Position Description

Position Details	
Role title:	Practice Advancement Lead
Location:	Hybrid Melbourne office and work from home
Department:	Social Work Advancement
Hours of work:	Full Time
Tenure:	Ongoing
Date:	October 2026

Position Purpose

Reporting to the Manager Practice Advancement the Practice Advancement Lead contributes to the advancement of social work through the delivery of professional practice support, capability-building initiatives, practice resources, projects and partnerships that strengthen the profession and improve member value.

Working collaboratively with members, First Nations social workers and communities, professional leaders, academics, researchers and sector stakeholders, the role identifies emerging issues and opportunities and translates these into practical responses. This includes providing practice support and advice, developing professional resources and guidance, leading projects and initiatives, facilitating professional networks and communities of practice that strengthen social work capability.

The role draws on contemporary social work knowledge, evidence, member insights and stakeholder engagement to strengthen professional capability, support practice excellence and ensure AASW services remain relevant, responsive and impactful

About AASW

The AASW is the peak body for social workers in Australia, representing more than 18,000 members across every state and territory. We set the benchmark for professional education and practice while championing social justice, human rights and policies that improve the lives of individuals, families and communities.

The AASW has embarked on an ambitious period of change and renewal. Social workers have been clear about the Association they want. They want an organisation that is affordable, transparent, locally connected, professionally credible and a respected national voice for the profession. They want an AASW that listens to its members, protects professional standards, supports Branches, stands alongside First Nations social workers and communities, and advocates with confidence for the value and impact of social work.

Our focus is on building trust, strengthening governance, putting members back at the centre of decision-making, and creating a stronger, more responsive and more influential professional association.

With a new strategic direction, we are reshaping the AASW to become a genuinely member-centric organisation, one that is informed and driven by the knowledge, experience and leadership of social workers working in communities across Australia. As government expectations, workforce challenges and community needs continue to evolve, the AASW is strengthening its role as the national voice of the profession and a trusted advocate for evidence-informed policy and social change. If you are motivated by purpose, enjoy influencing public policy and want to contribute to meaningful change, there has never been a more exciting time to join the AASW.

Our Values

AASW employees are expected to operate by the aims and intent of our shared values.

- **Respect:** Trust, openness, compassion, and reflection
- **Collaboration:** Teamwork, shared vision, and collegiality
- **Integrity:** Responsibility, authenticity, and courage
- **Accountability:** Engagement and outcome delivery
- **Responsiveness:** Agility, self-awareness, and curiosity

Key Areas of Accountability

Practice Support, Resources and Capability Building

- Provide professional advice, support and guidance to members and stakeholders across a broad range of practice issues, supporting social workers to navigate complex practice matters, access resources and connect with relevant AASW services.
- Identify emerging trends, issues and opportunities through member engagement, stakeholder feedback and practice support activities, informing practice advancement priorities and organisational responses.
- Develop, maintain and review practice resources, knowledge products, guidance materials and tools that translate evidence, research, professional knowledge and member insights into practical supports for social workers.
- Design, facilitate and support communities of practice, peer learning networks, mentoring activities and professional learning initiatives that strengthen professional capability and connection.
- Facilitate professional discussions, knowledge exchange and collaborative learning across diverse areas of social work practice.

Projects, Partnerships and Engagement

- Plan, coordinate and deliver projects, initiatives and activities that strengthen professional capability, connection and practice excellence.
- Build and maintain productive relationships with members, Branches, academics, researchers, employers, government, First Nations social workers and communities, and other sector stakeholders.
- Ensure member, stakeholder and sector insights inform practice advancement initiatives, resources and organisational responses.
- Support the development of partnership opportunities that contribute to organisational and profession-wide priorities.
- Work collaboratively with AASW committees, advisory groups and other professional networks to identify emerging issues, inform priorities and support practice advancement activities.
- Represent the AASW through committees, forums, working groups, conferences and stakeholder engagements, promoting professional excellence and advancing the interests of the profession.

Organisational Contribution

- Contribute to organisational projects, strategic priorities and continuous improvement activities.
- Monitor and report on emerging practice issues, project outcomes and member needs.
- Work collaboratively across AASW teams to design and deliver integrated initiatives, ensuring alignment between practice advancement, professional learning, advocacy, professional standards, member engagement and communications activities.
- Respond flexibly to changing organisational priorities and emerging opportunities.

Key Selection Criteria
Essential Requirements • Tertiary qualification in Social Work and eligibility for AASW membership. • Significant contemporary social work practice experience, including experience in professional leadership, practice development, workforce capability, service improvement or practice advancement activities. • Demonstrated ability to provide professional advice, guidance and support on social work practice issues, and facilitate communities of practice, professional networks and peer learning activities that strengthen professional capability. • Demonstrated ability to translate practice knowledge, evidence and stakeholder insights into practical resources, initiatives, supports and organisational responses. • Demonstrated experience planning, coordinating and delivering projects, programs or initiatives involving multiple stakeholders, from concept through to implementation and evaluation. • Highly developed communication, facilitation and stakeholder engagement skills, including the ability to build productive relationships, influence outcomes and work collaboratively with members, First Nations stakeholders, professional communities, leaders and stakeholders. • Demonstrated ability to apply critical thinking and sound professional judgement to complex practice, professional and organisational challenges, balancing competing priorities to achieve outcomes. • Demonstrated commitment to professional excellence, collaboration, continuous improvement and advancing the social work profession.
Desirable Requirements • Postgraduate qualification in Social Work or a related field. • Experience working within a professional association, membership organisation, peak body or not-for-profit environment.
Key Compliance Requirements
All employees are required to: • Comply with AASW policies, procedures, values and the Code of Conduct. • Undertake duties in accordance with relevant legislative, regulatory and professional obligations, including work health and safety, privacy, equal opportunity, record keeping and financial management requirements. • Participate in mandatory training and maintain compliance with organisational requirements relevant to the role. • Contribute to a safe, respectful and inclusive workplace. • Police check and other employment-related screening may be required as part of the employment process

Acknowledgment and Acceptance

This position description is intended to describe the general nature and responsibilities of the role. Responsibilities may change over time to reflect organisational priorities and operational requirements.

Employee Acceptance		
Print name:	Signature:	Date:

Employer Acceptance		
Kerryn Pennell, CEO		
	Signature:	Date: