied audiences, including policy makers, civil society organisations and citizens. • Excellent digital skills, including the ability to utilise digital and AI-enabled tools appropriately and in line with University policies relating to data protection, information security and responsible use of AI. • Exceptional time management and organisational skills; ability to multi-task, to perform effectively under pressure, and to work independently. • Decisive, firm and diplomatic; enthusiastic and motivated; flexible and open.

Desirable	• Experience of strategic impact work within higher education, including knowledge of how to develop a REF impact case study. • Knowledge of UKRI funding systems and demands, including monitoring, evaluation, and reporting. • An understanding of social science research methods. • Experience of involvement in successful research funding bids.

Key Behaviours (I HATE THIS!)

The following standard statements should be included in all JDs and should not be amended.

One University: A 'One University' approach, whereby we break down silos and work collaboratively towards furthering the University's strategic goals, vision and values.

Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom: Support the University's commitment to securing and actively promoting the importance of free speech and academic freedom within our community.

Service Excellence: Committed to prioritising service excellence and high performance to deliver great people-centred experiences.

Agility: Demonstrate a commitment to agility and continuous improvement by embracing change, championing innovation, and being flexible and forward thinking to adapt.

Sustainability: A sustainable approach that safeguards the University of the future by championing environmental practices, advancing digital capability, and supporting financial stability and philanthropic initiatives.

Inclusion: Support the University's ambition to create an inclusive place to work where every person matters, demonstrating a commitment to non-discriminatory conduct and respect for others, and fostering a University where people feel deeply connected to each other, to Manchester, and to the wider world.

Social Responsibility: Promote and champion the University's social responsibility ambitions to advance social inclusion, prosperous communities, better health, and cultural engagement.

People Leadership: Demonstrates effective leadership by empowering, motivating, and developing teams to achieve high performance. Builds a collaborative and inclusive work environment and provides clear direction, support, and feedback.