

Sands

Application Information

Research Officer

May 2021

About Sands

Every day in the UK, 14 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 43 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 independent, free and confidential counselling and information telephone service. Support is available on a range of issues including legal, financial, emotional, health issues 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.

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!

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 are looking for a motivated, enthusiastic Research Officer to join our Research and Prevention team.

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 could be by providing direct support to studies, ensuring that the views of bereaved parents and families inform the development of research projects, and by helping researchers to demonstrate impact.

You will have relevant experience of communicating complex scientific information to a range of audiences, including the general public. Experience of using social media for sharing resources and research findings is also essential, as is the ability to write and express complex issues clearly and simply. With a working knowledge of research methods, you will also have an understanding of the issues around involving patients in research.

You will have excellent interpersonal skills and be able to build effective working relationships with colleagues, researchers, professional partners, bereaved parents and target public audiences. With a highly organised approach, you will be able to demonstrate an enthusiasm for continued learning and a willingness to adapt to changing circumstances.

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 : 23rd May 2021

Interview Date : 16th June 2021

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
Salary:	circa £29,000 per annum
Hours:	Full Time – 35 hours per week

Main Purpose of Job:

1. Support research projects that will make the biggest difference to improving maternity and neonatal care and to saving babies' lives
2. Ensure that the findings from research Sands has supported are used to deliver change
3. Increase the profile of perinatal mortality research
4. Support bereaved parents to shape research

Principal tasks and responsibilities

Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

Support key research studies

- Ensure that systems are in place so that Sands can identify and prioritise support for those studies that will make the greatest difference to Sands aims
- Maintain oversight of all Sands supported research including screening and review of new requests, managing ongoing relationships and commitments and responding to inquiries from researchers
- Support individual studies directly helping researchers to secure funding, demonstrate impact, and involve parents and families
- Create and deliver dissemination plans for all Sands supported research so that findings are used to improve maternity, neonatal and postnatal care
- Put systems in place to measure the impact of Sands supported research

Ensure that the outcomes of Sands supported research studies reach key audiences

- Ensure that information about Sands research activity is regularly communicated to Sands staff and supporters
- Create engaging content and share research activity via social media channels and regularly updated pages on the Sands website
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of all Sands research activity
- Support the development of a framework for involving bereaved parents in research including materials for researchers and external partners and mechanisms to engage parents

Support Sands as an evidence based organisation

- Support external evaluations of Sands projects and activities
- Critically appraise research to ensure Sands work and views are evidence based and informed
- Provide administrative support to Sands research collaborations and groups
- Keep abreast of current and new developments in research relating to stillbirth and neonatal death
- Attend relevant conferences and meetings to gather information, represent Sands perspective and communicate Sands research work

General

- Undertake any other tasks and responsibilities commensurate with the role as required by the Senior Research Officer, Research and Prevention Manager and Director of Research, Education and Policy

- Liaise regularly with other Sands departments/teams and keep up to date with what they are doing
- Work flexibly with other members of staff and team, occasional evening/weekend working
- 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

This job description is not contractual and is liable to change over time

Person Specification

Skills and Experience		
Importance	Criteria	Assessment
Essential	Experience of working with researchers and supporting research studies	Application and interview
Essential	Ability to understand, assimilate and extract key messages from complex scientific papers and studies	Application and interview
Essential	Experience of translating complex research evidence into engaging content for social media channels	Application and interview
Essential	Experience of creating and maintaining reporting and dissemination systems and procedures	Application and interview
Essential	Experience of managing multiple high priority work streams simultaneously and meeting deadlines under pressure	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	Experience of using a range of IT packages, including PowerPoint, MS Teams, Zoom, Word, Outlook and Excel	Application and interview
Desirable	Willingness to keep abreast of new developments in research and in maternity and neonatal care	Application and interview
Core Competencies		
	Criteria	Assessment
Essential	An understanding of research methods	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	Good 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	Networking and interpersonal skills with an ability to engage with researchers on complex issues concerning perinatal death	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	Good planning and organisational skills, with considerable attention to detail	Application and interview