



**Women  
in Prison**

Director of Influence and  
Innovation

Candidate Brief

## Welcome

Dear Applicant,

I am thrilled that you are interested in this exciting new role of Director of Influence and Innovation at Women in Prison (WIP). You will be joining at an exciting time as we continue to develop and design our work to deliver our strategy **Together in Power**. The leadership team you will be joining with me also includes a Director of Finance and Resources and a Director of Development and collectively we hold accountability for the leadership of WIP, hold relationships with our brilliant Board of Trustees and have collective decision making responsibilities for decisions that relate to the strategic leadership and development of Women in Prison.

This role is a new role and provides the vision and direction for our programming and systems change work as we embed our strategy. Our ambition is to offer women in prisons and the community impactful direct support more independently of government demands and funding and with a new and deeper partnership model. Our strategy also challenges us to mobilise women, drive women-led influencing and campaigning and co-design programmes with women with experience of the justice system. We know we must design and deliver programmatic work that incorporates systems change work so that we are not propping up a harmful existing system. The problem in the criminal justice system is not the women themselves, but the structures and systems that oppress them. Women in Prison is taking bold steps to design and embed new programmes that build evidence that directly challenge those harmful systems.

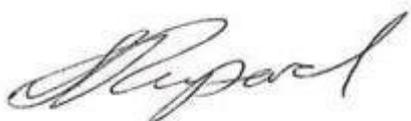
At Women in Prison we pride ourselves on tackling the root causes of why women end up in the criminal justice system. We are passionate, ambitious and grounded in the reality of women's lives. We are proud of our roots as a feminist grassroots organisation, and we have grown from strength to strength since the 1980s, delivering services to women and campaigning for change. We exist to support women facing multiple marginalisation and exclusion, who have been let down, and their rights denied. We believe that prison doesn't work and we want to see an end to the harmful imprisonment of women in England and Wales.

This role is critical to driving our strategy and work into its next exciting phase and ensuring that we remain single-mindedly focused on impact. In this role you will:

- Co-design and deliver quality programmes delivering measurable and impactful outcomes for women
- Drive stronger influence and visibility with policymakers, funders and partners
- Ensure that evidence from programmes is driving successful campaigns and policy changes
- Develop your team so they are empowered, motivated and focused on delivering on the strategy and values of Women in Prison

If you are excited by our strategy and the breadth of what this role could offer to you, we would love to hear from you.

I look forward to meeting you.



**Sonya Ruparel, Chief Executive**

## About us

Women in Prison (WIP) was born out of the anger that our founder – Chris Tchaikovsky – felt about what she experienced and saw when imprisoned in HMP Holloway in the 1980s.

During Chris's time in prison, a woman died after setting fire to her own cell. Chris saw that the specific needs of women in prison and the damaging effect prison sentences were having on women scarcely figured in public or political discourse. So, in 1983, alongside international criminologist Pat Carlen, Chris founded Women in Prison. They pushed hard to expose the scandal of women's imprisonment and campaigned for change.

Our founders wanted to increase awareness of the lives behind the women in our prisons, and the impact of poverty and abuse on women's lives. In Chris's own words:

“Taking the most hurt people out of society and punishing them in order to teach them how to live within society is, at best, futile. Whatever else a prisoner knows, she knows everything there is to know about punishment because that is exactly what she has grown up with. Whether it is childhood sexual abuse, indifference, neglect; punishment is most familiar to her.”

In the early 1990s, the organisation was able to expand its remit beyond campaigning to deliver direct support to women affected by the criminal justice system. WIP's initial focus on prison in-reach services was then expanded to support women in the community following their release. Chris, sadly, passed away in 2002. Despite the loss of our visionary founder, Women in Prison works to carry on Chris's legacy.

Today, WIP is a national charity dedicated to making a difference to the lives of women affected by the criminal justice system. We campaign for a new system of justice; one that addresses the root causes of offending (including homelessness, domestic abuse, harmful substance use, mental ill health and experiences of poverty and trauma).

Our Women's Centres in Manchester and London and the services we provide in communities and prisons deliver trauma-informed, holistic, women-centred support to enable those whom we work with to address the complex challenges they face.

Our Mission is to persuade decision-makers to radically reduce the women's prison population, by demonstrating how a focus on human rights, social justice, health and investment in specialist community support services, including Women's Centres, enables women to move forward with their lives. We do this by:

1. Leading inspiring, impactful campaigns to challenge the current system that propose alternatives to criminalisation, and to radically reduce the number of women in prison
2. Delivering high quality, trauma-informed programmes for women, in communities and prisons, which focus on supporting women to address the systems that have led to their offending, and supporting them to claim their rights
3. Offering a platform for women's voices which builds women's confidence and self-belief, strengthening an understanding of their rights and responsibilities, and provides opportunities to speak 'truth to power' to bring about real change.

WIP's extensive experience and history of frontline work gives power and legitimacy to our campaigns, constantly increasing our influence with policymakers and building public support.

We do not underestimate the challenges ahead, with an increasingly hostile external environment and funders shifting priorities – we know we must be single minded in our focus on impact with women who are disproportionately impacted by a harmful system. Supporting women in their communities to have their voice heard, taking a clear trauma-informed approach, and coproducing our programming and influencing work with women will enable stronger communities that will drive change and end the harm of prison.

### **For more information**

Visit [our website](#) to learn more about our work and impact.

Download our latest [Annual Report](#) and our strategy here: [Our strategy - Women In Prison](#)

## Job Description

Job title:	Director of Influence and Innovation
Reports to:	Chief Executive
Direct reports:	Head of Policy and Public Affairs, Head of Practice, Head of Community Programmes, Head of Justice Programmes
Salary:	£60,000-£65,000
Working hours:	Full time, 35 hours per week. Flexible working considered
Annual leave:	30 days plus bank holidays for full time p/a. In addition, the office closes for 3 days between Christmas and New Year.
Pension scheme:	WIP provides an auto enrolment pension scheme with 5% contributions from the employer and 3% from the employee
Location:	Hybrid, North London (NW5), 1-2 days per week in the office

### Job Purpose

This role not only drives our direct support to women but also wider change in society through driving innovations in programming and influencing approaches. Through co-designing innovative programmes that embed systems change work, building strong evidence of the impact of our work and co-designing influencing approaches, this role will integrate our programming and advocacy approaches.

Centring the voices and agency of women with lived experience of the criminal justice system, this role will ensure that our programmes are designed to meet the highest standards of quality and impact, and that the insights from the work lead to co-designed campaigns and initiatives to influence public opinion and policy. As a key member of the leadership team, the Director of Influence and Innovation will contribute to collective leadership of the organisational strategy and sustainability of the organisation.

### Key Responsibility Areas

1. Programme Leadership – to drive a vision for programmes that are trauma-informed, impactful, anti-oppressive, and offer alternatives for women
2. Influencing – to deeply connect programme work to systems change work through evidence, insights and women led influencing and campaigning
3. Leadership and Collaboration – to be a key member of the senior leadership of Women in Prison modelling feminist collective accountability and leadership

## **1. Programme Leadership**

- Develop and deliver an innovative vision and strategy for programmes in prisons and in the community in line with the organisational strategy, ensuring they are co-produced, women-led, take an intersectional feminist approach, meet gaps in demand for women caught up in the criminal justice system and embed systems change thinking
- Drive innovation, learning and continuous improvement in programme design and delivery that deeply integrates systems change approaches
- Oversee the operational management of all programme delivery teams, ensuring compliance with legal and safeguarding standards and funder requirements
- Leadership on systems for measuring, evaluating, and reporting on programme outcomes, insights and impact
- Build and oversee equitable programme partnerships that support women's needs to be met holistically and in a trauma-informed way

## **2. Influence and Systems Change**

- Lead the organisation's systems change approaches, ensuring that policy, advocacy and campaigns are rooted in the lived experience of women we work with and what needs to change, aligned with the strategy
- Build relationships with key stakeholders as prioritised by the influencing approach, including policymakers, government agencies, funders, and partner organizations at national and local levels
- Represent the organization as a spokesperson
- Use insights from women we work with and frontline staff, data and evidence to shape public policy and advocate for systemic change

## **3. Leadership & Collaboration**

- Contribute to the overall direction of the organisation through collective accountability and leadership as a member of the Leadership Team
- To directly line manage staff and support progression and development within the directorate
- To embed the organisation's values in ways of working prioritising anti-oppressive practices
- To work closely with peers to align work across fundraising and communications
- To work collaboratively with the CEO, leadership and Board to support a culture of empowerment and accountability

- Act as a change leader driving innovation, embedding change in learning and evidence and with a focus on embedding equity, diversity, inclusion (including anti-oppression and feminism) across programmes and influencing work

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## Person Specification

### Essential Skills & Experience

- Proven track record of senior leadership in a charity/NGO in programming, policy, or advocacy.
- Strong strategic thinking with the ability to connect operational delivery to systemic change.
- Demonstrated success in influencing policy, funding decisions, or public opinion.
- Experience managing multi-disciplinary teams and complex budgets.
- Excellent communication and stakeholder engagement skills.
- Good partnership management skills and approach

### Desirable

- Understanding of the political landscape that Women in Prison works in
- Understanding of the rights and needs of women in the criminal justice system

### Personal Attributes and other requirements

- Commitment to the values of Women in Prison
- Collaborative leadership style
- Proactive and solution-oriented attitude
- Commitment to anti-discriminatory practice and equal opportunities and an ability to apply awareness of diversity issues to all areas of work.
- Good verbal and written communication skills

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Statement - Our Principle Commitments

Women in Prison (WIP) is committed to building and valuing diverse teams and taking positive action to promote equality and challenge unfair and unlawful discrimination. We recognise that women may experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination based on their sex and additional, real or perceived characteristics, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion, sexual orientation, social-economic background, immigration status, caring responsibilities, spent convictions or trade union membership.

WIP works to tackle discrimination and the structural inequalities women experience. We are committed to embedding diversity and inclusion in all areas of our work, including

recruitment, and aim to reflect the diversity and excellence of the women that we work with. We actively encourage applications from women from a variety of backgrounds, and with a range of skills and experiences. We are particularly interested to hear from women from Black, Asian and minoritised communities and women with lived experience of the criminal justice system who are underrepresented in leadership positions in our sector.

This role is only open to women, in accordance with the sex-based exemptions of the Equality Act 2010 pursuant to Schedule 9, Part 1.

This post is subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (Exceptions Order) 1975. Due to the nature of our work it will be necessary for an enhanced disclosure to be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service for details of any previous criminal convictions which are not protected under the Act.

### How to apply

Apply [here](#)

Application is by way of CV with a Supporting Statement that should set out your motivations for applying and how your work experience to date meets the scope of the responsibilities. As a general guide, your Supporting Statement should be around two sides of A4.

<b>Closing date:</b>	Midnight Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
<b>Preliminary interviews (NFP):</b>	Week commencing 20 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
<b>First interviews (WIP):</b>	Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
<b>Final interviews:</b>	Week commencing 4 <sup>th</sup> May 2026

To recruit the most appropriate candidate, a number of pre-employment due diligence checks will be undertaken in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. These checks will help determine the character and suitability of the individual to carry out this particular role.

### Accessibility

If you require reasonable adjustments at any stage of the recruitment process, including accessing a copy of the recruitment pack in large print or an alternative format, please contact [info@nfpconsulting.co.uk](mailto:info@nfpconsulting.co.uk)