

Sands Application Information **Research Officer**

September 2022

About Sands

Every day in the UK, 13 babies are stillborn or die shortly after birth.

Sands is the leading stillbirth and neonatal death charity and exists to reduce the number of babies dying and to support anyone affected by the death of a baby, before, during or shortly after birth.



Sands provides bereavement support services both nationally through its Freephone helpline, mobile app, online community and resources, as well as locally through a network of around 100 regional support groups based across the UK and run by trained befrienders.



Sands works in partnership with professionals, trusts and health boards and offers a range of training programmes and bereavement care resources to ensure that every bereaved parent and family receives the best possible care wherever they are in the UK.



Sands promotes improvements in practice and supports research to better understand the causes of baby deaths and save babies' lives.

Sands raises awareness of baby loss and works with governments, key influencers and other stakeholders to make reducing the number of babies dying a priority nationally and locally.

Over the past 44 years, Sands has grown into a national charity with a powerful vision shared by dedicated volunteers, fundraisers, members, donors, healthcare professionals, partners, staff and bereaved parents and families.

Sands has grown its income by over 40% since 2012 and, as part of our strategic plan, is focusing on how we can make the biggest difference to the lives of bereaved families and save babies' lives. To find out more, visit www.sands.org.uk

our vision at Sands is for a world where fewer babies die and anyone affected by the death of a baby receives the best care and support for as long as they need, wherever they live in the UK.

Join us and help create a world where fewer babies die.

Sands Staff Benefits

Annual Leave

Staff receive 28 days annual leave per annum pro rata, plus bank holidays. Staff will be required to take 3 days annual leave during the period between Christmas & New Year.

Employee Assistance Service

As part of its commitment to employee wellbeing, Sands offers all Staff access to the Bupa Employee Assistance service which offers free and confidential counselling and wellbeing support. Support is available on a range of issues including legal, financial, emotional, health and work-related concerns.

Sand Cycle to Work Scheme

Sands has teamed up with Cycle Solutions to provide a Cycle to Work Scheme, which you can join to make considerable savings on the cost of a new bike and equipment.

Sands Pension Scheme

Subject to eligibility, you will be automatically enrolled into the Aegon Personal Pension scheme as soon as your employment commences. You can decide whether to remain in the scheme and/or make additional voluntary contributions if you wish.

Flexible Working

All Staff can apply for flexible working with effect from their first date of employment.

Maternity Pay

Staff on maternity leave are paid their full salary for the first 26 weeks of their period of leave.

Leave for the Death of a Baby or Pregnancy Loss

Any member of Staff affected by the death of baby or pregnancy loss will be granted leave paid at their normal salary, regardless of the type of loss.

Sands is a vibrant, growing charity!

With a clear strategy, Sands is repositioning as a learning, developing organisation which aims to achieve excellence through people and offers a collegiate, collaborative working environment – making it an especially exciting time to join the charity!

Sands is an inclusive and diversity-friendly employer. We are committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity and working inclusively. We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds and do not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, colour, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age or any other category protected by law.

About the role

Sands is the leading stillbirth and neonatal death charity and exists to reduce the number of babies dying and to support anyone affected by the death of a baby, before, during or shortly after birth.

We still do not fully understand why many babies die, or what more can be done to prevent deaths. For as many as one in four babies the cause of death is still not known. Sands is committed to supporting research so that we can save babies lives by improving maternity and neonatal care, understand why babies die and provide better bereavement care and support.

This newly-created and exciting role is responsible for supporting a diverse range of bereaved parents to inform and shape research projects and agendas, and to share their views in order to deliver change and inform practice improvement in maternity and neonatal care. The post-holder will support the development and management of the Sands Insights Network which aims to provide bereaved parents the opportunity to shape and inform Sands research, training and policy work.

A highly-motivated research professional, you will have a very good understanding of research methods and the relationship between research, policy and practice.

With excellent communication and networking skills, you will be able to work effectively with multiple audiences and stakeholders whilst working in a collaborative and inclusive way.

You will have experience of co-ordinating diverse and complex research project groups, and be able to develop and maintain effective relationships with researchers and research organisations.

Additionally, experience of creating and updating high quality written tools and resources to meet the changing needs of stakeholders is essential as well as an excellent understanding of issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion.

To apply:

Please submit your CV, together with a supporting statement that demonstrates how you meet the criteria in the person specification to recruitment@sands.org.uk. Please also complete the Diversity and Equality Monitoring Form and send this with your application.

Closing date for applications: 25th September 2022

Interview Date: w/c 10th October 2022

As we have limited staff resources, we are unable to provide candidates with feedback about their applications. **Interviews will be held online via Zoom.**

Job Description

Job Title:	Research Officer
Responsible to:	Senior Research Officer
Location:	Home-based
Contract:	Permanent
Hours:	35 hours per week
Salary:	£34,000 per annum plus £312 per annum Home Worker Allowance

Main purpose of Job

1. Support a diverse range of bereaved parents to inform and shape research projects and research agendas
2. Support a diverse range of bereaved parents to share their views and inform practice improvement in maternity and neonatal care
3. Bring people together and build expertise by creating networks that will increase Sands' influence in perinatal mortality research and raise its profile
4. Ensure that the findings from research Sands supports are used to deliver change
5. Support key research studies and Sands' work as an evidence based organisation

Principle tasks

Support a diverse range of bereaved parents to inform and shape research

- Review existing feedback and consult with bereaved parents to identify a refreshed set of perinatal mortality research priority questions
- Support the development and management of the Sands Insights Network which aims to provide bereaved parents the opportunity to shape and inform Sands research, training and policy work.
- Create tools and resources to enable a diverse range of bereaved parents to get involved in research and be recognised for the contribution they make
- Ensure that bereaved parents who are involved in research are supported through the process
- Share and promote research involvement opportunities to bereaved parents via a range of channels
- Support researchers to undertake and appreciate the value of meaningful, high quality parental involvement

Support a diverse range of bereaved parents to share their views and inform practice improvement in maternity and neonatal care

- Review the documented experiences of Black and Asian bereaved parents and run focus groups to identify key barriers to safer care
- Consult diverse groups of bereaved parents on their experiences of maternity and neonatal care
- Present findings in a way that is accessible to practitioners and policy makers

Bring people together and build expertise by creating networks that will increase Sands influence in perinatal mortality research and raise its profile

- Support the Sands Research Network, Core Group and Advisors, driving forward activity and engagement
- Create opportunities to bring the Sands Research Network together to share learning, initially by supporting an on-line community and later to establish networking events and conferences
- Research potential funding sources for perinatal mortality research (government, large independent funders, private sources) and develop links
- Develop strategic relationships with key research institutions reflecting a balance of disciplines
- Provide administrative support to Sands research collaborations and groups

Ensure that the findings from research Sands has supported are used to deliver change

- Ensure that information about Sands research activity is regularly communicated to Sands staff and supporters
- Use research to inform the production of resources and learning materials for clinicians
- Creating new resources to convey key research findings in accessible formats
- Create engaging content and share research activity via social media channels and regularly updated pages on the Sands website

Support key research studies and Sands work as an evidence based organisation

- Support individual studies directly by helping researchers to secure funding, demonstrate impact, disseminate findings, and involve parents and families
- Support external evaluations of Sands projects and activities
- Critically appraise research to ensure Sands work and views are evidence based and informed
- Keep abreast of current and new developments in research relating to pregnancy loss and the death of a baby stillbirth and neonatal death
- Attend relevant conferences and meetings to gather information, represent Sands perspective and communicate Sands research work
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General

- Undertake any other tasks and responsibilities commensurate with the role as required by the Senior Research Officer, Head of Saving Babies Lives Team and Director of Research, Education and Policy
- Liaise regularly with other Sands departments/teams and keep up to date with what they are doing

- Promote the Sands vision and values at all times, clearly representing the views and positions of Sands distinct from any personal opinion
- Maintain a high level of confidentiality and professional conduct
- Abide by all Sands policies and procedures
- Undertake all mandatory training as required
- Be familiar with matters relating to Health & Safety Management, affecting themselves, their department and the organisation as a whole

Person Specification

Skills and Experience		
Importance	Criteria	Assessment
Essential	Experience of working effectively with multiple audiences and stakeholders, particularly service users and researchers, working in a collaborative and inclusive way	Application and interview
Essential	Experience of co-ordinating diverse project groups and facilitating networks	Application and interview
Essential	Experience of supporting research projects, and developing and maintaining effective relationships with researchers and research organisations	Application and interview
Essential	Experience of creating and updating high quality written tools and resources, which remain responsive to the changing needs of internal and external stakeholders	Application and interview
Essential	Experience of using a range of IT packages, including PowerPoint, MS Teams, Zoom, Word, Outlook and Excel	Application and interview
Essential	Willingness to keep abreast of new developments in research and in maternity and neonatal care	Application and interview
Desirable	Knowledge of NHS services, including maternity, neonatal and bereavement care and the complications that can arise during pregnancy, birth and the new-born period	Application and interview
Desirable	Proven ability to understand, assimilate and translate key messages from complex scientific papers and studies into engaging content for lay audiences	Application and interview

Core Competencies		
	Criteria	Assessment
Essential	An understanding of research methods and the relationship between research, policy and practice	Application and interview
Essential	An understanding of and empathy with the issues surrounding the death of a baby, and ability to communicate sensitivity with bereaved people	Application and interview
Essential	Excellent communication and presentation skills, with an ability to communicate scientific messages in a compelling way to a variety of audiences, lay and professional	Application and interview
Essential	Excellent networking and interpersonal skills with a positive style, who can support and motivate people to engage with projects	Application and interview
Essential	Ability to manage own workload, be well organised and demonstrate strong time management skills	Application and interview
Essential	Enthusiasm for continued learning and a willingness to adapt to changing circumstances	Application and interview
Essential	Excellent understanding and advocacy of issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion	Application and interview