

## CHIEF ECONOMIST AT THE SOCIAL MARKET FOUNDATION

**The SMF is seeking a new Chief Economist. The appointee will replace Kathryn Petrie, who is leaving for a senior role in international public policy.**

This is an opportunity to join an influential Westminster think-tank in a senior role, working on research to address the big economic and social problems facing the UK. The SMF is Britain's leading cross-party think-tank and a registered charity overseen by its Chair, Mary Ann Sieghart and the Board of Trustees.

The role of Chief Economist is a wide-ranging and influential role within the SMF. The appointee will help shape the topics that the SMF analyses and the policies put forward, as well as interacting widely with politicians, officials, leading figures from industry, academia and the media.

### **The postholder will:**

- Design and deliver high-quality research output that maintains and enhances the SMF's reputation for rigorous and influential policy analysis.
- Oversee the SMF's quantitative research work, advising and mentoring colleagues on the use of data.
- Communicate the SMF's work to a wide range of audiences including ministers and, parliamentarians, officials, executives and academics.
- Represent the SMF in the media, by writing oped pieces, broadcasting and commenting on economic and policy developments. The SMF will offer media training to an applicant who is not experienced in broadcasting.

### **Detailed job description**

The Chief Economist will:

- Produce rigorous and influential policy reports, which combine headline-grabbing analysis with practical and innovative policy proposals.
- Project-manage research output from idea inception, through to proposal writing, methodology design and delivery.
- Conduct quantitative analysis on a range of large-scale datasets and ONS data releases to generate robust and insightful statistical commentary and observations.
- Help the Research Director to quality-assure SMF research output, including ensuring that the SMF's methodologies are robust as well as able to generate fresh insights.
- Support and mentor junior research staff.
- Develop new project proposals for SMF policy work.
- Represent the SMF externally by speaking and chairing at conferences and events, as well as to the media.

- Write compelling and persuasive research reports, briefings and comment pieces.

## Person specification

**You should be able to demonstrate as many as possible of the following:**

- Experience of policy development or policy-focused research, whether in government, academia, industry, think tanks, Parliament or the charity sector
- Strong numeracy and familiarity with the analysis of large economic and social science datasets - experience with datasets such as Wealth and Assets Survey, Labour Force Survey, Living Costs and Food Survey and Understanding Society would be helpful.
- Experience of data analysis software such as STATA, R or Python.
- An established interest in social and economic policy.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Evidence of producing high-quality work in short timeframes.
- An open and inquisitive mindset that can get to grips with new topics quickly and confidently.
- A keen awareness of UK politics.
- Willingness to put evidence before political inclinations. The SMF recruits people of all political views, but staff must be happy to work closely with people of differing views.

## Benefits

Salary: dependent on experience. The SMF offers a contributory staff pension and generous holiday allowances.

This is a permanent, full time position. The SMF is based at Westminster, but home working may obviously be required subject to Coronavirus restrictions.

We actively encourage flexible working and working patterns outside the traditional office hours. The appointee will be able to design their working week – in discussion with colleagues – to accommodate family commitments and other obligations.

## Application process

**Applications should be sent to [opportunities@smf.co.uk](mailto:opportunities@smf.co.uk) with the header “Chief Economist application”.**

The deadline for applications is **9am on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> July**

Applicants should attach two .docx or .pdf documents:

1. A CV (**please read the notes on this carefully below**)
2. The outline of a research project you would like to undertake at the SMF if appointed. This should be no more than two pages long and explain:
  - The issue you would research and the problem your work would address
  - How you would do it.
  - How you would expect to present your research

- Who the key audiences for the research would be – and why
- How the project fits with the SMF's outlook and purpose

**Applicants are also asked to download, complete and return an equality and diversity monitoring form. This is voluntary and not a condition of applying.** A copy of the form can be found at <https://www.smf.co.uk/new-opportunity-chief-economist-at-the-social-market-foundation/>

### Important notes

1. Applications will be sifted on a name-blind basis. A staff member not involved in the appointment will produce anonymised copies of your documents for the sift. **Please assist us in this by confining any references to your name to the top of the first page of each document.**
  2. CVs should omit institutions. Please **do not** include the names of schools or universities attended. **Do** include courses studied and qualifications obtained.
  3. Where possible, please remove references that might identify your background, sex or other characteristics. For instance, change references to “University women’s football team” to “university football team.”
- Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an initial interview – to be held via Zoom – during the week starting 6<sup>th</sup> July.
  - To discuss this post informally with James Kirkup, SMF Director, email [james@smf.co.uk](mailto:james@smf.co.uk)
  - Kathryn Petrie is also available to discuss the role with prospective candidates – [kathryn@smf.co.uk](mailto:kathryn@smf.co.uk)

**The SMF is an equal opportunities employer and all our jobs are open to anyone, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, race, age, disability, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, or pregnancy and maternity.**

**We particularly encourage applications from people whose backgrounds are poorly represented in Westminster-based institutions and employers.**