Associate Director (Data & Digital)

Full time role. Flexible location, regular travel to our London office and to clients or partners around the UK will be required.

About Social Finance

We are an ambitious not for profit organisation that partners with governments, service providers, the voluntary sector, and the financial community. Together, we find better ways of tackling social problems in the UK and globally.

Since we started in 2007, Social Finance has helped to pioneer a series of programmes to improve outcomes for individuals with complex needs. Our innovations, including the social impact bond model, have mobilised more than £500 million globally. We have sister organisations in the US, Israel, the Netherlands and India and a network of partners across the world.

What we do

Our unique method combines financial analysis, data science, service design, and social issues research. We focus this expertise on understanding the needs of service users and working with communities to create new responses to challenging social problems.

We develop models, products and services that are pragmatic and have the scope to drive systemic change to improve people's lives. In the UK, we focus on issues such as homelessness, domestic abuse, mental health, learning difficulties, loneliness, and vulnerable children on the edge of the care system. We also look to improve equity for marginalised communities in social services. Internationally, we design outcomes-based models for issues such as maternal and neonatal health, education, and employment.

Our Values

Everyone at Social Finance believes that change is possible. Our unique blend of skills and backgrounds enables us to create breakthrough solutions to society's toughest problems. To help us do it, we have three core values that guide everything we do:

Curious

We unearth the evidence, ask the awkward questions, and don't give up until we get an answer. Through rigorous thinking, and learning from others, we generate ideas that make a big social impact.

Empathetic

We look from all angles, welcome all viewpoints. We seek to understand without reproach. We build strong teams from diverse backgrounds, with a shared goal to create lasting partnerships for change.

Pioneering

We are ambitious for lasting change and won't stop until social systems truly meet people's needs. Change is hard. But by combining social insight, business flair and practical innovation – we make it happen.

If this sounds like you, then we'd love to hear more. More information about us can be found on our website: www.socialfinance.org.uk

The opportunity

We are looking for an Associate Director passionate about how data and emergent technology can be used to solve social problems and create a fairer society. Your work will be varied; leading projects/products, developing our data and digital strategy, and coaching and mentoring colleagues. Your peers are likely to have 8 - 10 years' experience in this sector and are currently managing a number of projects, analysts and managers at Social Finance.

Data and digital is the major growth area for Social Finance. They are key ingredients to delivering 21st century services that improve outcomes. Over the next 12-18 months we have an ambitious plan of growing the team, expanding into new social issues, and building international collaborations to bring our approach and model to new countries.

The Data + Digital Labs team

Recent examples of our projects include:

• Using data science to uncover hidden social issues – we analysed local authority social care and education data (bringing together 700 datasets) and did user research with decision makers to find new ways to help reduce exclusions. We showed that girls were being 'excluded' at a higher rate than boys, but their exclusions were hidden by official definitions. Our findings featured in The Guardian. We are now helping authorities replicate our analysis and are developing an intervention to support the high-risk students which the analysis identified.

• Changing the social contract between government and residents – We have worked closely across councils in Wales to enable adult social care to better communicate and share information with people accessing their services. Our multi-disciplinary team applied user centred design to define the problem, prototype solutions, and build and embed a new digital service. Our approach to share knowledge and skills with partner teams has enabled the service to be adopted by council digital and service teams to improve transparency and trust between people accessing adult social care and councils.

• Improving mental health with better service data – We have run a large, national programme called IPS Grow since 2019, which is supporting the NHS and other government departments to significantly increase the number of people with mental health conditions and drug and alcohol addictions who can find and keep fulfilling work. We have developed and currently manage an outcomes and reporting tool which allows services to capture, monitor and respond to their performance data more effectively, improving outcomes for people using the service.

Responsibilities

We are looking for an Associate Director passionate about enabling the public, social and health sectors to use data and digital to improve outcomes for people across the United Kingdom and beyond. You will work closely with the team to develop and implement our impact strategies across important social issues in the UK and beyond from improving outcomes for children in care to reducing health inequality to tackling intimate image abuse.

Our work is broad and wide reaching – ranging across digital transformation, risk modelling, business intelligence, developing data standards, designing the commercial models for 'govtech' and 'tech for good' products, advising on the ethics of data collaborations, and training partners' data scientists.

This breadth is intentional. Rather than trying to develop our own leadership in a single area, we are trying to achieve social change. We take on this wide variety of challenges because these challenges

are what lie between us and our goals. You will need to be excited by that breadth – and by the frequent need for teams to blend technical with policy and service delivery expertise to identify the right solution.

Ultimately, social impact should be your driver rather than the use of cutting-edge data science approaches or the latest technologies as we are often constrained by the data, technology, and in-house capability of our partners. This provides you with the opportunity to think of creative ways to work around those constraints and consider that to be part of the fun.

About you
It is important you have a mix of the skills and experiences below and, most importantly, will be excited about the opportunity to lead and learn.

Changing systems

•   Refining and implementing our strategy - working with the senior team to shape our strategy and roadmap for projects and products from health and social care, children services, international development and more.

•   Build pipeline of strategically aligned projects/products - developing a pipeline of impactful and strategic projects to enable us to deliver our vision of improving outcomes across our social issue strategies (from responding to tenders to building meaningful relationships with our partners/clients).

•   Stakeholder management & relationship building – building and managing a network of relationships in your area of strategic focus externally. You are also able to manage challenging or delicate external relationships, knowing when to step in to support team members (and when not to).

Delivering sustainable impact

•   Leading projects - leading projects/products that enable our partners to more effectively use data and technology to improve decision-making and explain our approach and insights to stakeholders and partners.

•   Communicating insights to non-data and tech roles – you will need to be comfortable speaking with a range of people and roles, helping them to understand data and technology and taking important decisions from re-designing services or choosing a coding language.

•   Supporting our partners – you will love building our partners' capacity to undertake similar work themselves whether this is pairing with their team, launching an apprenticeship programme for data science or open-sourcing solutions so that they are easy for others to use and build on.

Building thriving teams

•   Managing ambiguity – you will need to be comfortable with changing approaches as you and the team develop a better understanding of the problem and what might solve it.

•   Managing in an agile way – manage ambiguity, establish ways of working that enable multi-disciplinary specialists to thrive and successfully collaborate across skillsets and workstreams, and ultimately enable the team to deliver social impact.

- Coaching and supporting colleagues - helping them to structure their work, build new skills and expertise and check that the outputs are production/publication ready.

- Considering ethics - think about and explore the ethical implications of data, technology, and society – e.g., how design decisions exacerbate or counter problems such as structural racism and algorithmic bias, or the tendency towards state surveillance of disadvantaged people.

The following is desirable, but not essential:

- Leading or contributing to open-source projects – increasingly a key part of our impact strategy.

- Working with the public and social sector – inc. experience with the Government Digital Service standards, government, ICO (Information Commissioner s Office) and NHS best-practise guidance on data ethics, sharing, and analysis.

- Working in multi-disciplinary teams - working with user researchers, designers, developers, business analysts and others.

Our commitment to you

Social Finance offers a range of training and development support, using both in-house expertise and external partners to develop and deliver our training programmes. Alongside the Project Managers you work with day to day, your Line Manager will support you in your career planning and personal development. All new staff have a buddy in place to help them learn about life at Social Finance.

The fixed salary for this position is £60,000 per annum (plus 10% in lieu of benefits). We offer a generous holiday allowance plus bank holidays and corporate leave between Christmas and New Year when the office is closed. We also offer a contributory stakeholder pension scheme, season ticket loans, bike to work schemes and Give as you Earn via salary sacrifice.

Encouraging community and wellbeing is important to us. We have a health and wellbeing plan to encourage better working practices for individuals. Social Finance is a disability confident committed employer as well as a founding signature of the UK social investment sector's Diversity Forum manifesto.

Diversity and inclusion

We need a diverse organisation to be effective. Our work requires us to bring together people with a broad range of skills and life experiences to ensure our impact across a range of social issues and systems. We are committed to having an inclusive culture and working environment in which everyone feels at home and is supported to achieve their potential. We know there is further to go and are implementing a Diversity and Inclusion strategy with a group of external experts to hold us to account.

We actively encourage applications from under-represented and minoritised groups, including those with lived experience of the social issues we are working to address. We are an equal opportunities employer. We support a range of flexible working options and welcome UK based applications from outside of London/the Southeast so far as they can meet the in-person meeting requirements for the role. We can also accommodate secondments and part-time working.

How to apply

Social Finance are using Applied, a new application platform developed by the Behavioural Insights Team, to record your application. Applied is focused on using behavioural and data science to improve hiring decisions and minimise unconscious bias in the recruitment process. You will be asked to respond to four situational based questions which will allow you to express your ability.

Your answer to each question will be viewed in isolation. Please therefore ensure there is enough detail in that single response, without any references to your other responses.

NB: Whilst we are asking for your CV, please note that we will not be viewing your CV during the initial sift process. The selection panel will not have access to your CV, so it is therefore essential that you respond to each question fully.

Apply for this position using this link or by copying and pasting the address below

https://app.beapplied.com/apply/d950ut5uzr

Closing date for applications: 1pm, Tuesday 7 June 2022