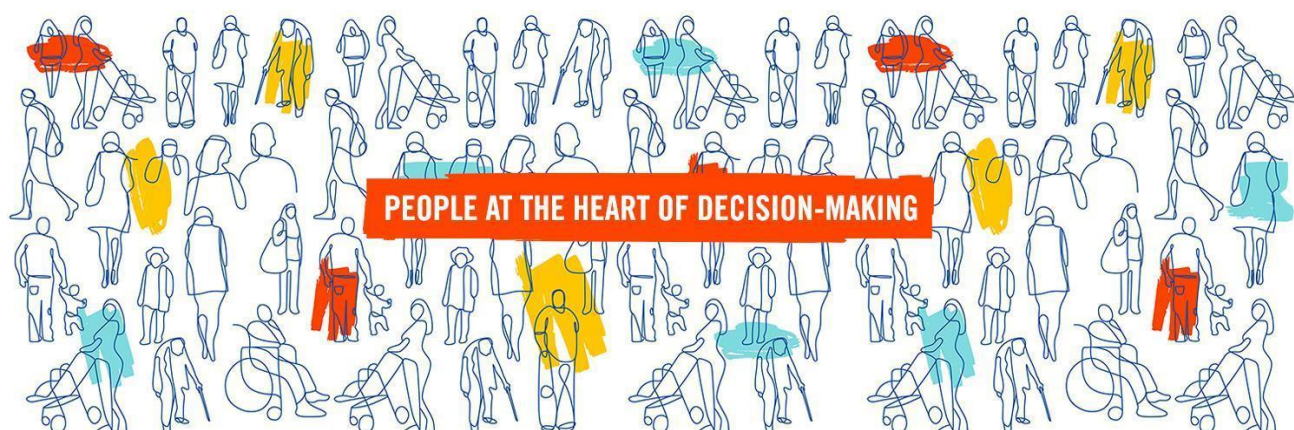




# DIRECTOR OF CAPACITY BUILDING & STANDARDS (maternity cover)

## Job description



## Practical details

**SALARY BAND:**

£72,100 (or pro-rata equivalent)

**LOCATION:**

Flexible. Must be comfortable with committing to regular travel both for project work and Involve team activities. Must be able to travel across the UK.

**HOURS:**

Full time (35 hours per week) or 0.8 full time equivalent (28 hours per week)

**CONTRACT DURATION:**

Maternity cover from July 2025 - May 2026

# 01. Who we are

**We're the UK's leading public participation charity, and we want to build a more vibrant democracy, where everyone can have a say in a society that works for all of us.**

Since 2003, we have been working with governments, parliaments, civil society, academics and members of the public to create and deliver new forms of public participation that re-vitalise democracy, improve decision-making, and enable people to shape the decisions that affect their lives.

We are realistic about the challenges faced by democracy, but optimistic about how to overcome them. We are committed to ensuring our democracies are vibrant and fit for the future by putting people at the heart of decision making.

We work across the UK and internationally, with offices in Belfast and London. Many of our staff work from home across the UK or in a hybrid pattern, rather than being based at one of our offices, though we meet up regularly as a team.

# 02. What we do

**Our mission is to lead the UK in making participation and deliberation an everyday part of democracy, to help meet the challenges of the 21st century.**

We need to make important choices as a society, but our democracy isn't working as it should. Decision-makers are struggling to get things done. The public are frustrated the system isn't working for them. And everywhere people are feeling divided, distrustful and powerless.

Our work is focused in three areas:

- **Making the case** – demonstrating why participation and deliberation are essential features for a healthy modern democracy, and ensuring that those in positions of power and influence understand and support their use in addressing some of the UK's most intractable issues. [Check out our latest thinking.](#)
- **Embedding change** – building the capacity of public servants and practitioners, and developing the body of evidence, principles and standards that support participatory and deliberative practice. [Check out our resources.](#)
- **Pioneering practice** – encouraging widespread uptake of participatory and deliberative processes, and promoting continuous learning and innovation to improve democracy and deliver lasting solutions in key policy areas. [Check out our practical projects.](#)

All our work builds towards delivering the following six outcomes for our democracy, which we believe will lead to the vibrant, participatory society we want to see.

- **Democratic norms** – Participation and deliberation are recognised as essential features for a healthy equitable democracy by the public, society and decision-makers;
- **Political support** – People in positions of power and influence across society and the political spectrum understand and actively support the use of participatory and deliberative decision-making;
- **Frequent use** – There is frequent use of participatory and deliberative processes supported by the right resources (people and budgets) both inside and outside of political institutions;

- **Evidence and practice** – There is an accessible and well-communicated body of evidence and practice that demonstrates the impact of our vision and how to achieve it;
- **Clear standards** – There are clear principles and standards that support good practice in delivering and embedding participatory and deliberative processes, which are widely understood and followed;
- **Democratic innovations** – There is continuous learning and innovation to improve democracy and work against entrenched inequalities.

Find out more about our work: [www.involve.org.uk/our-work/](http://www.involve.org.uk/our-work/)

## Our values

- **Collaboration** – because change comes when broad coalitions of people work towards a common vision
- **Equity** – because everyone in society has an equal right to be listened to and participate in decisions that affect their lives. No one should be held back by societal divisions or prejudice;
- **Independence** - because we are committed to the integrity and impartiality of participatory and deliberative processes;
- **Purpose** – because participation must have an impact. We reject tokenistic or ineffectual engagement
- **Quality** - because effective participation requires time, attention and commitment

## 03. About the role

This role is to lead the Capacity Building & Standards (CB&S) Function. The Director reports to the CEO, Sarah Castell, and also sits on Involve's Management team, which as well as the Director CB&S comprises the CEO, Director of Innovation & Practice (I&P), Director of Advocacy and Communications (A&C) and Director of Finance and Support Services (F&SS).

The Director will lead a team of around 10 people (both CB&S team members and cross-function team members), you will have around 5 direct reports, and work closely with teams across all functions in delivery of our work. We also work with a close group of Associate freelancers.

Our Director of CB&S is due to be on maternity leave from August 2025 to May 2026. This role is required to cover during the period of maternity leave. We require a candidate to cover this role from July 2025 - May 2026 allowing for a handover period. There may be the opportunity for the contract to be extended on a part time basis from May to July 2026, but this would be confirmed closer to the team.

## 04. Key results areas

### 1. Developing strategy for, leading, and quality assuring programmes and projects (50%)

- Develop impactful and sustainable programmes and projects in line with Involve's vision, mission and strategy. This through proactive bidding and some reactive response to tenders. Lead and oversee the delivery of projects, supporting teams to deliver, helping team members access training and resources, and quality directing work.
- Continue to develop and deliver the strategy and business plan for how CB&S can deliver key deliverables (both through funded consultancy and grant work directly and other means where relevant);
  - A training offer for capacity building and training programmes
  - Mentoring and strategic guidance for institutions and organisations
  - Peer learning networks to share and embed good practice
  - Guidance and good practice collateral in the form of thought leadership
  - Standards for participatory and deliberative methods
  - Any other outputs in strategic areas of development, for example grassroots capacity building.

### 2. Management and leadership (30%)

- Help create an environment in which our team can thrive; this includes holding and continuing to develop the Function. Building capacity and approaches to help the team learn and develop.
  - Line managing and task managing staff in CB&S, acting as a role model for managers, including those who also manage others.
  - Translate strategic priorities into stretching, outcome-focused objectives for the team, and weave this into the appraisal process
  - Supporting the team in learning and development activities at away days and through internal training
  - Recruitment and succession planning in line with CB&S strategy
- Play a role in overseeing Involve's finances, governance and HR. Accountable for the Function meeting its reporting requirements to the Board of Trustees, and liaising with Trustees and Subcommittee members.

### 3. Impact reporting and standards setting (20%)

- Oversee the implementation of the impact framework, leading the Impact Working Group
- Active involvement in and leadership of a sector-wide group developing UK standards for deliberative processes

## 05. Key competencies

- Expert in a related field to Involve's work such as public engagement in decision making, community organising, actor engagement, evaluation or training. Able to communicate convincingly, both within and outside institutions, to develop impactful projects which advance capacity building and standard setting around open, participatory and deliberative democracy;
- Inspiring leader, able to create the conditions in which others can thrive. Able to create a high performing team, plus support and demonstrate a culture of learning, reflection and development around our work, which can benefit Involve and the wider sector.
- Strong networker, able to represent Involve and manage relationships with a range of people - from activists, local authority officers and civil society groups to senior civil servants, Ministers and MPs. Understands the operating environment across national, devolved and local government in the UK.
- Effective business leader, in particular able to innovate when it comes to new areas of business development, explore new ways to embed good practice, or scale up existing work (such building our evidence base or future work on accreditation).
- Experienced facilitator and/or trainer, able to design and deliver relevant work such as training courses, workshops and meetings of all sizes;
- Excellent project manager, able to provide robust management of project finances, budgets and reporting;
- Committed team player, embodying our values of collaboration, equality and purpose, and passionate about furthering Involve's vision of a democracy that works for everyone.

## 06. Pay, location and benefits

**Job Title:** Director of Capacity Building & Standards (Maternity Cover)

**Pay band:** £72,100 (or pro-rata equivalent)

**Hours:** Full time (35 hours per week) or 0.8 full time equivalent (28 hours per week)

**Start date:** July 2025

**Location:** Flexible. Must be comfortable with regular travel both for project work and Involve team activities. Must be able to travel across the UK.

**Reporting to:** CEO

**Leave:** All staff get 25 days annual leave (pro rata) in addition to bank holidays and the period between Christmas Day and New Years Day.

Interviews will take place on 28-30 April 2025. Interviews will take place on Zoom and will consist of an interview task plus interview questions. If successful in the first round, you may be invited to a second interview.

We can make reasonable adjustments to our interview process, and to working arrangements, according to your needs. If you are shortlisted for interview we will explain what the interview process will involve in advance and check with you if we need to make any adjustments so that you can interview fairly and comfortably.

We're actively building a diverse team and welcome applications from everyone. But simply having a diverse workforce is not enough. We aim to build an inclusive environment, where everyone can contribute their best work and develop to their full potential. We offer a flexible working environment so you can adjust your hours to suit your personal circumstances. We celebrate our differences, and recognise the importance of teams reflecting the communities they work with.

We have physical offices in London and Belfast which are always available to work in. We are flexible in terms of either working from home, or working hybrid from home and a physical office. However the successful candidate must be able to travel for both project work and to attend Involve internal meetings and away days. This will involve travel across the UK. We anticipate that this travel would not be every day but would be fairly regular. We cannot say definitively how regularly this would be, but it is likely to be at least 2-3 times per month and sometimes to include overnight stays. As such, applicants will need to be comfortable with regular travel.

The following benefits are available to staff:

- Workplace pension with employer contribution of 5%
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Childcare vouchers
- Enhanced parental leave package for qualifying employees
- Participation in both external and internal training