

Position description

Position title	: Associate Director, Policy & Advocacy
Reports to	: Director, Policy & Advocacy
Employment type (FT/PT)	: Permanent, Full Time (1.0 FTE)
Location	: Sydney or Melbourne
No. of direct reports	: None
Date (created or reviewed)	: April 2024
Approved by (position)	: Director, Policy & Advocacy

The operating environment

SVA overview

SVA is Australia's most innovative social impact organisation.

We use our broad outlook, transformational thinking, and trusted voice to lead the charge against inequality in Australia. We were created over 20 years ago to find innovative solutions to entrenched social problems and speed up the rate of positive change.

We help institutions think differently, we help redesign systems by learning about what works in communities, and work hand-in-hand with our passionate partners to take real action and drive positive social change.

SVA values

As a purpose-driven organisation, our values guide who we are, how we work and the decisions we make.



People at the centre



Difference gives us strength



Open and ready to learn



Real change takes time

Learn more about SVA's values [here](#).

First Nations Practice Principles

SVA is committed to providing a culturally safe workplace for all our First Nations employees, partners and clients. We commit that our work with First Nations peoples is aligned with our First Nations Practice Principles set out below.



Learn more about SVA's First Nations Practice Principles [here](#).

Team overview

The Policy & Advocacy (P&A) team supports SVA to achieve its mission by improving SVA's practical knowledge about reducing disadvantage. P&A plays a pivotal role in understanding the external evidence of what works and codifying the learning from SVA's work with partners across all areas of social policy including people excluded from education, employment, and housing, as well addressing issues affecting children experiencing vulnerabilities, people with disability and First Nations peoples.

The team's work drives SVA's systems change agenda by taking SVA's perspectives and using them to influence government policy and sector practice to become more effective and reduce disadvantage. The Associate Director sits within the P&A team and reports to the Director, Policy & Advocacy.

Position purpose

The Associate Director oversees SVA's policy and advocacy activity in selected policy areas, which may include impact investing, charity sector viability and employment, as part of the team's collective effort to co-ordinate SVA's government engagement and advocacy activity.

In consultation with the Director, P&A, the position takes a leading role in identifying prospective new areas and consolidating existing areas where SVA and the P&A team can drive change in Australia's social policy landscape to improve community outcomes. This includes developing and implementing short, mid and long term strategies to make progress towards shared goals.

The role also provides leadership, innovation and strategic advice working closely with internal stakeholders and external partners with relevant subject matter expertise.

Position responsibilities

Key responsibilities include:

- In consultation with the Director, P&A, take a leading role in developing SVA's Policy & Advocacy strategy and business plan to address social issues, understanding the policies and policy settings underpinning a range of social policy issues.
- Identify prospective new policy areas and consolidate existing policy areas where SVA and/or our partners are well placed to innovate and drive positive social impact
- Ongoing monitoring of evolving social policy debates including identifying opportunities for SVA to participate in formal and informal policy processes and discussions.
- Develop and implement campaign and advocacy strategies to support SVA's policy and advocacy goals in selected policy areas e.g., impact investing, charity sector viability, and employment
- Prepare policy briefs, presentations and other communication to support SVA's engagement with governments, including assisting in the delivery of submissions, literature reviews, policy, and research papers to support SVA's advocacy agenda and contribute to public policy debate.
- Provide strategic policy advice across teams including research, evidence, and engagement with government, to improve the effectiveness and influence of SVA's work.
- Provide input on current policy-relevant research and evidence as part of the planning of new innovations and concepts that SVA could develop or work with partners to develop.
- Represent SVA at social sector forums and build relationships with policy and advocacy leaders in the sector to share strategies and build coalitions as well as enrich SVA's understanding of best practice and the latest evidence.
- Working with the Policy & Advocacy team, build and maintain relationships with policy makers in selected policy areas, to improve information exchange on new SVA initiatives and SVA's understanding of government priorities.

Special requirements

Some interstate travel may be required.

Person requirements

To effectively perform this position, the person will require the following:

Knowledge

- Demonstrated knowledge, passion and commitment to working in the social sector and on society's most important challenges
- Knowledge of Australia's policy settings, social issues and an understanding of the levers employed by Government in economic and social policy This includes the processes by which social policy is developed and implemented, the key actors, and preferably the relevant legislation.
- IT literate (Word, Excel, PowerPoint).

Experience

- Consolidated experience in public policy development, across social and economic policy domains. Experience in one or more of the following domains would be an asset: charity sector sustainability, impact investing, employment.

- Experience developing policy positions either within government or on behalf of an organisation seeking to influence government policy.
- Exposure to government relations, campaigning or coalition building
- Experience working with people experiencing disadvantage, whether in a research, policy or service delivery capacity.

Qualifications

- Strong academic record with a graduate degree in fields of Public Policy, Law, Social Sciences, or relevant field; or equivalent experience

Skills and Abilities

- Ability to analyse, understand and navigate complex social and economic policy issues
- Strategic written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to build consensus amongst complex stakeholder groups
- Ability to represent SVA in meetings with government officials and social sector leaders
- Project management skills
- Demonstrated ability to prioritise use of time and limited resources toward meeting ambitious, measurable goals
- Capacity to work effectively independently, without support staff, including providing advice to senior managers.
- Relationship-building skills to manage multiple relationships across a broad set of external organisations that relate to specific existing projects or are prospects for future work
- Ability to work collaboratively and consultatively within team unit and broader organisation
- Skills in influencing others in organisation outside of team unit, including where no formal authority/accountability exists
- Self-motivated and proactive, with ability to be adaptable in an entrepreneurial, outcomes-focused culture
- Ability to work effectively and problem solve in multi-disciplinary teams with very different academic and professional experience
- Ability and willingness to embrace new ideas and to be challenged
- Ability to work in cross-cultural settings and connect with diverse teams across the organisation
- Alignment with SVA values