



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

CANDIDATE BRIEF

Head of Knowledge Mobilisation (Place-based policy)

Leeds University Business School



Salary: Grade 8 (£51,753 – £59,966 p.a.)

Reference: BUSEC1016

Fixed term until April 2027 because there is a need for temporary cover.

Location: University of Leeds campus (with scope for hybrid working)

We will consider job share and flexible working arrangements

Head of Knowledge Mobilisation (Place-based policy)

Economics Department

Leeds University Business School

Are you a leader with experience of delivering academic-policy engagement programmes, including experience of place-based academic policy engagement? Do you have an understanding of UK devolution and its impacts for academic-policy engagement, and experience of working with a diverse range of universities in the UK, recognising the different added values institutions bring to place-based policy?

The Head of Knowledge Mobilisation (Place-based policy) at the Universities Policy Engagement Network (UPEN) is a strategic national role that will deliver key programmes of work to support and champion place-based academic policy engagement across the UK. Reporting to the UPEN Programmes Co-Chair (Academic) and supporting the Place Pillar Co-Leads and Institutional Leads, you will join the UPEN Programmes Place team, based across the Universities of Leeds, Birmingham, Teesside and Nottingham Trent, to deliver strategic opportunities for engagement, collaboration and influence across the funding, policy and university landscape.

This is an exciting time to join the UPEN Place team to build your skills on academic policy engagement in the context of evolving devolution. The post will require occasional travel.

What does the role entail?

As the Head of Knowledge Mobilisation (Place-based policy), working across the Pillar 2 team in Birmingham, Leeds, Teesside and Nottingham Trent, you will lead & deliver on:

Strategic engagement & leadership

- Working with the Pillar co-leads at the University of Birmingham and Yorkshire Universities to provide strategic and operational leadership to the Place team to deliver on the place programme of work, ensuring the programme brings value to the sector and that activities are delivered to schedule



- Provide strategic leadership on the delivery of the Place Policy Toolkit, leading a diverse working group of policy partners to generate a new framing and pathways for local policy partners to engage with academic research.
- Provide strategic advice and operational support to the Place team on the other work strands, including funder engagement, research and the Place community of practice.
- Contribute to UPEN's sustainability plan by supporting the co-chairs in the development of regional hubs for policy engagement
- Work with UPEN pillar leads from across the project to ensure strategic join up of activity and reduce the risk of duplication and stakeholder fatigue.
- Support and advise UPEN members where appropriate on place-based academic policy engagement
- Represent the Project Co-Lead and the University's interests at UPEN Programmes meetings, encompassing meeting attendance and the timely delivery of written and verbal project progress reports to the Head of Programmes and Operations
- Deputise for Pillar Co-Lead as and when required.
- Support UPEN member institutions in applications drawing on the Innovation Fund to pilot new models of academic-policy engagement
- Support the UPEN demonstrator projects at Nottingham Trent University and Teesside University to ensure that they are strategically aligned to UPEN's aims and objectives.
- Work with the programme manager to manage the Place team meetings and wider reporting.

Building evidence-informed practice

- Identify shared place-based evidence needs across sub-regional networks
- Identify best practice and case studies from across the network
- Work with UPEN communications to produce high quality communications content on pillar two activity
- Support and co-write the place pillar research theme, ensuring UPEN's draws on its membership's diversity of experience and learnings

Convening & coordinating

- Work with project colleagues in Birmingham involved in the Local Policy Innovation Partnership Strategic Coordination Hub to consider models for different places and regional contexts.
- Co-lead the Toolkit programme of work, working with local and strategic authority partners to effectively articulate value of academic policy engagement, through workshops identifying useful tools and validating their effectiveness with partners



- Facilitate 'What Works Where' workshops with universities on a regional infrastructure from academic policy engagement, to develop a positioning statement to support place-based policy funding. Build and maintain relationships with funders on place-based academic policy engagement .

May also include:

- Identify useful place-based academic policy engagement resources with UPEN members demonstrating what works and what doesn't, working closely with the Knowledge Mobilisation & Place Communities of Practice
- Work with UPEN central team to support delivery of lunch seminars on place-based academic policy engagement to build awareness across the network
- Support and ensure alignment with the UPEN Place sub-committee
- Identify opportunities and test models for UPEN regional-to regional and regional-national policy engagement
- Support on evaluation of regional infrastructure funding pots
- Publish and write blogs & thought pieces on place-based academic policy engagement
- Develop a living map of sub-national networks across the UK

The above duties and roles provide a framework for the position and should not be regarded as a definitive list. Other reasonable duties may be required consistent with the grade of the post.

What will you bring to the role?

As a Head of Knowledge Mobilisation you will have:

- Strong leadership skills (e.g. in coordinating, facilitating, negotiating, brokering or influencing outcomes)
- Programme management & coordination: experience of delivering academic-policy engagement programmes, including place-based academic policy engagement
- Understanding UK devolution: experience of working with devolved powers in the UK and its impacts for research policy engagement
- HEI experience: Experience of working with a diverse range of universities in the UK, recognising the different added values institutions bring to place-based policy
- Strong communication and presentation skills: able to gather information and ideas and crystallise them into a clear vision and plan.



You may also have:

- Experience working in UPEN, or involved in the UPEN subcommittee programmes
- Project management qualification
- Track record of producing outputs on academic policy engagement
- Experience evaluating research policy engagement programme.

How to apply

You can apply for this role online; more guidance can be found on our [How to Apply](#) information page. Applications should be submitted by **23.59** (UK time) on the advertised closing date.

Contact information

To explore the post further or for any queries you may have, please contact:

Kayleigh Renberg-Fawcett (Head of Knowledge Mobilisation (Place), UPEN)
Email: k.e.renberg-fawcett@leeds.ac.uk

Or

Professor Andrew Brown (Co-Chair, UPEN)
Email: A.Brown@lubs.leeds.ac.uk

Additional information

About UPEN

The Universities Policy Engagement Network (UPEN) was set up in 2018 by approximately ten higher education institutions. It now has more than 110 UK university and policy members. Institutional leads from each university comprise the knowledge exchange brokers/policy impact colleagues whose responsibilities include disseminating, supporting and building academic policy engagement opportunities across their institution. In 2025 UPEN was awarded funding from Research England and ESRC to deliver a project focused on infrastructure and capabilities for academic-policy engagement in the UK with a major focus on place-based academic policy engagement.



Working at Leeds

We are a campus-based community and regular interaction with campus is an expectation of all roles in line with academic and service needs and the requirements of the role. We are also open to discussing flexible working arrangements. To find out more about the benefits of working at the University and what it is like to live and work in the Leeds area visit our Working at Leeds information page.

Our University and School

As an international research-intensive university, we welcome students and staff from all walks of life. We foster an inclusive environment where all can flourish and prosper, and we are proud of our strong commitment to student education.

At Leeds University Business School we work hard to ensure that our shared University values (collaboration, compassion, inclusivity and integrity) guide all our activities. We are committed to developing our culture so that we are able to work together to deliver our purpose to “make an exceptional impact on the economy, society and the planet”. We aim to do this by pursuing our goals of developing innovative solutions for society and building a community of responsible leaders.

Everyone at the Business School has a part to play in realising this vision - whether you are involved in education, research, external engagement or professional support. Everyone has skills, knowledge, talent and experience of value - we all have something to offer and we all have a part to play in contributing to collective success. This is at the heart of who we are and how we treat one another. We want all colleagues to feel excited about going to work, to feel valued, to be challenged, to feel part of something bigger and to have fun along the way. To make this a reality we expect all colleagues to champion our shared values, to help us to strengthen our culture and to contribute to our common purpose.

We are dedicated to diversifying our community and we welcome the unique contributions that individuals can bring, and particularly encourage applications from, but not limited to Black, Asian, people who belong to a minority ethnic community; people who identify as LGBT+; and disabled people. Candidates will always be selected based on merit and ability.

Information for disabled candidates

Information for disabled candidates, impairments or health conditions, including requesting alternative formats, can be found under the ‘Accessibility’ heading on our How to Apply information page or by getting in touch by emailing HR via hr@leeds.ac.uk.



Criminal Record Information Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

A criminal record check is not required for this position. However, all applicants will be required to declare if they have any 'unspent' criminal offences, including those pending.

Any offer of appointment will be in accordance with our Criminal Records policy. You can find out more about required checks and declarations in our Criminal Records information page.

