

“Good support isn’t just about ‘services’ – it’s about having a life.”

Job Description: IMPACT Senior Strategic Improvement Coach

Full time/Part time	PT 0.5/50% FTE
Duration of the Post	12 months – target start date = September 2026
Salary	Up to a maximum £56,535 FTE (50% for this post), depending on experience

Summary of role

IMPACT is the UK centre for implementing evidence in adult social care, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Health Foundation. IMPACT draws on knowledge from different types of research, the lived experience of people who draw on care and support and carers, and the practice knowledge of social care staff.

IMPACT Demonstrators focus on a large, strategic issue in a host organisation or local system, helping to get evidence of what works used in practice to make a difference to services and to people’s lives. They involve using change management, organisational development and leadership skills to bring about evidence-informed change, in partnership with people who draw on care and support, families, social care services and policy makers.

Each Demonstrator is typically supported by two Senior Strategic Improvement Coaches. In each pair of coaches, one appointee will often have a background in strategy / improvement and have experience of applied research, organisational development or behavioural science. The other may well have experience of drawing on care, being a carer or working in front-line roles. We recognise that we all have multiple aspects to our identity, and that some candidates may bring a combination of these different backgrounds and experiences.

Positions are offered at 50% FTE for 12 months, and will be based primarily in the Demonstrator site/host organisation. While successful candidates are often employed by the lead University in each nation (Stirling, Ulster, Cardiff, Birmingham, or Sheffield), the nature of our Coach roles also make them ideal for possible secondments from policy, practice, applied research or citizen-led organisations. This can help people build on current skills and experiences while also developing new ones, supporting the longer-term development of more ‘hybrid’ research-practice roles.

As part of IMPACT’s commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion throughout our practice we are particularly keen to receive applications from people from black and minority ethnic communities, and will be operating the ‘Rooney’ rule (i.e. at least one person from a black and minority ethnic community background will be shortlisted where they meet the essential criteria for the role). We are also keen to receive applications from people who have lived experience of drawing on care and support, are carers or are front-line practitioners, as well as from people who have experience of working with groups whose voices are seldom heard.

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Details of the recruiting Universities, host locations and the areas of adult social care are on IMPACT’s website. The coaches appointed for each project are typically based on site within the relevant host organisation.

While these are part-time and very flexible posts, successful applicants will be expected to attend fortnightly online meetings with the broader IMPACT team where possible – these are held on Monday mornings (11am-12) for one hour. There will be an induction in Birmingham on Wednesday 23rd September 2026.

Main duties/responsibilities

- Supported by IMPACT’s national Demonstrator lead, lead negotiation with the Demonstrator site regarding what support will be provided by IMPACT and how this will complement the local site’s responsibilities (the ‘contracting’ process)
- Supported by other members of IMPACT staff, support the implementation of insights from the evidence. [Reviews of the evidence are typically conducted by other members of the team ahead of projects starting, but some projects can sometimes involve additional reviewing and synthesis, with support]
- Work with local stakeholders to design the change project and articulate a local ‘theory of change’ to help structure the project. [This will set out key features of the current context, the change process, expected outputs and outcomes, and the underlying assumptions of how change will be achieved]
- Facilitate the change project on the ground, bringing together key stakeholders from across the local site to design, deliver and sustain local change
- Ensure that the local site/service commits to the active and meaningful involvement of people whose voices are seldom heard and to co-production at all stages of the project, challenging and rectifying power imbalances where needed and working sensitively but courageously with issues of power, equality, diversity and inclusion
- Work with the local site to develop a joint approach to formative evaluation of developments related to the Demonstrator project based on the theory of change [The role of the coaches is to support this local evaluation, not to carry out the evaluation themselves]
- Work with national policy and practice partners to embed lessons learned nationally (across all four nations of the UK)
- Be the main point of contact for IMPACT’s work with the Demonstrator site
- Have overall responsibility for co-ordinating the activity of IMPACT within the Demonstrator site, representing IMPACT and its values locally and nationally
- Act as a coach and role model in strategic improvement projects in adult social care through demonstrating excellent practice and, where appropriate, mentoring colleagues
- Contribute to the overall success of IMPACT through engaging with its wider activities and participating in sharing of learning and development opportunities

Person specification

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- Senior experience as a manager or practitioner, or as an applied researcher, management consultant or improvement coach in relevant fields
- Extensive experience of leading and designing strategic improvement projects within adult social care or in a field relevant to adult social care
- Demonstrable commitment to the values of co-production and knowledge of how to embed these values in practice
- First degree OR equivalent professional qualification OR sufficient practical experience to demonstrate relevant knowledge and skills
- An understanding of the factors that enable or prevent change in adult social care and how evidence can be used to increase likelihood of success
- Excellent presentation skills, both verbal and written, with an ability to communicate effectively with social care stakeholders including people drawing on care and support, carers, local communities, practitioners, managers, academics and policy makers
- High level of personal organisation and motivation
- Collaborative and flexible approach to work and excellent inter-personal skills
- An awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses in leading projects and an ability to work reflexively
- Ability to assess and organise resources effectively
- Experience of championing co-production, equality, diversity and inclusion in own work area

Successful candidates will also need to demonstrate that they can apply these skills within the context and topic of the project in question (they don’t need to be subject experts, but do need to be credible with the host organisation and partners, and show that they could work effectively within the specifics of the project to implement evidence-informed change).