INSTITUTE FOR GOVERNMENT

Associate Director, Devolution and Local Government

DLG26



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A note from the Institute's CEO

I am delighted that you are interested in applying to join us here at the Institute for Government.

As part of our team, you would have the opportunity to make a real impact in the world of government and politics, working in a fun, stimulating and challenging environment at the heart of Westminster. The Institute is always busy and our work is often fast-paced, and reactive to the events in government-as well as setting a proactive agenda on the things we most care about. We are proud to call as colleagues some of the most insightful, energetic and connected people involved in thinking about government across the UK.

Wellbeing is very important at the IfG and we have a friendly, supportive workplace culture. The IfG is committed to developing and maintaining a diverse workforce and an inclusive working environment – we recognise the benefit that having a team with a broad range of backgrounds and experience brings to our work.

I hope you'll consider applying to join our team.

Dr Hannah White OBE, CEO of the Institute for Government

@drhannahwhite.bsky.social

About the Institute for Government

Who we are

The Institute for Government is the UK's leading independent think tank making government work well for the people of the UK.

We work across the political spectrum and the public sector throughout the UK, pursuing changes which will improve the way government works. We provide expertise and fresh, evidence-based thinking which we share though our convening, professional development and research outputs.

How government works is one of the most important factors driving a country's social and economic performance and the health of its democracy. Our work programme focuses on the most important ways in which UK government can do better or currently falls short. We work to ensure that UK government holds power and exercises accountability at the right level, through legitimate and resilient institutions with high-quality leadership which is equipped to respond well to shocks and trends, including rapid technological change.





What we do

Our mission is to make government work well for the people of the UK through our rigorous research, expert analysis, active convening, professional support and fresh thinking.

We do this by:

- Conducting rigorous, independent research into the most important problems facing UK government, undertaking expert analysis of the evidence, and making bold and compelling recommendations for change.
- Convening enlightening conversations among people from across and beyond UK government – helping them think differently about how government can be better.
- Supporting people working in and with UK government to learn and develop professionally in order to play their roles more effectively.





Our work programme

During the first half of 2026, the Institute undertook a major review of its strategy. The review identified four priorities for our work over the next five years, which all our teams will work to deliver.

1. Effective power and accountability
Because the UK is too centralised, and responsibilities and accountabilities at different levels are often overlapping or unclear, we will prioritise work on where power is held and how accountability operates to make government work well. Our two focus areas for the first part of the strategy period will be:

- Mayoral government that works well
- A positive future for local government

2. Legitimate, resilient institutions
There is an important role for the Institute to play in examining the institutions that underpin government in the UK – from our legislatures to the civil service, to public services, asking whether they are structured and equipped to meet the challenges of today and the future. Our two focus areas for the first part of the strategy period will be:

- Institutions equipped for multi-party politics
- A public sector resilient to trends and shocks

3. High quality leadership
It is increasingly clear that many of the problems of UK government originate in, or are exacerbated by, poor leadership, and this is undermining public confidence in the ability of government to deliver. Our two focus areas for the first part of the strategy period will be:

- A pipeline of high-performance leaders
- Tackling falling trust in government leadership

4. Responding well to technological change
Understanding and responding to the risks and opportunities of rapid technological change –including but not limited to the development of AI, changes to the media ecosystem and the development of new markets and currencies – is an increasingly significant challenge for governments across world. Our two focus areas for the first part of the strategy period will be:

- Government's business model adapted to AI
- Governing well in a fragmented information ecosystem

About this role

Help make government work better for the people of the UK – join the Institute for Government.



The Institute for Government is pleased to be recruiting for this exciting role at the heart of our growing Devolution and Local Government (DLG) team, one of three large research teams around which our new work programme is structured.

The DLG team is focused on the powers, funding, capacity, leadership and performance of devolved, regional and local government across the UK, as well as on constitutional questions relating to the future of the Union.



You will join at a pivotal moment for this policy area, given the emphasis the Burnham government has placed on devolution – in particular to mayors – as a route to delivering growth, creating jobs, accelerating house-building and improving a range of other policy outcomes.

As one of two Associate Directors in the team, you will report to our Director for Devolution and Local Government. You will work closely with the rest of the DLG research team as well as colleagues from other teams, in line with an organisational culture that encourages working collaboratively across the Institute.



You will have the opportunity to lead projects; to have an impact on government and policy; to develop a public profile as a spokesperson for the Institute; to lead on cross-cutting priorities for the organisation as a whole; and to be an important part of an organisation focused on improving government to the benefit of the population of the UK.

The DLG team's plans for 2027 include a continuation of our 'DevoLab' series that shares lessons from policy innovations at the devolved level and asks 'what works?', as well as projects on how to make a success of local government reorganisation, how to create new mayoral strategic authorities, and how powers and resources should be distributed between levels of government. We also closely follow devolution in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

We welcome applications from high-quality candidates with relevant prior experience, knowledge and demonstrable interest in this set of policy questions.

We are creating this role at a moment of great importance for the Institute, and for our DLG programme. Identifying the right candidate will be vital to our success in delivering our exciting new strategy, making us bolder, and more focused on what we want to change about how UK government works.



What you will do

As an Associate Director, your role will include:

- Developing and leading projects as part of our overall Devolution and Local Government programme, shaping them to take account of the wider context, including external events and government priorities.
- Identifying and creating opportunities to establish new work, to disseminate our existing work and to achieve impact.
- Communicating our conclusions and recommendations credibly and persuasively to a wide range of audiences inside and outside government, as well as in broadcast, press, online and social media, with a consistent focus on achieving change and impact.
- Working with others, alone and leading teams to generate high-quality outputs with minimal input from senior staff, to agreed deadlines, showing flexibility and responsiveness to fast-moving events.
- Convening and leading public events, private roundtables and workshops, to develop new insights about good government and to increase our impact.
- Producing clear, jargon-free and compelling products that maintain the Institute's reputation for high-quality research, and embody our non-partisan stance and independent approach.
- Using qualitative and quantitative evidence to make an argument, and maintaining a high standard of intellectual rigour and clarity.
- Participating in cross-cutting projects with other teams, including our UK Government and Public Services research teams, our cross-cutting Economics function, and the IfG Academy, which delivers training.
- Building and maintaining a wide and varied network across government and other sectors – including at the devolved, regional and local level – and confidently maintaining relationships with senior stakeholders.
- Developing partnerships with external organisations to support our work and further our impact, including working with our partnerships team to secure funding for elements of our work.
- Making a strong wider contribution to the Institute – through developing others, leading corporate activities and contributing to our research and impact strategy.

What we are looking for

The successful candidate will have several years of relevant professional experience, for instance of working within government at the central, devolved or local level, or of engaging with government and the policy process, for instance in a think tank, consultancy or other sector.

You should have a demonstrable interest in – and good knowledge of – devolution and local government, and a desire to shape the government's policy agenda in these domains.

We are keen to identify candidates who can help us strengthen our evidence base for whether and when devolution 'works', for instance in improving economic outcomes, public service delivery, or the health of democracy.

You will be a collaborative team player, motivated by the IfG mission and strategic priorities, and the opportunity to make a direct contribution to them.

You will have good research skills – ideally both quantitative and qualitative – and the ability to extract relevant insights from evidence, and turn these into actionable recommendations for decision makers.



You will have strong project management skills, and attention to detail, with the ability to deliver high-quality work to tight deadlines.

You should be a strong and persuasive communicator, able to articulate and explain complex ideas to a wide range of audiences – both orally and in writing, in formats ranging from research reports to blogs.

You will demonstrate credibility and good judgement, including as a representative of the Institute in engaging with senior stakeholders from across the government and policy sector.

You should be intellectually curious, eager to identify and answer complex questions about the nature of government, especially at the devolved level within the UK.

You should have some relevant professional networks in government and the wider policy sector, ideally including at the regional and local level.

Ideally, you will be able to demonstrate experience of partnership and fundraising work, and at a minimum the willingness to build skills in this area.

Information for applicants

Employer

Institute for Government

Location

2 Carlton Gardens, SW1Y 5AA

Who can apply

Anyone who can demonstrate they have the relevant skills and experience.

The IfG will not provide visa sponsorship for new staff. Applicants should either:

- have an entitlement to work in the UK without a visa, or
- hold a relevant visa allowing them to work in the UK without employer sponsorship.

Closing date

Applications close on **Friday 20 November at 1:00pm.**

Start date

As soon as notice periods allow.

Terms

The successful candidate will join on a permanent contract subject to a three-month probationary period.

Salary

£55,000–60,000 per annum, depending on experience.

Working hours

The usual working hours of the IfG are a five-day week of 37.5 hours (09:00–17:30 with a one-hour lunch break) but you will, as the occasion requires, work outside the standard hours.

Hybrid working

Full-time staff are typically expected to work from the IfG's offices in London for at least three days a week, including Mondays, with the option to work remotely for up to two days a week. For this role, we are open to proposals for alternative patterns of working, for instance from candidates based in and with strong, relevant networks in another part of the country. We would still require the successful candidate to be in London for part of each week.

Benefits

Contractual

- 30 days of annual leave in addition to eight days of bank and public holidays for full-time staff.
- The IfG has a pension scheme which you will be auto-enrolled into in your third month of employment. The contribution is a minimum of 5% from the employee and a fixed 10% contribution from the employer.
- Death in service life assurance of 4 x salary is given to all staff.
- 20 days sick pay in the first year and thereafter 30 days per rolling 12-month period.

Non-contractual

- Staff may take two weeks each year when the requirement to work from the office in London does not apply.
- Lunch is provided when working in the office.
- Employee Assistance Programme and online 24-7 GP is available.
- Six months maternity leave at full pay.
- Six weeks paternity leave at full pay.
- Shared parental leave – some paid, subject to circumstances.
- Cycle to work scheme.

Equal opportunities

All job applicants and employees will receive equal treatment regardless of sex, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, civil partnership, gender reassignment, age, disability, or religious beliefs.

The IfG collects equal opportunities monitoring information with applications. This information is anonymised and is not given to those involved in the recruitment process. It is used only for monitoring purposes and to help us better understand how we, as an employer, can ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Privacy policy

When you apply for a job with the IfG, we collect and process information (personal data) about you according to data protection law. You can find full details of our privacy policy on our website: **www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/privacy-policy**.

How to apply

To apply, please follow this link: **https://app.beapplied.com/apply/1x9urnoib5**, where you will be asked to upload the following documents.

1. Your CV
2. A cover letter explaining your motivation for applying and how your prior experience prepares you for this role
3. A proposal that outlines, in no more than 1,500 words, what you believe the priorities for the DLG team should be over the coming one to three years, and how we can contribute to the overall Institute mission.

Please note that applications submitted without a cover letter and supporting document (written proposal) will not be considered.

The Institute has a policy which **covers the use of AI**. Use in background research is acceptable but, as with all our published work, we would like the covering letter to be entirely your own work.

Interview stage

We expect to hold the first interviews during the week commencing Monday 30 November 2026.

Second interviews will take place shortly after the first round concludes.

All interviews will take place in person in our London office. We will reimburse travel expenses for candidates in the UK but travelling from outside London.

Any questions?

If you would like further information about this position or the selection process, then please contact us at **recruitment@instituteforgovernment.org.uk**, or visit the careers section of our website: **www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/about-us/careers/current-vacancies**.

We send out regular emails, including a weekly newsletter, about our publications and events. To receive these emails, you can subscribe on our website: **www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/newsletter**.

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