

Sands
Application Information

**Research Officer - Saving Babies
Lives Team (6 month Fixed-Term
Contract)**

March 2026

About Sands

Sands exists to save babies' lives and ensure that anyone affected by pregnancy loss or baby death receives the support and care they need.

We provide bereavement support services both nationally through our Freephone helpline, online community and resources, as well as locally through a network of around 100 regional support groups based across the UK and run by trained befrienders.

Working in partnership with professionals, trusts and health boards, we offer a range of training programmes and bereavement care resources to ensure that every bereaved parent and family receives the best possible care wherever they are in the UK.

Additionally, we promote improvements in practice and support research to better understand the causes of deaths and save babies' lives.

Sands raises awareness of baby loss and works with government, key influencers and other stakeholders to make reducing the number of babies dying a priority nationally and locally.

Over the past 46 years, Sands has grown into a national charity with a powerful vision shared by dedicated volunteers, fundraisers, members, donors, healthcare professionals, partners, staff and bereaved parents and families.

Sands has grown its income by 40% since 2012 and, as part of our strategic plan, is focusing on how we can make the biggest difference to the lives of bereaved families and save babies' lives. To find out more, visit www.sands.org.uk

Our vision at Sands is for a world where fewer babies die and anyone affected by the death of a baby receives the best care and support for as long as they need, wherever they live in the UK.

Join us and help create a world where fewer babies die.

Sands Staff Benefits

Annual Leave

Staff receive 28 days annual leave per annum pro rata, plus bank holidays. Staff will be required to take 3 days annual leave during the period between Christmas & New Year.

Employee Assistance Services

As part of its commitment to employee wellbeing, Sands offers all Staff access to the Bupa employee Assistance service which offers free and confidential counselling and wellbeing support. Support is available on a range of issues including legal, financial, emotional, health, and work-related concerns.

Sand Cycle to Work Scheme

Sands has teamed up with Cycle Solutions to provide a Cycle to Work Scheme, which you can join to make considerable savings on the cost of a new bike and equipment.

Sands Pension Scheme

Subject to eligibility, you will be automatically enrolled into the Aviva Personal Pension scheme as soon as your employment commences. You can decide whether to remain in the scheme and/or make additional voluntary contributions if you wish.

Life Insurance

All Staff are covered by a Life Insurance Policy which pays 3 x annual salary to nominated beneficiaries. Staff also have access to Canada Life's WeCare wellbeing platform including 24/7 online GP, mental health counselling and financial and legal support. Additionally Staff have access to Bereavement Counselling and a Probate Helpline.

Flexible Working

All Staff can apply for flexible working with effect from their first date of employment.

Maternity Pay

Staff on maternity leave are paid their full salary for the first 26 weeks of their period of leave.

Leave for the Death of a Baby or Pregnancy Loss

Any member of Staff affected by the death of baby or pregnancy loss will be granted leave paid at their normal salary, regardless of the type of loss.

Sands is a vibrant, growing charity!

With a clear strategy, Sands is repositioning as a learning, developing organisation which aims to achieve excellence through people and offers a collegiate, collaborative working environment - making it an especially exciting time to join the charity.

Sands is an inclusive and diversity-friendly employer. We are committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity and working inclusively. We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds and do not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, colour, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age or any other category protected by law.

About the role

We are looking for a motivated, proactive and enthusiastic Research Officer to join Sands' Saving babies lives Team on a temporary 6-month basis.

This role sits within the well-established Saving Babies' Lives Team, and this role is part of Sands' drive to improve maternity and neonatal safety so that babies' lives are saved, and inequalities are reduced.

Sands' work to save babies lives focuses on the following objectives:

- Maternity and neonatal care is continually improved using research and evidence (including the experiences and perspectives of bereaved parents) to inform policy and practice
- All hospitals in the UK offer safe and personalised maternity and neonatal care
- Inequalities in outcome in maternity and neonatal care are eliminated
- Maternity and neonatal services have a culture which embraces and supports learning and improvement

Our aim is to save babies lives, with the UK matching the best-performing countries in Europe in reducing baby deaths, and within this to eliminate inequalities in these outcomes based on ethnicity and deprivation.

The Research Officer will have experience of working with researchers, supporting the development of studies and identifying gaps in evidence, innovation and guidance. Excellent organisation, communication and relationship building skills are key for this role.

To apply:

Please submit your CV, together with a supporting statement that demonstrates how you meet the criteria in the person specification to recruitment@sands.org.uk.

CVs and supporting statements should be sent as attachments to an email in either Word or PDF format. The title of the attachments should be your first name, surname and either CV or supporting statement e.g. "NAME.. CV"

Please also complete the Diversity and Equality Monitoring Form and send this with your application.

Closing date for applications: 6th April 2026

Interview Date: To be confirmed

As we have limited staff resources we are unable to provide candidates with feedback about their applications. **Interviews will be held online**

Job Description

Job Title:	Research Officer
Responsible to:	Research Manager
Location:	Homebased
Contract:	Temporary 6 month Fixed-Term contract
Hours:	Part Time - 21 Hours per week
Salary:	£21,600 per annum (pro rata £36,000) Plus £188 home workers allowance per annum (pro rata £312)

Key Responsibilities

- Support research that will further the development of evidence-based care policies leading to safe and personalised care
- Build strategic relationships with researchers and organisations and begin to identify gaps in evidence, innovation and guidance
- Ensure that the findings from research Sands has supported are used to deliver change

Principle tasks

- Support research that will further the development of evidence-based care policies leading to safe and personalised care
- Ensure that systems are in place so that Sands can identify and prioritise support for those studies that will make the greatest difference to Sands aims
- Maintain oversight of all Sands supported research including screening and review of new requests, managing ongoing relationships and commitments and responding to inquiries from researchers
- Support individual studies directly helping researchers to make the case for funding, demonstrate impact, and involve parents and families
- Create and deliver dissemination plans for all Sands supported research so that findings are used to improve maternity, neonatal and postnatal care
- Put systems in place to measure the impact of Sands supported research
- Ensure that the outcomes of Sands supported research studies reach key audiences
- Ensure that information about Sands research activity is regularly communicated to Sands staff and supporters

- Create engaging content and share research activity via social media channels and regularly updated pages on the Sands website
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of all Sands research activity
- Build strategic relationships with researchers and organisations and to identify gaps in evidence, innovations and guidance
- Maintain relationships with Sands researchers and build new strategic relationships with researchers or organisations that can help Sands achieve its aims
- Create a system for identifying gaps in evidence, innovations and guidance to inform and identify new and emerging areas of interest and impact. To help build an evidence base to support improvement in maternity and neonatal safety.

General

- Undertake any tasks and responsibilities commensurate with role as required by the Research Manager, Head of Saving Babies Lives and Director of Research, Education and Policy
- Liaise regularly with other Sands departments/teams and keep up to date with what they are doing
- Work flexibly with other members of staff and team, occasional evening/weekend working
- Promote the Sands vision and values at all times, clearly representing the views and positions of Sands distinct from any personal opinion
- Maintain a high level of confidentiality and professional conduct
- Abide by all Sands policies and procedures
- Undertake all mandatory training as required

- Be familiar with matters relating to Health & Safety Management, affecting themselves, their department and the organisation as a whole

This job description is not contractual and is liable to change over time

Person Specification

Skills and Experience		
Importance	Criteria	Assessment
Essential	Experience of working with researchers and supporting research studies	Application and interview
Essential	Ability to understand, assimilate and extract key messages from complex scientific papers and studies	Application and interview
Essential	Ability to identify gaps in evidence, innovations & guidelines	Application and interview
Essential	Experience of translating complex research evidence into engaging content for social media channels	Application and interview
Essential	Experience of creating and maintaining reporting and dissemination systems and procedures	Application and interview
Desirable	Experience of managing multiple high priority work streams simultaneously and meeting deadlines under pressure	Application and interview
Desirable	Knowledge of NHS services, including maternity, neonatal and bereavement care and the complications that can arise during pregnancy, birth and the new-born period	Application and interview
Essential	Willingness to keep abreast of new developments in research and in maternity and neonatal care	Application and interview
Essential	An understanding of research methods	Application and interview
Essential	An understanding of and empathy with the issues surrounding the death of a baby, and ability to communicate sensitivity with bereaved people	Application and interview
Essential	Good communication and presentation skills, with an ability to communicate scientific messages in a	Application and interview

	compelling way to a variety of audiences, lay and professional	
Essential	Networking and interpersonal skills with an ability to engage with researchers on complex issues concerning perinatal death	Application and interview
Essential	Ability to manage own workload, be well organised and demonstrate strong time management skills	Application and interview
Essential	Enthusiasm for continued learning and a willingness to adapt to changing circumstances	Application and interview
Essential	Good planning and organisational skills, with considerable attention to detail	Application and interview