Job profile

Post Senior Policy Analysis Officer (E3)

Directorate Finance

Line Manager Assistant Director, Capital and Climate Change

Purpose To support the achievement of SFC’s strategic priorities through development and implementation of key SFC policy relating to the climate emergency. To lead work with SFC colleagues, government, other agencies and funded institutions to deliver positive outcomes through our investments and operations.

Key responsibilities

1. Develop, implement and programme-manage key initiatives focused on delivering policy objectives in green economic recovery, just transition and the contribution of universities, colleges and SFC itself to Scotland’s Climate Change obligations. The nature of this activity will require the post-holder to work closely with colleagues across all areas of SFC.

2. Working across institutional and policy boundaries take responsibility for engagement with key partners, ensuring SFC’s climate change policy positions are clearly understood and that there is effective and proactive stakeholder management.

3. Lead engagement with colleges and universities on key national programmes and initiatives related to Scotland’s Climate Change obligations, ensuring effective support, challenge and appropriate accountability is at the heart of these relationships.

4. Manage key relationships with and between internal and external stakeholders. Provide advice and guidance to institutions and key stakeholders (both internal and external) as required. Provide advice to senior officers and draft and present a range of policy and strategy papers at committee and board level.

5. Lead SFC’s own climate change, environmental sustainability and biodiversity planning and reporting, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and
public sector duties, working in partnership with stakeholder bodies where appropriate.

6. Represent SFC externally, chairing and facilitating discussions when required.

Skills, qualifications and experience

Essential

- Strong interpersonal skills, including experience of representation, negotiation, building/developing and maintaining work relationships with internal and external stakeholders, as well as to working flexibly with colleagues in other parts of the organisation.
- Policy development or implementation experience.
- Proven understanding of the key issues in Scotland’s response to the climate emergency.
- Proven ability to research, analyse, understand and respond to complex issues in an appropriate manner, demonstrating good judgement and awareness of the audience’s level of understanding.
- High-level oral and written communication skills.
- Strong organisational and programme management abilities to cope with diverse and changing workload in a politicised environment.
- Good IT skills.
- Degree level education (SCQF level 9) or equivalent experience.

Desirable

- Knowledge of the further and/or higher education sector.
- A good understanding of the current Scottish political and government environment.
- Some experience of dealing with financial/funding information.

Status of Job Profile

This profile has been created to describe, in outline, the nature of appointments at this level. It is an indicative document and the exact nature of these duties will vary with time and from post to post. Post-holders will be expected to carry out any work that is commensurate with their grade or that may reasonably be required of them.

Additional information

Reporting to SFC’s Assistant Director of Capital and Climate Change, the post-holder will work with colleagues across SFC to support the sustainability and green recovery agenda and ensure those dimensions are reflected in policy decisions relating to further and higher education. The delivery of SFC’s strategy and responsibilities for
environmental sustainability, climate change and related matters sits with SFC’s Director of Research and Innovation.

The creation of this new post arises from the importance which the SFC Board is placing on SFC using its position of influence at the heart of Scotland’s further and higher education system to assist universities and colleges to contribute as much as they can, as fast as they can, to Scotland’s Climate Change goals both in the immediate post-COVID green economic recovery and in the longer term just transition to a sustainable net zero economy and society by 2045.

The universities and colleges in Scotland are, individually and collectively, already active in reducing their environmental impact and SFC has been supporting this effort through targeted grants and incentives. The contribution of the two sectors to wider society – through research, supporting companies, education and training is vital and is also growing. SFC is determined to use its influence and considerable resources to support and enhance that wider contribution of universities and colleges, recognising the need for social as well as technological change, for inclusivity and for new employment across the whole country.

The post-holder will be expected to lead our relationship with relevant Scottish Government, university, college, partner agency and other stakeholders, to identify opportunities for SFC to influence and support change. SFC will look to monitor progress across the sectors and so the post-holder will seek out best practice and fulfil current Government expectations in advising colleagues in SFC on the achievements we should expect to see and record.

SFC is a small organisation of just over 100 staff, every one of whom is encouraged to consider their own contribution to climate change objectives in their work. As subject-matter lead, the post-holder will support colleagues’ growing understating and knowledge of the difference SFC can make. The post-holder will also lead on the mandatory reporting in the area of climate change and biodiversity required of SFC as a public body.

SFC is has just recently carried out a Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability within the Further and Higher Education sectors, commissioned by the Scottish Government. In that report we recognise that:

*In tackling the climate emergency, and given the importance of the United Nations (UN) Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, colleges and universities are key in the achievement of the green economic recovery, a just transition to a net-zero economy that is fair for all, and a sustainable future, through the provision of educated and skilled people to take up new and emerging jobs, jobs affected by the transition to net-zero, and existing jobs*
that will be needed in greater numbers; by being at the leading edge of academic practice that attracts discerning students, inward investment and low-carbon spin-out formations; by creating solutions through research and knowledge exchange; and by decarbonising campuses and providing leadership in sustainable commitments, and the just transition, as anchor institutions within their regions and communities.

Our recommendations and actions in that reflect the universal nature of the climate challenge – from the built campus estate to future skills, from research to new teaching practice, from digital technologies to land use.

Scotland, through its universities and colleges, has the opportunity to make an important contribution to the defining global challenge of our times. The holder of this new post at SFC will be at the heart of ensuring that happens.

*Committed to equality of opportunity*