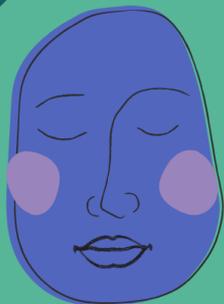




association of **visitors** to  
immigration detainees

# Policy and Communications Manager

## Candidate Brief



"When you go for the first time, it is a bit of a shock to see the fence, the razor wire, all those locked doors that open in a rather sinister way. The whole paraphernalia of detention is a bit of a shock, and I think most people have no idea that this goes on in their name."

-Sylvia, Visitor





# Welcome

Immigration detention is expensive, inefficient and unjust.

Our work is aimed at improving the conditions and treatment of people detained, and to reduce the human cost of detention whether this be by supporting our member and volunteer visitors or through our policy, advocacy and campaigning.

Members are at the heart of our work and we provide training, information, advocacy support and resources to help visitor groups conduct their vital work.

The need for our work is self-evident. Home Office figures for the year ending in June 2021 record 17,088 people entered detention and the number of people detained in prisons increased by 52% from 368 in the same period.

People in detention will often feel vulnerable, isolated and frightened. It is a traumatic experience and the volunteers who we support are often the only person a detainee sees from outside, who is not an official. This relationship can often become a lifeline, as a visitor listens and cares, helping to reduce isolation.

We want, and need, to be able to do more to make a tangible and positive difference not only to the lived experience of people who are detained but also to establishing an immigration and asylum policy that is just.

Coming to the end of our current three years strategy, we are seeking to appoint a new Director to work with us to shape the ways in which we can increase our impact and extend our reach.



**Jayne Butler,**  
Co-Chair



**Carolina Rodriguez**  
Co-Chair

# About AVID

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We are a small national charity, and a highly respected voice on immigration detention nationally. Our small staff team is renowned for ‘punching above its weight’ in working to amplify the voices of people in detention and the volunteers supporting them. Established in 1994, we have over 25 years’ experience in working with people experiencing indefinite immigration detention and have achieved real change in this time. Immigration detention is no longer a marginalized issue, it is now recognized as one of the UK’s most pressing human rights concerns. Our strategic aim is to reduce the human and social cost of immigration detention.

Central to this is our unique structure as a membership network. AVID members are central to everything we do. A full list of our members is available on our website. Our membership is very diverse, including some registered charities with paid staff and a remit that extends beyond visiting; and other smaller, wholly voluntary groups. All members visit (befriend) detainees and share a concern about the use of detention in the UK. Our network covers some 550 volunteers all over the UK, and it is our role to support them to ensure people in detention have access to quality volunteer support at a time of great crisis in their lives. AVID and its members have a unique perspective on the realities of detention in every detention centre in the UK as well as in some prisons. This gives us an unparalleled insight into the lived experiences and realities of immigration detention and its impacts on the ground. We use this experience to present the case for change, raising awareness of the impact of detention and working towards systemic reform.

We currently have three staff members, our Director and two part time Training and Membership Coordinators who work on a job share basis. We are recruiting two posts, the Policy and Communications Manager and a new Director. Our work is also supported by volunteers who assist in various areas of our work such as fundraising. Governance and oversight of the organisation’s strategic direction is carried out by our Board of Trustees, a group of volunteers elected by our membership.

Historically based in London, and with a London base, AVID has moved to remote working, recognising the challenges of the current pandemic.

AVID’s work is based on an agreed strategy developed with our members. You can read the [strategy in full here](#). We advise you to read this before completing your application.

Our vision for detention reform has never been more important. With the most hostile Government we have ever faced, the increasing use of prisons for immigration detention, the use of sites of ‘quasi detention’ like barracks to house people seeking asylum, and a range of provisions outlined in the Nationality and Borders Bill such as offshore processing, it has never been more important to defend the rights of those who are detained under immigration act powers.

It is a crucial time to be part of AVID, as we embark on a new strategic period and have committed to placing lived experience at the heart of all that we do. We will do this by working with our members, collaboratively and collectively work to secure systemic change.



# About the role

After 12 years, our long-standing Director is leaving the organisation in December 2021. As a result we are recruiting two new roles to take our organisation to the next phase in its development, putting lived experience at the heart of what we do and strengthening our network to meet the challenges of the Nationality and Borders Bill provisions, and beyond. This role will work closely with the new Director to deliver an ambitious and exciting portfolio, extending our reach and influencing change.

The Policy and Communications Manager is a new role within our organisation, made possible with funding from the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, the Tudor Trust and Paul Hamlyn Foundation. The post holder will lead on all aspects of our external communications and digital work, ensuring that AVID extends its reach, accessibility and influence on behalf of people in immigration detention. The role will oversee and lead on our policy, research and advocacy activities, working with our membership to ensure a collaborative approach to external engagement. This is a unique opportunity to apply your communications and strategic advocacy skills to raise the profile of a small charity which regularly ‘punches above its weight’ in policy and influencing, at a critical turning point for the organisation.

# Job Description

**Job Title:** Policy and Communications Manager

**Reports to:** Director

**Responsible for:** Social media volunteers

**Salary:** £35,000 FTE (pro rata).

**Contract:** Permanent, subject to funding.

**Hours:** Part time, 22.5 hours (three days)

**Location:** Remote dependent on successful applicant. At the moment due to the current pandemic, all staff are working remotely. It should be noted that some UK travel is a requirement of this post, and many meetings take place in London. Overtime is not paid but time off in lieu is arranged.

**Benefits:** 25 days on a pro rata basis plus public holidays. Automatic enrolment into AVID's contributory workplace pension scheme on completion of probation period. Employer contribution of 8%. External supervision offered.

**Probation:** Three months

**Flexibility:** The job description sets out duties that exist at the moment. They may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility. Such variations may be a common occurrence and cannot in themselves justify a reconsideration of the post.



# Purpose of the role

The Policy and Communications Manager will be responsible for our strategic communications, policy and advocacy activities. They will lead the development and delivery of effective policy and advocacy, ensuring a strong voice for our membership network and the people in detention we support, proactively pursuing key policy aims and responding to policy developments. They will plan and deliver effective communications that extend our reach and raise awareness of what we do. They will develop and steward relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders including people affected by detention, policy makers, statutory monitoring bodies, partners, members and funders.

# Areas of responsibility

## Influencing, policy and advocacy

- Work towards detention reform and specific policy goals - including promoting the adoption of community based alternatives to detention - by developing a programme of policy and influencing activities.
- Provide a proactive and responsive policy resource including preparing briefings on key thematic areas, responding to consultations, stakeholder engagement including representing AVID externally with partners, NGOs, government and statutory monitoring bodies, impact measurement, conducting and commissioning research.
- Ensure the AVID membership is engaged in AVID's influencing activity and consultation responses, and that briefings and reports are based on evidence and the knowledge from across our network
- Adopt a participatory approach to policy development, prioritising lived experience
- Identify strategic opportunities and relationships to influence change, building and managing external relationships to enhance AVID's reach and influence decision makers.
- Work with our Director to identify policy targets, goals and aims, helping to influence strategic direction.
- Advocate on behalf of our members and the people in detention they support, including but not limited to ensuring volunteer access to all places of detention.
- Ensure that all reports, publications, responses and policy outputs reflect and are aligned with AVID's strategic directions, priorities and the needs of our members.

## Communications

- Actively monitor changes in, and maintain a national perspective on, current detention law, policy and practice, assessing impact on people in detention and actively communicating this, in particular to members across the UK.
- Carry out effective awareness raising for AVID, extending our reach and enhancing knowledge of our work amongst stakeholders.
- Build the profile of, and raise awareness of the work of AVID and its members, driving traffic through the planning and creation of a range of communications materials
- Bring the voices of people in detention and those who support them to new audiences
- Oversee AVID's digital and communication portfolio with lead responsibility for the AVID website, newsletter and social media tools
- Produce, edit and distribute updates and materials for external audiences, dealing sensitively with people's lived experiences
- Liaise with AVID members regularly to ensure our communications outputs are effective and useful
- Manage AVID's key messaging, using strategic tools to build awareness of AVID and immigration detention amongst diverse audiences
- Audit, monitor, review and make recommendations on our communications outputs
- Develop engaging content that is based on lived experience and the experiences of our membership network
- Produce our regular communications materials including our annual report and other external publications

## Other duties

Work with our Director to:

- Develop a strategic communications and policy strategy that helps achieve AVID's strategic aims
- Engage with current and potential individual donors through digital campaigns, helping to diversify our income
- Assist with reporting to our Board and funders as required

This job description can be changed at any time according to the needs of the organisation.

As AVID is a national organisation, this role will require some travel throughout the UK. As we work with volunteers, evening and weekend work will also be required from time to time. This will be reimbursed through the use of 'time off in lieu'.

## Person specification:

*While senior level experience is important for this role, establishing a team that is diverse, representative and inclusive of the values we seek to promote is hugely important to us at AVID. We are keen to hear from people with a wide range of backgrounds, and people who have lived experience of the issues facing people in the immigration and detention systems, and who understand the intersections with structural racism, are particularly encouraged to apply.*

*We recognise the great value of lived experience and experience gained in less formal settings, alongside more traditional formal, paid work experience.*

### Experience

- Minimum three years experience in a policy, advocacy or communications role
- Experience of identifying policy challenges and opportunities for advocacy, with the ability to undertake a range of policy outputs and to develop a clear plan
- Strong background in working to develop policy positions collaboratively and with a diverse range of stakeholders
- Experience in influencing government decision makers and public policy, and in relationship building at senior levels
- Experience of developing and delivering high quality policy and research projects in support of advocacy objectives, using a range of methods
- Experience in web development and design an advantage

### Skills

- Good relationship management skills, preferably gained in a voluntary sector role, and an ability to motivate and influence others
- Ability to maintain oversight and manage competing priorities
- Sound judgment, with a good understanding of policy making in the UK
- A good understanding of immigration detention and its impacts in the UK
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to condense complex information for policy briefings, newsletter articles, web copy and other communications outputs.
- Outstanding interpersonal skills, with the ability to develop and maintain effective relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
- Strong analytical skills and experience of using a range of research methods to provide robust evidence in support of policy and advocacy priorities
- Influencing skills with the ability to manage multiple viewpoints and bring people together to work collectively for change
- Demonstrable understanding of how to build the experiences of people affected by detention and people with lived experience into all communications outputs in a meaningful way
- Ability to analyse complex information and data and to communicate this in a range of ways and for diverse audiences

### Values

A commitment to the values of AVID including:

- Equality of opportunity
- Anti racism

- Commitment to human rights principles including in particular those of refugees and migrants

# How to apply

To find out more about the role, we are holding two online information sessions:

- Friday 7<sup>th</sup> January 11am ([register here](#))
- Friday 14<sup>th</sup> January 11am ([register here](#))

To apply for this role:

1. Download the job application form and equal opportunities form from: <http://www.aviddetention.org.uk/news-events/news/we-are-recruiting-0>
2. Send your completed application form and an equal opportunities form by email to Carolina Albuerne, Co-chair, [Carolina.albuerne@aviddetention.org.uk](mailto:Carolina.albuerne@aviddetention.org.uk) (Please note your equal opportunities form will be detached from your application prior to screening, and saved anonymously. It will not form any part of the recruitment process and is for monitoring only)
3. Ensure you include the subject line 'Policy and Communications Manager' in your email.

We are unable to accept postal applications.

**Closing date:** Monday 24<sup>th</sup> January

**Interviews:** Early February (this may be subject to change)

# Selection process

It is anticipated that interviews will take place in early February, although this is subject to change. In current circumstances we are monitoring public health guidance and as such it is likely that interviews will be held via video conferencing. We will aim to be flexible.

## **Accessibility**

Please let us know if you have any special requirements which we might need to consider in relation to the selection process, e.g. attending interview, completing any part of the selection process. Any requests will not be taken into account in the selection process.

**Equal Opportunities:** AVID is committed to operating as an equal opportunities and actively anti-racist organisation. Those with lived experience of detention or as a refugee are particularly encouraged to apply.

**Right to Work:** We are not able to arrange work permits for people who do not already have the right to work in the UK.