UCL CAREERS

FIND *your* FUTURE

Exploring Careers in Charities, NGOs, & International Development

A guide and resources

Made for **S**tudents from:
Laws,
Arts & Humanities,
Social
& **H**istorical Sciences,
and the **I**nstitute
of **E**ducation

Exploring Charity & Development Sector Careers

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Is the Charity & Development sector right for me?

So you're interested in the Charity & Development sector, but not quite sure if it's for you. That's understandable, it's not always clear how the sector is organised and operates.

The first thing to say is not to focus on the differences between Charities, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO), or International Development organisations. All are non-profit and they can even do similar work. Charities are generally focused on local or national issues and populations, whereas the others focus on international / regional issues and populations. As outlined below, it seems better to focus on the issues and populations you find interesting.

Because of the range of organisations and the diverse issues with which development is concerned, the opportunities are wide-ranging and potential career paths vary. Broadly speaking, roles fall into four categories; Support, Policy /Advisory, Advocacy /Outreach, and Practitioner.

The aim of this document is to help you understand which of these four categories you would prefer. Work through the following four questions and carry out the research described to understand the types of roles available and whether they are right for you.

Q 1. What am I interested in?
Q 2. How do I want to influence the agenda?
Q 3. What skills do I want to use?
Q 4. How do I know the job suits me?

Q 1. What am I interested in?

When people talk about having an interest in Charity & Development work, they often talk about doing something which has a real impact in the world. Sometimes this is a general sentiment, sometimes this relates to specific issues. Can you reflect now on what issues are important to you?

What current affairs issues do you find yourself drawn to? What grabs your attention in the news and/or social media? Do you notice any consistent themes here?

During your course have you chosen any modules or found any particularly enjoyable? Are there any connections here to broader issues?

Are you involved in any societies? Do you have any hobbies with a social or political element?

Are there any consistent themes that link to any of the broad issues overleaf?

If you cannot identify any consistent themes, try prioritising the list overleaf; what would you like to influence, which are you more or less interested in?

You should now be able to identify at least one issue which is important to you. If you identify many, prioritise them.

DON'T worry if you cannot prioritise, or if there are many which interest you. Simply note your reflections, skip the next question, and move on to Q 3.

Having one or two preferences is a good starting point and can help to focus your search, however one can influence the agenda in many ways. The next question asks you to consider in what way you want to work on the issues.

Which issue is most important to you?

- Social equality
- Human rights
- Legal rights
- Financial / Economics
- Physical health
- Mental health
- Educational
- Political
- Security
- Environmental standards
- Infrastructure
- Business development
- Forced migration
- Emergencies, conflict and disasters
- Other?

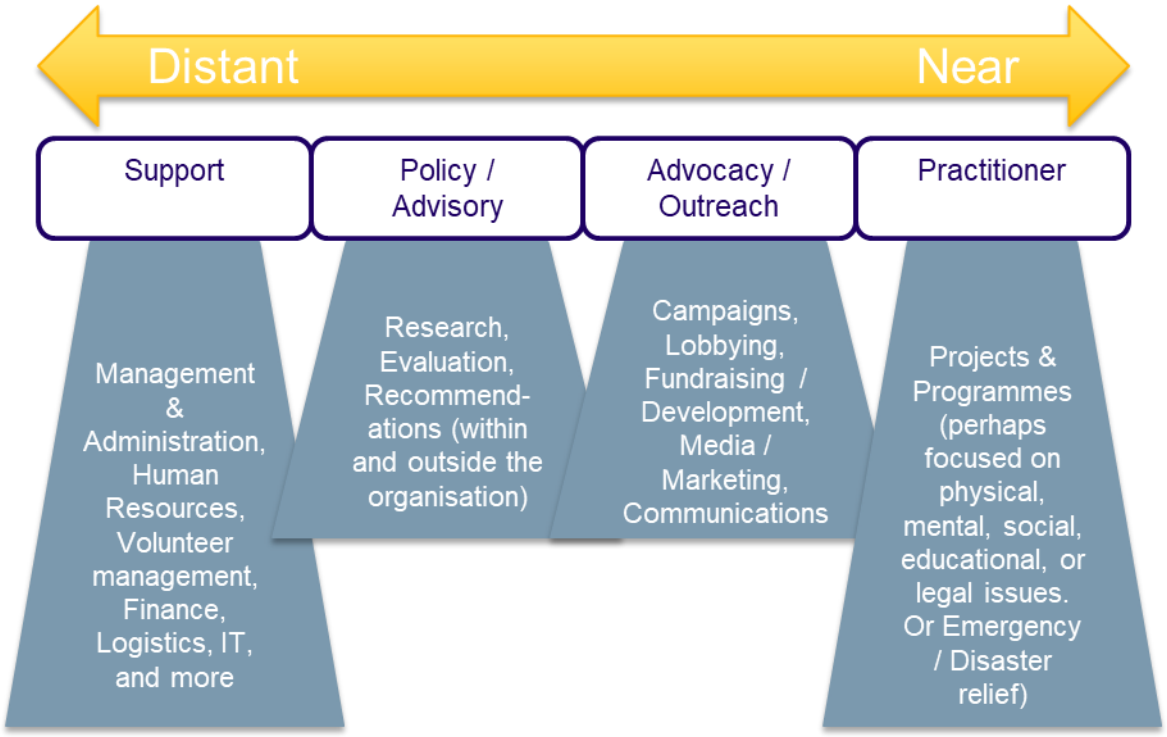
Q 2. How do I want to influence the agenda?

Pick one of the issues which are important to you (as listed above). You may want to refine this further by considering the population you would most like to serve, e.g. the elderly or children, specific ethnic groups, those in a specific region (perhaps utilising a second language).

When you imagine yourself in this area, how distant are you from the 'frontline'? How close do you want to be to the people being served by the charity/development organisation?

Broadly speaking, job roles fall into four categories. Which of the below four categories suit you best? If you identify many, prioritise them.

How do you want to influence this issue?



Once you have prioritised and identified your most preferred job category you can move on to Q 4. However, you may want to review Q 3 now or at another time.

DON'T worry if you cannot decide at this stage. In one way this just means you are open and flexible to many roles. However, it is advisable to understand where you are best suited so that you can target your search and have better conversations with potential employers. The next question takes a different approach to understanding which of the four categories best suit you.

Q 3. What skills do I want to use?

Instead of thinking about where you would prefer to be, we could consider where your skills would be most suited. Let's first identify those skills you associate with most.

Sometimes it's hard to notice those things we are good at. Our friends and family have the advantageous perspective of seeing you flourish in many different areas. You could try asking them what skills they think you have…or try to take on this perspective yourself.

Review your past activities and experiences; your hobbies, voluntary work, societies, work experience, and academic life. Can you recall things that went well, good grades, people praising you, what made you proud? What skills were you using which led to such a good outcome? Do you notice any skills being used consistently? If you are using the skills often and enjoy the process, we can call these *strengths*.

At this point, compile a list of your skills and strengths. Can you group any of them together? Are there any themes? Is any one theme or group more dominant than the others? What does this tell you about your preferences / what you want to use in a job?

Do your preferences fit more or less into any of the below skill areas? You are multi-skilled and likely fit more than one, but try prioritising and selecting your most preferred skill area.

Skill Areas		Job Categories
Leadership and Strategy *within organisations, working on various projects*	→	Support
Research and Analysis *behind the scenes to evaluate & generate policy or influence strategy & campaigns*	→	Policy / Advisory
Communication and Collaboration *across organisations and stakeholders for events & campaigns*	→	Advocacy
Supporting and Empathising *towards clients*	→	Practitioner

These skill areas can be, *somewhat*, mapped onto the four job categories mentioned in the last section. All jobs use multiple skills, however some jobs have a greater requirement for these skill areas than others. Accordingly, which of the four job categories fit your skill preferences?

Once you have prioritised and identified your most preferred job category move on to Q 4.

There may be a difference between how you want to influence the agenda (Q 2) and where your skills suggest you would fit in (Q 3). If so, this may suggest you have more skills to develop and hone before you can influence the agenda in that particular way, and so rather than your first job perhaps it will be your next job. The best way forward will be to research roles across both job categories to understand the different pathways and skills required (as described in the following section).

Again, DON'T worry if you cannot decide at this stage. In one way this just means you are open and flexible to many roles. However, it is advisable to understand where you are best suited so that you can target your search and have better conversations with potential employers. Simply select one category at a time to start researching roles as outlined in the next section.

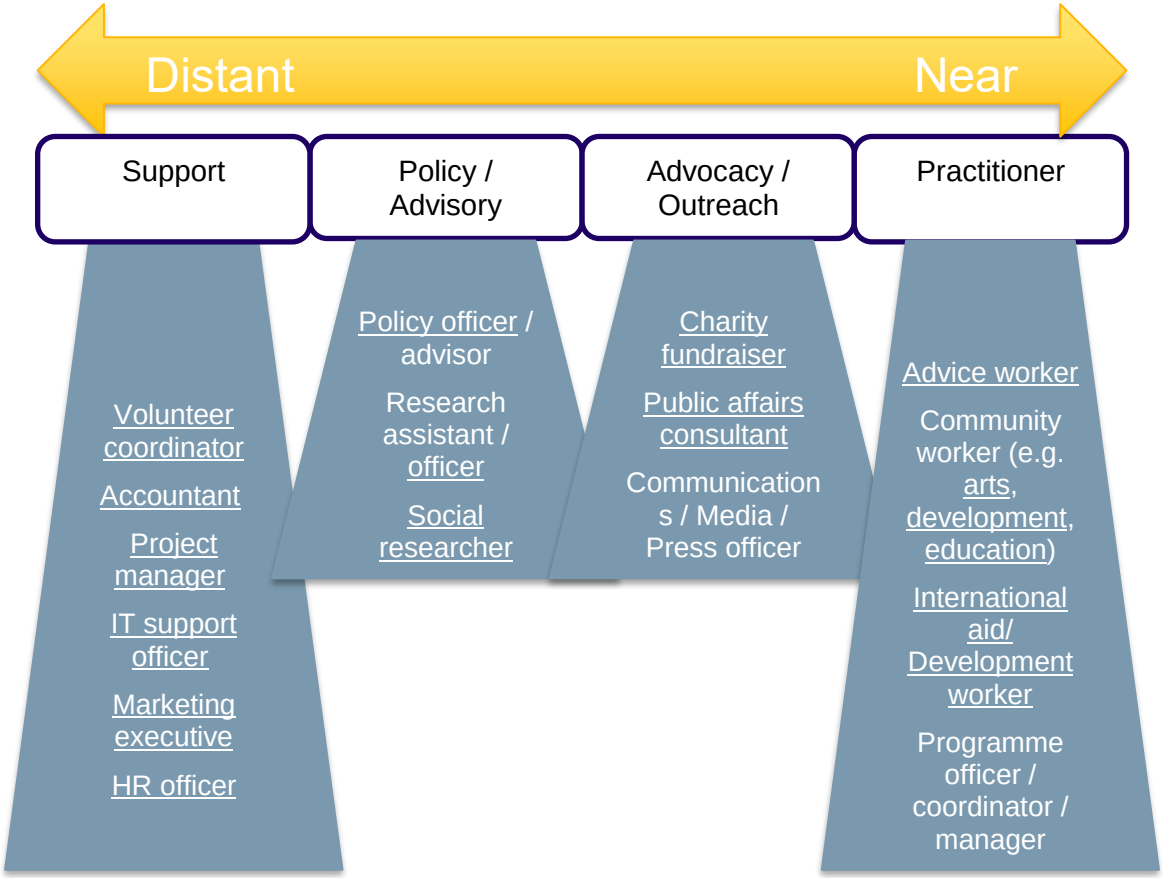
Q 4. How do I know the job suits me?

No one can tell you what job you should do. There are likely to be many jobs that you will find equally fulfilling. Only you can decide which of the many suitable jobs you would prefer most. The following outlines an approach to researching and narrowing your options and get a clearer idea of what roles might suit you.

a) Initial Research

Start with your preferred job category and read about the different roles within the category as presented in the below graph. You can follow the links provided and complement this with further internet searches for job descriptions. Importantly, this is just a starting point, the below list is not exhaustive and you will inevitably come across related roles. Through your research you can start discounting the less appealing roles. The aim is to narrow your options by selecting the more appealing roles which you will subsequently research at a deeper level.

You may want to repeat this process with another job category, but be wary of taking on too many roles to research deeply at the same time (do what is manageable and take your time).



b) Deeper Research

You should now have a select number of roles to research further. We are going to look into specific organisations so that you can gain a better understanding of how they work; both internally within and across teams, but also externally with their clients, the public, and other organisations.

Selecting the issue you are most interested in, e.g. environmental issues, create a list of all the charities, NGOs, and/or development organisations involved in this issue. Who is being vocal in the media; online and offline publications? Perhaps you have come across some organisations through your studies. You can use larger 'donor' organisations (funding bodies like the UN) to locate smaller accredited organisations, e.g. https://esango.un.org/civilsociety/login.do. There are also several other online directories.

If you have been unable to prioritise issues which interest you, simply choose one and start researching as described. Selecting an issue helps to focus the research and allows you to understand the role within a specific context.

You may want to search such directories more thoroughly in the future, but for now simply pick a couple of organisations, perhaps those based locally and relatively well known. Research their webpages, newsfeeds, and reports to understand the work they do – and what teams are involved. Looking at a recent project can you discover how your preferred roles were involved? What related and peripheral roles have you found – these may also be worth researching.

Take this further and speak to people in one or two of these organisations working in your preferred roles.

i. Search LinkedIn.com for the organisation.
ii. Then select the "People" option on the left to see all the people registered on the platform who work in that organisation. From here you can search and filter the display to find the person doing the work you are most interested in.
iii. Contact them with a *personal* message requesting to learn more about their career history and the role. Ideally you will find someone with a common connection, e.g. UCL or previous university, degree subject, or a friend/family member who can introduce you.

See Information interviewing questions for an ideas of what to ask. You may also find the UCL mentoring platform quite useful as graduates have signed up to help you! – uclalumnicommunity.org.

Tips for researching:

- What the organisation(s) has done recently.
- Finding out what how your chosen role contributes to this work.
- Interrogate the job, e.g. what is the average day in the life of someone in that role?
- What experience is valued / did other people have before starting?

Sources:

- Reviewing the organisation's webpages, annual report, and where they have appeared in the news.
- Watching videos / reading case studies on organisations webpages.
- Reading person specifications and job descriptions for any advertised roles.
- Reading 'job profile' summaries on prospects.ac.uk.
- Watching people's stories on icould.com and YouTube (some on our channel).
- Looking at successful professionals' work history on their LinkedIn profile.
- Talking directly to graduates currently doing the work (find willing graduates on the alumni mentoring platform uclalumnicommunity.org).

c) Evaluate

Consider what you have learned about the role in light of your original motivations. Is it what you expected? Does one influence the agenda as hoped? Does it involve the skill set you expected? Does it meet your expectations around salary, work/life balance, development opportunities, or whatever else is important to you in a job?

It seems unlikely you will have found a role which meets *all* of your expectations. You may decide that it doesn't come close and so discount the role for now, continuing the research process with a different role. Or you may decide that it meets *enough* of your expectations and so you will be prepared to give it a try. In that case, it will be time to apply to jobs.

It is perfectly normal not to be certain. You may even have identified a couple of roles, none of which stand out above the others. Although you could continue researching, sometimes you have to experience the workplace before feeling confident that it is a good fit. If you think it is time, focus on a manageable number of jobs to search and apply to.

d) Try it out

Having narrowed down your options to a couple (manageable number) of roles it is time to find and apply. You will find guidance and resources for this on our webpages (www.ucl.ac.uk/careers/).

While looking for advertised roles you may discover unheard of titles, don't be put off evaluating these and applying. Sometimes gaining that ideal role involves an intermediate job(s) or 'stepping stone', an opportunity to build experience and show motivation for the issues. The research process should clarify if this is the case. These intermediate jobs are not always clearly advertised. Thus, in this sector, it is advisable to approach organisations directly with a quality speculative application. You may find your previous LinkedIn contacts useful for this, but don't be put off contacting an organisation completely 'cold'.

Tips for trying it out:

- Volunteer with an organisation you are interested in and try to get included on their internal communications
- If you've volunteered or interned in the past, let them know you're job hunting
- Join networks that promote good practice in the area you are interested in (e.g. professional associations), and also the more general LinkedIn groups such as *Non-Profit & Charity Network*
- Use the UCL alumni mentoring platform uclalumnicommunity.org and LinkedIn to find mentors in the area
- Send speculative applications, showing knowledge & motivation of the issues/what they do, a relevant skill set, and a suggestion of where you would fit in. You are inviting a discussion so be flexible about the role you will take, and follow up even if there is no reply

Resources based on Organisations of interest:

Governmental organisations

For example:

- UK Department for International Development (DFID)
- French Development Agency
- German Development Agency
- US Agency for International Development

(Other countries will have an equivalent department responsible for aid)

Intergovernmental/ Multi-lateral/ Regional Organisations

A list of links to UN and other inter-governmental organisations
http://libguides.northwestern.edu/IGO

For example:

United Nations

- UN Careers information http://careers.un.org
- Jobs www.unjobs.org
- Entry level (for experienced candidates) Junior Professional Officer and Young Professionals Programme
- Information and resources www.impactpool.org/career-resources
- www.facebook.com/UN.Careers
- http://twitter.com/un_careers
- Unpaid Internships
    - Internships with UN agencies https://careers.un.org/lbw/home.aspx?viewtype=ip
    - UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) internships in London www.unhcr.org/uk/internships.html
    - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) https://en.unesco.org/careers/internships
    - UNICEF The New and Emerging Talent Initiative (NETI) www.unicef.org/about/employ/index_74609.html
    - International Maritime Organization www.imo.org/en/About/Careers/Internship/Pages/Default.aspx
    - How to secure an internship within the UN https://unjobfinder.org/articles/how-to-secure-an-internship-with-the-un--step-by-step
    - United Nations Volunteers Programme https://careers.un.org/lbw/home.aspx?viewtype=VOL & www.unv.org/how-to-volunteer.html

NATO

- Jobs www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/recruitment.htm
- Internships www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/71157.htm

Organisation for Security & Co-operation in Europe

- Jobs https://jobs.osce.org/
- Internships https://jobs.osce.org/internships

Organisation for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD)

- Jobs www.oecd.org/careers/
- Young Professionals Programme www.oecd.org/careers/young-professionals-programme/

World Bank

- Jobs www.worldbank.org/en/about/careers
- Programs and Internships www.worldbank.org/en/about/careers/programs-and-internships

International Monetary Fund

- Summer Internships www.imf.org/external/np/adm/rec/job/summint.htm

World Trade Organisation

- Trainee Programmes and Internships www.unicef.org/about/employ/index_74609.html

World Health Organisation

- Internships www.who.int/careers/internships/en/

World Food Bank

- Internships, Junior Professional Officers, and Volunteering opportunities www1.wfp.org/careers

British Council

- Opportunities in UK and Abroad www.britishcouncil.org/study-work-abroad

EU Institutions

- The Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development is the Commission department responsible for EU policy on development and delivering international aid
- See what other EU institutions are doing on international cooperation and development
- European Personnel Selection Office http://europa.eu/epso/index_en.htm overview of routes and opportunities
- Graduate opportunities https://epso.europa.eu/job-opportunities/entry-level-graduate_en
- Traineeships (or *stage*) https://ec.europa.eu/stages/ - Approx. 6 months starting in March or October, applications close 6 months prior. Degree certificate required.
  EU Traineeships blog www.ectraineeship.info (unofficial)
- Opportunities for linguists https://epso.europa.eu/career-profiles/languages_en
- European Commission https://ec.europa.eu/info/about-european-commission_en
- EU official website http://europa.eu/index_en.htm
- EU Jargon buster http://careers.guardian.co.uk/eu-careers-jargon-guide
- PubAffairs guide to finding a job in Brussels
- Video about EU Careers: www.youtube.com/watch?v=AYoIKU4JO3w

- EU Careers on Facebook www.facebook.com/EU.Careers.EPSO
- Twitter https://twitter.com/EU_Careers
- EU Careers on LinkedIn

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

Including, but by no means limited to:

- CAFOD https://cafod.org.uk/Work-with-us
- Christian Aid https://jobs.christianaid.org.uk
- Islamic Relief www.islamic-relief.org.uk/about-us/vacancies/
- Oxfam www.oxfam.org.uk/what-we-do/about-us/working-at-oxfam
- Save the Children https://jobs.savethechildren.org.uk
- WaterAid https://jobs.wateraid.org/
- World Vision www.worldvision.org.uk/who-we-are/jobs/

Use the following to find more:

- World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations directory of NGOs
- British Overseas NGOs for Development (BOND) www.bond.org.uk/

Academic organisations/research institutes

Including, but by no means limited to:

- The Institute of Development Studies (IDS) (Sussex University)
- The Overseas Development Institute (ODI)
- The Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House)

Use the following to find more:

- The Guardian provide a list of think tanks in the UK can be found
- NIRA directory of think tanks from around the world
- Sourcewatch list of think tanks in UK, US and Australia
- 80,000 hours guide to think tank research

Consultancies

Including, but by no means limited to:

- Adam Smith International
- Africa Practice
- Crown Agents
- DAI
- Forum for the Future
- ITAD
- Justice Studio
- MASDAR
- MetaMetrics
- The Palladium Group

Use the following to find more:

- Directory Of Consulting Firms active in International Development Co-operation

Resources based on type of opportunity:

Volunteering

- 2Way Development www.2waydevelopment.com
- Do-it www.do-it.org.uk/
- International Citizen Service (ICS) www.volunteerics.org/
- Medicins sans Frontieres www.msf.org.uk/
- TimeBank http://timebank.org.uk/
- UCL Volunteering Service http://studentsunionucl.org/volunteering have opportunities to develop your own project, join established projects, or simply scan their directory of partnering organisations
- United Nations Volunteers Programme www.unv.org/how-to-volunteer.html
- Vinspired http://vinspired.com/connects
- Volunteering Matters http://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/
- VSO www.vso.org.uk/

Sample Internships

- Amnesty International https://careers.amnesty.org/
- British Council Internships www.britishcouncil.org/study-work-abroad
- British Red Cross www.redcross.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/volunteer-internships
- Cancer Research UK www.cancerresearchuk.org/support-us/volunteer/internships
- IMF Summer Internships www.imf.org/external/np/adm/rec/job/summint.htm
- Macmillan Cancer Support www.macmillan.org.uk/about-us/working-with-us/careers-at-macmillan/mac-interns
- Marie Curie Cancer Care www.mariecurie.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering
- NATO www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/71157.htm
- OECD Young Professionals Programme www.oecd.org/careers/young-professionals-programme/
- People and Planet https://peopleandplanet.org/work-with-us
- The Charities Advisory Trust www.charitiesadvisorytrust.org.uk
- The Starfish Greathearts Foundation www.starfishcharity.org/get-involved-uk/volunteer.aspx
- United Nations https://careers.un.org/lbw/home.aspx?viewtype=ip
- WHO Internships www.who.int/careers/internships/en/
- World Land Trust www.worldlandtrust.org
- WTO Trainee Programmes www.unicef.org/about/employ/index_74609.html

Sample Graduate Schemes

- Cancer Research UK www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-us/graduates-and-interns/graduate-scheme
- CharityWorks www.charity-works.co.uk/graduate-programme/
- City Year www.cityyear.org.uk/
- Department for International Development (DfID) www.dfid.gov.uk/work-with-us/working-for-dfid/jobs (does not appear to be running 2019)
- gradunique
- IntoUniversity http://intouniversity.org/graduatescheme
- Overseas Development Institute (ODI) Fellowship Scheme www.odi.org/odi-fellowship-scheme
- Sanctuary Group www.sanctuary-graduates.co.uk/

- The Wellcome Trust https://wellcome.ac.uk/jobs/graduate-development-programme
- The World Bank Group Junior Professional Associates (JPA) programme www.worldbank.org/en/about/careers/programs-and-internships/young-professionals-program
- Worthwhile www.worthwhile.org.uk/
- Year Here http://yearhere.org/

Sector vacancies (any entry point)

- AidJobs http://aidjobs.org
- Bond (British Overseas NGOs for Development) www.bond.org.uk/pages/internships-and-volunteering.html
- Charity Job www.charityjob.co.uk
- Charity People www.charitypeople.co.uk/
- DevNetJOBS www.devnetjobs.org/
- Good Moves www.goodmoves.org.uk/ (mainly Scotland)
- Idealist www.idealist.org/
- Inside Housing: Jobs http://jobs.insidehousing.co.uk/
- Jobs Go Public www.jobsgopublic.com/job_areas/charitiesvoluntary
- LinkedIn Jobs www.linkedin.com/jobs/
- LinkedIn Groups www.linkedin.com/groups/
- Net Impact www.netimpact.org/jobs
- The Development Executive Group (Devex) www.devex.com/jobs/search
- The Economist https://jobs.economist.com/
- The Guardian job website http://jobs.theguardian.com/
- Third Sector: Jobs http://jobs.thirdsector.co.uk/
- UN careers (a range of jobs across the UN agencies) https://careers.un.org/
- Workfuly https://workfuly.co.uk/

General Resources:

Directories

(search by region or issue)

- Charities: www.charitychoice.co.uk/
- Charities: https://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/ShowCharity/RegisterOfCharities/AdvancedSearch.aspx
- NGOs: www.wango.org/ World Association of NGOs
- NGOs: www.bond.org.uk/about-us/members BOND network
- Think Tanks: www.nira.or.jp/english/nwdtt/nwdtt.html NIRA
- Consulting Firms active in International Development Co-operation: www.weitzenegger.de/docon

Sector news & research

- Bond www.bond.org.uk/
- Charity Times www.charitytimes.com/
- Department for International Development (DFID) www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-international-development
- Development Gateway www.developmentgateway.org/
- Development Studies Association www.devstud.org.uk/

- Eldis www.eldis.org/
- Idealist www.idealist.org/
- Institute of Development Studies www.ids.ac.uk/
- New Internationalist www.newint.org/
- Prospects: overview of the charity sector www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/charity-and-voluntary-work
- ReliefWeb http://reliefweb.int/
- The Development Executive Group (Devex) www.devex.com/en
- Third Sector www.thirdsector.co.uk/
- Thomson Reuters Foundation www.trust.org/
- World Service Enquiry www.wse.org.uk/

Sector careers advice

- Development Worker www.developmentworker.com
- Guardian Careers www.theguardian.com/careers
- Guardian: 12 Tips for Getting into International Development
- How to get a job in International Development www.internationaldevelopmentguide.com/how-to-get-a-job-in-international-development/
- National Youth Agency (NYA) www.nya.org.uk/careers-youth-work/
- Third Sector: Careers http://jobs.thirdsector.co.uk/careers/

Professional associations

- National Council for Voluntary Organisations www.ncvo.org.uk/
- The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations www.scvo.org.uk/
- (Ireland) Active Link www.activelink.ie/
- Institute of Fundraising www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/
- Charity Comms – www.charitycomms.org.uk/
- Aid Workers Network http://aidworkersnetwork.org/
- Global Aid Worker http://globalaidworker.org/
- Development Studies Association (DSA) www.devstud.org.uk/

Recruitment agencies

- CF Appointments www.cfappointments.com
- Charity Job www.charityjob.co.uk
- Charity People www.charitypeople.co.uk/
- Eden Brown www.edenbrown-charities.com/
- ElevatorCafe https://elevatorcafe.com/
- Harris Hill www.harrishill.co.uk/
- Jobs in Charities www.jobsincharities.co.uk
- Prospect-us www.prospect-us.co.uk/
- TPP www.tpp.co.uk/
- UK Charity Jobs https://ukcharityjobs.com/

Note: Agencies receive a fee from the employer for placing candidates. If the role is openly available, a candidate not using an agency may be advantaged as they do not involve the fee. So check before you apply via an agency. Specialist agencies can have quality industry knowledge and so perhaps help you understand roles and improve your applications.
When engaging agencies, it is best to find a named person(s) to keep in contact with regularly, so don't sign up to more agencies than you can manage, and keep them informed if you are no longer looking for work.