

Policy Officer (Disability Reform)

ROLE PURPOSE

About VCOSS

Too many Victorians face poverty and other forms of disadvantage that affect life opportunities and hinder community wellbeing. At the Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS), we exist to change that. For over 70 years, we've driven systemic reform, amplified voices for change, and worked to achieve our vision of a Victoria free from poverty and disadvantage. As the peak body for Victoria's social and community sector, VCOSS works with members and communities to activate collective power and influence change to achieve social and economic justice for current and future generations.

VCOSS is seeking a Policy Officer to work with us at a time of significant change and transformation in disability policy. Working with the Principal Policy Advisor, the Policy Officer will undertake assigned tasks that help VCOSS to monitor and appropriately participate in the reform environment and ensure VCOSS maintains a contemporary and accurate understanding of the issues in a dynamic policy landscape.

Under the guidance of the Principal Policy Advisor, this position will support two streams of work in the VCOSS Policy and Advocacy team: time-bound disability projects and broader disability policy work, and will collaborate with other policy and advocacy staff and other VCOSS teams to bring a disability policy lens into all other areas of VCOSS' work.

VCOSS encourages applications from people from culturally diverse backgrounds, linguistically diverse people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, members of the LGBTIQ+ communities, carers, and people with disabilities.

DETAILS

Team	Policy and Advocacy
Classification	Level 4 (in accordance with VCOSS EBA)
Status	1.0 FTE
Term	Fixed term position (12 month)
Salary	FTE \$87,156 – \$99,700
Reports to	Principal Policy Advisor (Social Justice and Inclusion)
Located	L8, 128 Exhibition St, Melbourne 3000 (VCOSS staff are currently working to a hybrid home-office model.)

KEY TASKS

Disability reform projects

1. Work under the general direction of the Principal Policy Advisor to deliver policy project(s) centred on disability reform. Tasks may include – but not be limited to:
 - Assisting the Principal Policy Advisor with project planning, monitoring and reporting.
 - Undertaking desktop research.
 - Undertaking member and stakeholder consultation and engagement and producing consultation feedback reports.
 - Drafting other types of project documents, including briefing papers, project reports, presentations and similar.

Disability policy and systemic advocacy

2. Support the Principal Policy Advisor to monitor the reform environment and ensure VCOSS maintains a contemporary and accurate understanding of the issues in a dynamic policy landscape. Tasks may include – but not be limited to:
 - Supporting VCOSS to continue to grow and develop its relationships with disability communities to ensure VCOSS' policy work appropriately centres lived and living experience perspectives.
 - Participating in community sector disability policy networks and other relevant forums as VCOSS delegate, or supporting the participation of senior VCOSS staff.
 - Monitoring and reporting on announcements from government agencies, disability peak bodies, disability advocacy groups, and other system actors.
 - Identifying upcoming consultation, review and inquiry processes.
3. Work under the direction of the Principal Policy Advisor to produce high-quality written policy submissions, position papers, policy briefs and research reports on disability policy matters. Key tasks may include – but not be limited to:
 - Provision of high level expertise centred on disability policy and reform including undertaking desktop research
 - Undertaking member and stakeholder consultation
 - Writing up consultation feedback
 - Undertaking initial sense-making of policy insights with the Principal Policy Advisor
 - Drafting findings and recommendations, or other assigned tasks that support the development of policy documents.
4. Provide support and advice across the Policy and Advocacy team and VCOSS on the intersections of disability with all other policy domains and areas of VCOSS work.
5. Provide support to whole-of-organisation flagship initiatives, such as the development of the annual VCOSS State Budget submission.

6. Work collaboratively with VCOSS staff to identify opportunities to strengthen policy development and advocacy.

7. Other duties as required.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

1. Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of disability, disability policy and/or disability advocacy, and a commitment to disability rights.
2. Experience working in a policy, research, advocacy or a related position.
3. Experience gathering, analysing and synthesising information, including information from desktop research and stakeholder consultation.
4. Strong written skills, with demonstrated experience drafting high-quality documents, such as briefing papers, reports or submissions.
5. Excellent organisational skills, with flexibility to prioritise a range of competing demands and work to deadlines.
6. Highly developed interpersonal skills with the ability to work independently or as part of a team.
7. Knowledge and a commitment to the objectives and values of VCOSS, and a capacity to represent views as required.
8. Relevant tertiary qualification or equivalent.

ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Reports to Principal Policy Advisor (Social Justice and Inclusion)

Supervises None

Internal Liaison VCOSS Policy Advisors
Director, Policy and Advocacy team
DARU (Disability Advocacy Resource Unit) Manager and staff

External Liaison VCOSS members
Disability Self-Advocacy Groups
Disability Advocacy Organisations
Peak bodies and sector networks
External contractors
Victorian Government departments



ABOUT VCOSS

VCOSS is the peak body for Victoria's social and community sector, and the state's premier social advocacy body.

We work towards a Victoria free from poverty and disadvantage, where all people and communities are supported to thrive. We champion wellbeing and inclusive growth.

VCOSS supports and advocates on behalf of its members. We respect the unique perspectives of people with experience of poverty or inequality and seek to strengthen and elevate their voices.

vcoss.org.au

HOW WE WORK

- We act ethically
- We lead and support collaborative initiatives for a thriving community sector
- We maintain productive relationships across the political spectrum
- We work in collaboration with our members
- We are transparent in our work and we consult widely
- We value and draw on the direct experiences of people affected by poverty and inequality
- We draw on the wisdom and expertise of our diverse member base
- We promote and advance the research and evidence base to drive advocacy priorities

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

VCOSS acknowledges the traditional owners of Country, and pays respect to Elders past and present, and to emerging leaders. Our office is located on the sovereign, unceded lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation.

