CASE STUDY

Family Fund

Appointing Family Fund's First Head of Policy & Public Affairs

600+ APPLICANTS. SIX WEEKS TO APPOINTMENT.

Family Fund partnered with Murray McIntosh to make its first Head of Policy & Public Affairs appointment, a newly created leadership role at the heart of its new External Affairs Directorate, within six weeks of commencement.

With no existing blueprint for the role and a mandate to unify policy, research and communications across all four nations, Family Fund needed more than technical expertise. It needed a leader capable of bringing a newly formed directorate together from day one.

Results

10

Profiles longlisted for leadership review.

7

Profiles selected for interview.

6 WEEKS

From commencement to appointment.

THE ROLE WITH NO BLUEPRINT.

When there's no precedent, and no room for a wrong hire

This was a first-generation role with wide-ranging impact and no existing template to follow. Family Fund needed a leader who could support its UK-wide influencing function, coach and develop four devolved-nation managers into public affairs-focused roles, and bring strategic clarity across policy, research and communications.

Beyond technical credibility, the brief called for senior, hands-on public affairs expertise, values-driven leadership fully aligned with Family Fund's mission around disability, families and poverty, and the ability to navigate complexity in a newly formed directorate, fostering cohesion and cultural alignment from the outset.

A DUAL-TRACK SEARCH, BUILT ON INSIGHT.

Broad reach, precise targetingt isn’t enough

The process began with a detailed briefing session alongside the Chief Operating Officer and Director of Partnerships, Public Affairs & Family Outcomes, capturing the strategic intent for the new directorate, leadership expectations, cultural fit, team dynamics, and devolved nations and mission alignment priorities.

From there, Murray McIntosh ran a dual-track search: broad market outreach to attract candidates aligned with the charity and children's sectors, alongside discreet headhunting focused on leaders with experience in public affairs, devolved nations policy and evidence-led influencing. Together, these tracks drew a wide yet targeted pool of more than 600 applicants.

Candidates were assessed not only for subject-matter alignment, but for practical leadership, clarity of communication, structured outcomes-focused thinking, and the ability to manage a remote four-nation team, with clear evidence of developing and uplifting others. The process itself was designed to be accessible and equitable throughout, with presentation briefs and full interview questions shared in advance to meet Family Fund's accessibility standards, and proactive communication at every stage.

A LEADER READY FROM DAY ONE.

An appointment made from a genuinely competitive field

Family Fund made a successful appointment following a highly competitive field, with several shortlisted candidates considered appointable. The chosen candidate accepted the offer immediately and will now play a central role in shaping the organisation's UK-wide influencing capabilities and strengthening alignment across policy, research and communications.

> *“The quality of candidates was exceptional, the search absolutely reaped dividends. We were genuinely spoilt for choice and had several appointable people. The process was smooth, professional and incredibly thorough, and the way Lauren understood our organisation, our values and the kind of leader we needed made a real difference. This was an important role for us, and we’re delighted with the outcome. We couldn’t have asked for a better partner.”*
>
> ***— Louise Wood, Chief Operating Officer, Family Fund***

"Thank you for such a strong search. The calibre was impressive, and the whole process felt well managed and well supported. We are really pleased with the appointment."

— Andy Harper, Executive Director, Family Fund

THE PEOPLE YOU NEED DO EXIST.

Just let us know how we can help you.

Murray McIntosh is the recruitment partner for businesses, trade associations, NGOs, Charities and regulators. We place experts in a range of niche policy subject matters in Policy, Public Affairs, Strategic Communications, Economics, Corporate Affairs and External Affairs with our clients to make change happen.

We are well-versed in recruiting professionals across multiple industries such as Energy & Utilities, Financial Services, Healthcare & Pharma, Transport, Education, Built Environment, Manufacturing. Akin to strategic communication practices, our recruitment process involves research, insight, consultation and evaluation to find solutions and keep up with market changes.

In an environment comprised of disruption, regulation and increased public scrutiny, the professionals that we represent, specialise in helping organisations assess and navigate the political landscape, and deliver real, meaningful change.

FCSA Accredited Member

APSCo Compliance+ Accredited

Get in touch



LAUREN MADDOCKS

Associate Director - Policy, Public Affairs, Strategic Comms & Economics

01189 077 582

laurenmaddocks@murraymcintosh.com

Connect with me on LinkedIn

MM