

Position description

Position title	:	Associate Director, Early Childhood
Reports to	:	Director, Early Childhood
Employment type	:	12 months, 0.8 FTE (extension subject to funding)
Location	:	Australia (Sydney or Melbourne preferable)
No. of direct reports	:	None
Date	:	August 2023
Approved by	:	Director Early Childhood

The operating environment

SVA overview

Social Ventures Australia (SVA) is a not-for-profit organisation that works with partners to alleviate disadvantage – towards an Australia where all people and communities thrive.

We influence systems to deliver better social outcomes for people by learning about what works in communities, helping organisations be more effective, sharing our perspectives and advocating for 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 Young Children Thriving (YCT) team is a systemic change program within SVA that seeks to transform Australia's early childhood development landscape for an Australia where all children, regardless of where they live or the challenges their family face, have the opportunities and supports they need to thrive. SVA works collaboratively with partners on ambitious high impact systems change initiatives involving redressing system gaps, convening and mobilising stakeholders, building evidence, testing and scaling solutions, and advocating for change.

Position purpose

The Associate Director, Early Childhood, is responsible for developing and implementing strategies to disrupt and transform the early childhood development system to improve early years outcomes for children in Australia. This role promotes and builds from the foundational work completed in recent years on why we are not seeing the change we all seek in the early years space and what we need to shift to improve outcomes. It will integrate a strong First Nations perspective and respectfully support our First Nations partners.

This role also provides leadership, innovation, and strategic advice to progress SVA's goals across the YCT program, working closely with project partners.

Position responsibilities

Specific responsibilities include:

Strategic leadership and partnerships

- Contribute to the ongoing development of the Young Children Thriving program strategy.
- Build and maintain partnerships for effective collaboration within SVA and across the early childhood development sector and build coalitions to drive advocacy priorities.

Systems change program innovation

- Identify systemic gaps and develop collaborative, strategic initiatives to shift early childhood development systems and in particular to shift the deep system forces influencing early childhood development outcomes in Australia today.
- Develop and implement plans to progress our collaborative project with SNAICC – National Voice for our Children, to see a strong and thriving First Nations community controlled early years sector, responsive to community needs.
- Drive implementation of YCT strategic initiatives around shifting the deep system forces, including key mental models, influencing early childhood development outcomes in Australia today.
- Facilitate program events, workshops and learning opportunities with key stakeholders.

Policy development and advocacy

- Develop and implement policy, advocacy and research strategies to implement YCT initiatives in collaboration with SVA's Policy and Advocacy team.
- Prepare policy briefs, papers, presentations, proposals and other communications.
- Represent SVA at external events and constructively participate in briefings with senior stakeholders (e.g. Ministerial advisors, senior managers of peak or sector bodies).

Program Management

- Monitor and evaluate the program, building learnings into ongoing program development.
- Manage timelines, resources, budgets, and the effective completion of all program deliverables within agreed timeframes.
- Prepare funding proposals in partnership with the Fundraising and Partnerships team, input to funding reports and participate in fundraising meetings as appropriate.
- Contribute to team goals and participate in organisational initiatives and activities as required, ensuring a safe and healthy environment for colleagues and stakeholders.
- Participate in and support organisational change initiatives and model SVA values.

Person requirements

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

Knowledge

- Knowledge of Australia's social policy settings, effecting systems change, shifting mental models and one or more of the key early childhood development domain areas (e.g., health, education, child protection).
- Understanding of the key issue areas impacting disadvantage in Australia and the drivers to achieving system change.
- Passionate interest in the value of early childhood development to transform children's lives and address intergeneration disadvantage and experiences of vulnerability.
- Comprehensive working knowledge of Microsoft Office (i.e., Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Outlook) and Salesforce (or similar CRM platform).

Experience

- Extensive demonstrated experience in driving innovation and managing complex, entrepreneurial programs of work with complex stakeholder relationships.
- Extensive demonstrated experience in policy development, including developing policy positions either within government or on behalf of an organisation seeking to influence government policy.
- People management experience including coaching and mentoring others.
- Exposure to government relations, campaigning, movement building or coalition building.
- Experience operating in diverse cultural settings and with people experiencing disadvantage.

Qualifications

- Degree qualifications in a relevant field, such as Public Policy, Law, Early Childhood, Communications or Social Sciences.

Skills & Abilities

- Advanced strategy and planning skills, including an ability to think strategically on both organisational and systemic levels over multi-year horizons.
- Ability to analyse, understand and navigate complex policy issues relevant to the Early Childhood setting
- Excellent written and oral communications skills, persuasive strategic communication and advocacy skills and ability to effectively build consensus among multiple stakeholders.
- Comfort with ambiguity and ability to thrive in a fluid, entrepreneurial environment.
- Ability to build trusting relationships across a broad set of organisations
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively independently, to prioritise use of time and limited resources toward meeting ambitious, measurable goals.
- Capacity to situate the voice of people with lived experience in all project design thinking and decision making.
- Project management skills – ability to manage large, long-term, complex projects within timeframes.
- Ability to work in cross-cultural settings, and connect with diverse teams across the organisation
- Alignment with SVA values