



## **Position Description and Selection Criteria**

**Position:** Senior Policy Adviser

**Hours:** Full-time position, with the option to negotiate flexible arrangements

**Salary:** The position is classified under the SCHADS award as level 6, pay point 1, depending on experience and qualifications, with access to annual increments.

ACTCOSS pays above award wages at this level according to the ACT Community Sector Multiple Enterprise Agreement, and the full-time wage is currently \$107,659 - \$112,420 plus 11.5% superannuation.

**Term:** Permanent

## **Organisational Context**

The ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS) advocates for social justice in the ACT and is the peak body representing not-for-profit community organisations. ACTCOSS works to ensure that government policy improves the lives of people facing disadvantage and develops a well-resourced, cohesive and sustainable community sector. ACTCOSS is a member of the nationwide COSS network, made up of each state and territory COSS and our national body, the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS).

As the peak body for the community sector in the ACT, ACTCOSS has unparalleled access to decision-makers in Government and in the community sector itself. This role is perfect for someone with the motivation and skills to make a genuine difference in the ACT community.

## **Benefits of the Position**

This position is ideal for someone with a passion for social justice and looking to apply their experience in policy analysis and research to improve the lives of people living on low-incomes or experiencing disadvantage.

This position will the work of the policy team in line with the ACTCOSS Strategic Plan. The position gives the successful candidate a broad and engaging workload, with an opportunity to work in a small but dedicated staff team working in policy, communications, sector development and administration. ACTCOSS interacts with diverse communities, allowing you to meet and connect with people from different backgrounds and circumstances.

ACTCOSS makes every effort to provide a flexible work environment, allowing substantial employee control of their working hours, among other benefits.

## **Role**

The Senior Policy Adviser position involves a variety of duties associated with research, policy analysis and development, advocacy and stakeholder engagement.

The role requires strong research and communication skills. It involves providing policy advice on diverse topics by sourcing, synthesising and analysing relevant literature and other materials, as well as engage with community sector stakeholders.

The Senior Policy Adviser will contribute to, or author, reports, submissions, briefs, letters, and other publications. The role may also contribute to the production of ACTCOSS strategic documents, funding reports, grant applications and newsletter/media releases and articles.

The role involves building and sustaining relationships with ACTCOSS members, key partners and other stakeholders and assisting with and attending meetings and committees.

This role will report to the Head of Policy as part of the Policy Team. The Policy Team works cooperatively with other staff across ACTCOSS and is accountable to the CEO.

The key performance indicators, priorities, and time allocation for the various aspects of the role will be determined in cooperation with the Head of Policy.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

Specific tasks will include:

- Monitor and analyse relevant government policies and how they will impact on people experiencing disadvantage and the community sector services that support them
- Undertaking policy analysis and research to support development of evidence-based advocacy positions
- Drafting of advocacy material including submissions, letters, briefs, and publications
- Contributing to advocacy planning, including working with the Head of Policy to identify tactics and strategies to maximise ACTCOSS's influence and impact
- Contributing to consultative and information sharing meetings, working groups, forums, and networks, including representing ACTCOSS externally
- Engaging and building positive relationships with community organisation representatives and decision makers to progress key pieces of work, facilitate sector engagement and co-develop policy
- Contributing to organisational development and improvement through collective planning and review processes
- Contributing to ACTCOSS's reporting requirements as required

- Working with COSS colleagues on shared priorities; and
- Other duties as requested by the Head of Policy.

The Senior Policy Adviser will also work as a part of the Policy Team to contribute to:

- The development and delivery of priorities for policy positions
- ACTCOSS advocacy strategy and content
- Government relations
- Cross-team collaboration
- Policy event content and organisation; and
- Development of media content.

As ACTCOSS priorities and projects change over time, this position also gives the successful candidate the opportunity to change their allocated areas of work and develop new directions for the work of ACTCOSS.

### **Selection Criteria**

ACTCOSS is an equal opportunity employer, and we encourage applications from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, people with diverse life experiences, people with disability, and/or or people from migrant backgrounds.

This role would suit someone who is confident with sourcing, synthesising and analysing data, literature and other relevant material on diverse social and economic topics. The successful candidate will also need to be comfortable with developing policy advice and advocacy material on topics on which they do not have previous experience.

Strong verbal communication, written communication and research skills are essential for this role.

### **Essential**

The successful applicant will be able to demonstrate:

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to communicate clearly and concisely on complex issues with diverse audiences
- Strong skills in policy analysis and research. Candidates with both quantitative and qualitative analytical skills are preferred, but this is not a requirement
- Commitment to social justice and demonstrated knowledge of social, environmental and economic issues affecting people on low incomes and/or experiencing other forms of social exclusion and marginalisation
- Ability to work flexibly and adapt strategy in a dynamic policy and political environment, including the ability to rapidly develop knowledge and provide policy advice on topics on which you may not have significant experience
- Strong interpersonal, consultation and engagement skills, including the capacity to engage ACTCOSS members and other stakeholders, including

people experiencing disadvantage, community sector workers and government officials

- Capacity to work autonomously, to prioritise work activities and complete projects as directed
- Capacity to work cooperatively within a diverse team environment, and in the context of a dynamic and complex external policy and political environment

### **Highly regarded**

- Experience in a membership-based not-for-profit organisation
- Sound understanding of political and governmental structures and policy processes, the contemporary social policy environment, community sector and the role of peak bodies
- Qualification in a discipline relevant to social policy, organisational development or advocacy, such as: social science, law, economics, political science, management, education, or communications
- Awareness and understanding of Equal Employment Opportunity and Work Health and Safety Principles
- Strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander communities