

Consultant: interim Sciencewise Programme Director

Role Profile (freelance)



Practical details

PAY:	Day rate negotiable
TIMING	August 2025 - February 2026 (possibility for extension)
LOCATION:	Flexible, must be comfortable with some travel across the UK
HOURS:	Approximately 16 hours per week for 7 months

01. Pay, location and benefits

Job title:	Consultant - interim Sciencewise Programme Director
Pay:	Day rate negotiable
Timing:	4 August 2025 to 27 February 2026
Location:	Flexible, must be comfortable with some travel across the UK
Hours:	Approximately 16 hours per week for 7 months
Reporting to:	Involve Chief Executive

02. Who we are

Sciencewise is a programme developed and funded by UK government which engages the public on decision making and policy related to science, innovation and research. It is highly reputable and internationally recognised as a globally leading public engagement programme enabling policies to be better socially informed with a particular emphasis on research, science and innovation.

Sciencewise does this by supporting government bodies to commission deliberative public dialogue within areas of research and development of interest to the government. Support includes up to 50 percent co-funding, expert advice and guidance. Public dialogues provide in-depth insight into the views, concerns and aspirations of a broadly representative sample of the population. This allows decision makers to develop policy which will be broadly supported by the public.

The Sciencewise programme is an exemplar of how to develop robust evidence on public views to inform policy development in areas of scientific and technological innovation. Established in 2004, the programme has supported over 50 dialogue projects. Sciencewise helps to ensure policy is informed by the views and aspirations of the public. The programme is funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) with support from DSIT. [Involve](#), the UK's leading public participation charity, provides expert advice, assurance and support to the programme.

03. About the role

For nearly two decades, Involve has been involved in the management of the UKRI funded Sciencewise programme. The programme is at a key moment of transition as it ends the first year of the 2024-2030 programme, led by a consortium of [Involve](#), the [British Science Association](#), and the [NCCPE](#). At the same time, there is a particular window of opportunity for impact as there is an increased commitment to science and technology by the national government as outlined in the spending review 2025, including commitment to Great British Energy, a renewed focus on innovation and new funding for AI innovation.

We are looking for a consultant for parental cover of the Sciencewise programme, pushing forward on our accelerators - increasing the quality and impact of the programme - as well as ensuring the gold

standard projects and dialogues for which Sciencewise is renowned are being effectively developed. This is a chance to strategically lead the government's flagship public engagement programme, and shape ambitions and scope for how we engage policymakers, researchers and members of the public. This role will help us take forward the Sciencewise programme and manage the consortium to take a step up in terms of impact.

04. Key responsibilities

- Strategically lead and manage the Sciencewise programme to deliver its theory of change and deliverables to a high quality
- Act as a figurehead for Sciencewise externally, developing and articulating a convincing narrative to establish and raise Sciencewise's profile and increase the impact of its work
- Develop and pursue the Sciencewise work plan, in conjunction with the Sciencewise team, in the context of external trends, opportunities and threats
- Be able to confidently and articulately speak about policy issues relevant to the Sciencewise programme and identify possible avenues for potential Sciencewise projects
- Offer robust programme monitoring, financial management and reporting, including task management of the Sciencewise Programme Manager, and Sciencewise Media and Strategic Communications Consultant
- Provide inspirational leadership across the programme, both across the consortium and core delivery team
- Establishing a strong partnership with UKRI to collectively deliver on and assess the success of the Sciencewise programme
- Cultivate partnerships with key players in the science, technology and data sector, research bodies and national government, and identify opportunities to strategically grow Sciencewise's network

05. Key competencies

Knowledge and experience

- Significant executive leadership experience in a relevant setting - science, technology and data sector, research bodies and national government
- Experience of high level representation with senior key actors such as government and organisational leaders with excellent public speaking and writing skills
- Excellent relationship building skills - proven expertise in developing and managing relationships with a range of people at all levels, including senior actors and policymakers
- Track record of oversight of multi-year complex programmes, including multi-partner management, financial oversight and reporting
- An understanding of the national context and policy issues in regards to public engagement, research and innovation, and science, technology and data
- Understanding of participatory and/or deliberative democracy, including the opportunities and barriers to public engagement in research and policymaking

- Excellent ability to embody the programme's ethos and ambitions, with limited time to get accustomed to it

Skills, abilities and personal style

- Influences with impact
- Able to lead high performing teams
- Thinks strategically.
- Works collaboratively
- Promotes innovation
- Delivers results
- Demonstrates passion for public engagement with a focus on science, technology and data

06. How to apply

To apply, please provide all of the information below to info@sciencewise.org.uk by Midday (12:00 pm) on Monday 30 June 2025.

The application consists of the following sections:

1. Application:
 - a. A cover letter of no more than two sides of A4 outlining why you are interested in this role, how you meet the core competences, your personal details and your day rate.
 - b. A CV of no more than two sides of A4. The CV should include a summary of your: work experience, volunteering experience (if any), and education history.
 - c. Contact details for two references.
2. Diversity monitoring (optional) - [please complete the Google form](#)

Interviews will be held on **Tuesday 8 July** and **Wednesday 9 July via zoom**, but we can be flexible given the tight turnaround. We may also have a second round of shorter interviews, depending on the outcome of the initial interviews.

If you have any issues with the application form or if you have any questions, please contact us at info@sciencewise.org.uk.