



What Works *for*
**Children's
Social Care**

**Senior Communications
and Events Officer**

Candidate Brief

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the Senior Communications and Events Officer role at What Works for Children's Social Care.

What Works for Children's Social Care is a young charity, incorporated in April 2020 following a period of incubation inside Nesta, the UK's Innovation Charity. The organisation's mission is to dramatically increase the quality and quantity of research in children's social care to enable social workers, system leaders, and policymakers to make evidence informed decisions that impact on the lives of young people every day.

This represents an incredible opportunity to make a difference to the lives of children and their families. Every year, over 700,000 children and young people, along with their families, have contact with the children's social care sector - often at the most formative period in their lives. Changes in how we as a profession support these children and their families can have huge effects which last throughout their lives.

New ideas are emerging all the time throughout the sector and from voluntary organisations working closely with local authorities. New ideas alone are not enough to see an improvement in the lives of young people and their families - these ideas require rigorous evaluation, and support in scaling up, if their collective promise is to be realised. We are fortunate to be working with 21 organisations through our "Practice in Need of Evidence" programme, and a further 130 through our grant funding processes.

With so much innovation taking place, and so much potential for change, the sector needs an independent authority to look across all of this work and build the evidence on what works, for whom, where, and why. Our evidence store collates the best of currently available research, while our programmes and research teams work to close the evidence gaps we identify, and our practice and policy teams work to make sure that all of this is both informed by the voice of social work practice, and communicated to practitioners and policymakers for maximum effect.

Our sister What Works Centres have been a real success in other policy areas – including education, policing and healthcare - we have big shoes to fill, but substantial giants on whose shoulders to stand.

Reporting to the Centre's Head of Communications, the post holder will have a key role in supporting and implementing the communications and marketing activity for the Centre and The Evidence Quarter (The EQ) - the home to a small but growing number of evidence-minded organisations. You will work day to day with the Centre's team and with teams of collaborators, particularly The Evidence Quarter Community Manager and The EQ member organisations.

Thanks once again for your interest.

Michael Sanders

Chief Executive, What Works Centre for Children's Social Care

The Role

This role will be responsible for supporting and implementing the communications and marketing activity for WWCS and The Evidence Quarter (The EQ) - a community which aims to bring together evidence-minded organisations to share physical space, increase collaboration, and tackle joint challenges together. You will work day to day with WWCS's team, The EQ team, and with teams of collaborators, particularly The EQ member organisations. You will report to WWCS's Head of Communications, but will work closely with everyone in the team, in particular the WWCS Policy and Engagement teams and The EQ Community Manager. Specific tasks will include but not be limited to:

- Supporting and implementing the strategic communications and engagement plans for WWCS and its projects
- Supporting the publication and launch of WWCS's research and findings, including project management, liaising with stakeholders, proofreading
- Managing the logistics of engagement events around the country (booking venues, catering etc., managing invitations and registration, collating content) and assisting with content (advising internal and external stakeholders to ensure content is in line with WWCS strategic objectives, relevant and engaging for audiences; suggesting potential topics, angles and speakers).
- Assisting with the WWCS's media strategy - identifying potential media opportunities, drafting press releases, building press lists, following up with journalists and media outlets
- Updating the WWCS website and social media channels, in partnership with other relevant workstreams
- Working closely with the research and programme management teams to ensure lessons, stories, outputs and outcomes from the Centre are captured and shared in the most appropriate and effective ways
- Drafting copy for a wide range of external audiences
- Representing the Centre at conferences and engagement events
- Working with The EQ Community Manager to develop and deliver EQ events, seminars and conferences
- Supporting and implementing the strategic communications and engagement plans for The EQ and its projects
- Managing and expanding The EQ's social media presence and updating The EQ website

The Person

- Proven experience of marketing and communications skills gained in a similar role
- Able to work across a range of projects with competing demands
- Attention to detail
- Excellent project management skills

- Experience in organising and running events
- Experience of creating content for a wide range of audiences and purposes
- Experience of writing and selling-in press releases
- Knowledge of the children's social care sector (desirable)
- Interest in evidence-based policy and solutions (desirable)

Initial Terms and Conditions of Appointment

- **Remuneration:** Circa £30,000k plus excellent benefits
- **Time Commitment:** Full time role (37.5 hours per week). We will also consider secondments
- **Location:** Central London. Travel around England may be required occasionally
- **Term:** Permanent
- **Other:**
 - Reports to WWCS Head of Communications
 - This role is not a public appointment

Introduction to the Centre

About Us

What Works for Children's Social Care seeks better outcomes for children, young people and families by bringing the best available evidence to practitioners and other decision makers across the children's social care sector. We generate, collate and make accessible the best evidence for practitioners, policy makers and practice leaders to improve children's social care and the outcomes it generates for children and families.

Our research looks at the point of referral through to permanence, including adoption, care-leaver support and targeted early help. We focus on children's social care practice in England and draw on and share learning at the international level.

We were commissioned by the Department for Education and work with a range of stakeholders. Engagement and co-design are central to our approach and we are working in close consultation with leaders, practitioners, children and young people, families and researchers across the sector to:

- Identify gaps in the evidence, and create new evidence through trials and evaluations
- Collate, synthesise and review existing evidence
- Develop, test and publish tools and services that support the greater use of evidence and inform the design of the future Centre
- Champion the application of robust standards of evidence in children's social care research.

WWCSC collates, produces, and translates research about "What Works" in Children's Social Care through a variety of different methodologies, both qualitative and quantitative, to conduct research that can be used by social workers, leaders in the sector and policymakers to support children and their families.

To do this, all of our research needs to adhere to our four principles:

- Research needs to focus on impact – how does a piece of practice work, how does it impact on social workers, and if we take one action rather than another, what happens as a result?
- We need to bear in mind the nuance of social care. The lives of children and families are complex and complicated, and there are many factors involved in successful social work. What works in one setting for one family might not work in a different circumstance. We need to design our research to take into account – and even celebrate – this complexity.
- Studies have to be useful – if we can't identify who we think should be able to make use of a piece of research, it's not for us. While there is certainly value in more exploratory research, this is not part of the Centre's mission and objectives.
- Everything we do needs to help empower the profession. Our research needs to be conducted with the profession, and not done to them – it needs to provide recommendations, not prescriptions, and it needs to support existing and innovative practice to grow the evidence base.

How to apply

To apply, please send your CV and a supporting statement outlining clearly how meet the above criteria to hr@whatworks-csc.org.uk, citing "WWCSC Senior Comms & Events Officer" in the Subject of the email.

Deadline for applications: 12pm, Monday 28th June 2021