

Programme Officer (cross-cutting commitments)

Full-time, permanent role

London, UK

About The Elders

The Elders was founded by Nelson Mandela in 2007 as an independent group of global leaders working for peace, justice, human rights and a sustainable planet. There are currently 11 active Elders from Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East. The group has been chaired since 2024 by Juan Manuel Santos, former President of Colombia and a Nobel Peace Laureate. Previous chairs were Desmond Tutu, Kofi Annan and Mary Robinson.

The Elders operate through private diplomacy and public advocacy; they use their experience, influence and access to heads of state and government to engage politically, and their connections to civil society to stand in solidarity with the most vulnerable people and communities.

Supporting the Elders' work is a Secretariat of around 25 staff, largely based in London. The work calls for a combination of initiative and humility, the ability to accept and implement Elders' decisions to high standards, and significant flexibility and teamwork. We have specialists in all our programme areas, alongside communications professionals and those who operationalise our work and the Foundation as a whole.

Role Overview

The Elders run programmes on the climate and nature crisis; nuclear weapons; pandemics; conflict; and Artificial Intelligence. Cutting across these are commitments on human rights; gender equality and women in leadership; intergenerational dialogue; and multilateralism. The post-holder will work closely with programme leads to provide general policy and programme support, including administrative support as required. They will also lead on integration and coordination of the cross-cutting commitments (excluding multilateralism, which is managed by another team member), as well as reporting on them. In addition, the post-holder will work closely with colleagues from the Communications Team to ensure the effective communication of Elders' commitments on cross-cutting issues to the public. The post-holder will report to the multilateral policy lead.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

Cross-cutting Commitments Lead and Policy Coordination

- Serve as the Secretariat's policy lead on cross-cutting commitments, delivering programmatic work and coordinating inputs on cross-cutting issues at key points in the annual programmatic cycle (operational planning, impact reporting, preparation of Executive Board meetings).

- Lead drafting and coordination of cross-cutting sections of policy papers, reports, briefing books, Board papers and talking points, ensuring coherence and analytical depth across programme areas.
- Ensure ongoing monitoring of and reporting on Elders' decisions on cross-cutting issues.
- Manage consultants working on cross-cutting issues, overseeing the quality of their outputs and handling associated contract and financial administration.

General Policy and Programme Support

- Support horizon-scanning, research and analysis to inform programme strategy and policy development, including maintaining watching briefs on specific issues or countries.
- Draft letters, statements and other written outputs for the Elders and the CEO.
- Manage and develop strategic partnerships with a select number of organisations (e.g. Chatham House), identifying opportunities to advance policy objectives and keeping Secretariat staff informed.
- Support the Programme Director and Head of Strategy and Planning in coordinating team-wide and cross-team activities including strategic planning, preparation of Elders' Board meetings, and impact reporting.
- Provide administrative support to programme leads, including for meetings and country visits, leading the production of briefing books for Elders' visits, maintaining the letter tracker and weekly priority list, and ensuring effective knowledge management across the team.
- Contribute substantive written analysis to funder reports and the Annual Review.

Technical Policy Lead on Human Rights, Gender Equality and Women in Leadership, and Intergenerational Dialogue

- Lead scoping, analysis and research on the above issues in close co-ordination with programme leads, to strengthen policy positions and programme impact across all five programme areas.
- Provide policy content on cross-cutting issues, including inputs to position papers, briefing books, talking points, speeches and op-eds.
- Build and manage strategic relationships with organisations and institutions working in these areas, with a focus on expanding networks in the Global South.

Person Specification

- 3–7 years' experience in international organisations, government, NGOs, think tanks, or development institutions, with a demonstrable policy focus.
- Strong grounding in politics, international relations, development studies and conflict, with experience of engaging governments, civil society and multilateral organisations on substantive policy issues.
- Proven ability to develop policy analysis and produce high-quality written outputs including briefings, position papers and reports.
- Technical expertise in one or more of the cross-cutting commitments.
- Analytical and research strength, including the ability to synthesise complex and sensitive information from diverse sources into clear, actionable policy recommendations.

- Experience integrating cross-cutting issues within international programmes.
- Experience in providing programme coordination and administrative support in a fast-paced environment.
- Excellent written and spoken English with the ability to draft compelling, precise policy documents for senior audiences.
- A strong personal commitment to the mission and values of The Elders.
- A collaborative working style suited to a small, agile team.
- This role may require some international travel, in exceptional circumstances. You may be required to attend staff or Elders events in the UK from time to time.

Working at The Elders

We operate a hybrid working policy, with a high degree of flexibility for staff. We ask staff to attend the office based on need, not a quota of days. We believe there are certain activities that are best conducted in person and also hold monthly “in days” when the whole team comes together. Aside from these obligations, staff are free to choose the balance between working remotely and working in the office that suits them best. We are based close to Green Park station in London, in a newly refurbished office.

The salary range is £36,400 - £38,000 depending on experience.

In addition to a competitive salary we offer the following benefits:

- Private pension scheme with 10% employer contributions
- Optional private medical and dental insurance
- Group life assurance equivalent to 5 x annual salary
- 28 days of paid annual leave (with 3 of these days on stipulated dates between the Christmas/New Year holidays) plus all UK bank holidays and public holidays
- Enhanced parental leave

The Application Process

The Elders is committed to creating an inclusive working environment that values diversity and equal opportunities. We welcome and encourage applicants of any ethnicity, religion, age, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation or disability. We will assess purely on your abilities and fit for a role. We are happy to discuss any adjustments you need to ensure a fair recruitment process and to enable you to be successful in your role if selected. You must have the right to work in the UK.

Please submit the following by email to jobs@theelders.org:

- Your curriculum vitae (CV)
- A tailored supporting statement confirming explicitly that you have the right to work in the UK and covering the points below:
 1. Your assessment of how your skills and experience match the job profile and any areas requiring further development
 2. Examples of when you have worked on one or more of the cross-cutting issues, your personal contribution and the impact you had.
 3. Examples of when you have coordinated others to achieve a common goal.

The closing date is **08.00am UK time on Monday 20 April**. First stage interviews will take place on 27th April and second stage interviews will be held in person on 30th April.

You may also wish to include why you would like to work for The Elders and address any additional points in the person specification to further demonstrate your suitability and experience. Your supporting statement should be no longer than two sides. Whilst we understand the benefits of AI, we would strongly encourage you to not use AI to answer these questions as part of your application.

We are expecting many applications and will be unable to consider any that do not meet the above requirements or are received after the deadline.