

Economic Change Unit

Application Pack Executive Director

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About us

The Economic Change Unit is a non-profit organisation that supports the efforts of those seeking to build more resilient, just and sustainable economies.

For over a decade, the world has been experiencing a range of inter-related crises. Financial instability, widening inequalities and climate and environmental breakdown have now been brought into sharper focus by the global coronavirus pandemic. In response, there is a growing consensus among a broad range of people – including policymakers, business and civil society leaders, academics, campaigners and commentators – that fundamental changes are needed to our economic model.

ECU creates resources to promote understanding of the ideas, policies and practices on which more resilient, just and sustainable economies can be founded. We identify opportunities for economic change and how to overcome the barriers to achieving it. And we help connect people and organisations from a variety of sectors who are interested and involved in seeking change.

Our origins and current activities

ECU was founded in 2019 by its current Executive Director, Laurie Laybourn Langton, and Executive Chair, Michael Jacobs. It builds on analysis from their 2017 report [*Moving beyond neoliberalism: An assessment of the economic systems change movement in the UK*](#). The report mapped the growing ecosystem of organisations working for economic transformation, analysed the progress and challenges faced by the sector, and recommended greater strategic coordination and communication to increase its impact.

Over the last year ECU has built on this analysis to provide a range of convening and communications support for a network of around 25 organisations working for a more resilient, just and sustainable economy. Since March, this work has focused on how the UK can recover and reform out of the Covid-19 crisis. Our activities have included:

- Strategic media interventions, which resulted in national coverage on economic policy issues and public support for change
- Working with a number of global and UK environmental organisations to build a campaign to make the recovery from Covid-19 green, equitable and resilient
- Supporting the formation of the [Build Back Better](#) initiative, which launched with 350 signatories from civic leaders across society.
- Coordinating a campaign to ensure the government applied environmental and social conditions to corporate bailout packages
- Convening a group of academic and think tank economists to understand the macroeconomic and sectoral impact of the crisis and the policy response.

Much of our current work focuses on our [Beyond Covid](#) initiative. This is a website, weekly email digest and webinar series aimed at helping policymakers, business, the media and wider audiences navigate the debate on how to build a fairer, more sustainable and more resilient economy in the wake of Covid-19. With the digest and webinars now well

established, we are currently building the website. This will be an accessible resource, curating ideas and proposals for systemic economic change from a wide range of sources. It will be launched over the coming months.

In 2021, as we establish Beyond Covid as an essential resource for navigating the economic debate, we will focus on widening and deepening ECU's relationships with mainstream policymakers and influencers. We will identify opportunities to promote systemic economic change within policy debates and institutions, and we will coordinate civil society action to turn these opportunities into impact.

Our funding

We are funded by Friends Provident Foundation, Partners for a New Economy, and the Omidyar Network. We have secure funding to the end of 2022.

Our values

Our values apply throughout our ways of working, office culture, and individual behaviour:

- **Justice:** We believe in social, economic and environmental justice. We work to rectify historical injustices nationally and internationally, as well as to mitigate injustices yet to come. Essential to our conception of justice is a commitment to sustainability.
- **Inclusivity and generosity:** We provide a welcoming, safe and supportive environment to everyone, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age or disability. We believe this is crucial to ensuring the legitimacy and effectiveness of our work. We recognise that people face systemic oppression based on these characteristics and therefore we have a responsibility to centre anti-oppression in our work.
- **Collaboration:** We don't have all the answers, and through working with others there is more chance of making change. We stand in solidarity with those seeking systemic economic change.

The opportunity

We are proud of our achievements so far, but recognise that we are only at the beginning of our journey to take arguments for systemic economic change into mainstream policy and practice. Having established the strategic and organisational foundations of ECU, Laurie, our founding Executive Director, is now stepping back to focus on other projects and enable the appointment of a new Executive Director, who will take ECU's work to the next level.

This is an outstanding opportunity to play a defining role in building a more just, sustainable and resilient economy, in the UK and beyond. Working with a talented team and a community of organisations at the cutting edge of economic reform, you will shape and lead our strategy to amplify the impact of ideas relating to systemic economic change on mainstream debates.

We're looking for an experienced leader with a deep understanding of the economic and political terrain, an ambitious, creative strategic approach, and the ability to translate this into effective delivery in a small, dynamic organisation. You will use your networks and influencing skills to influence mainstream thinking and practice, and you'll convene and coordinate effective action across those seeking systemic economic change. In all of your work and relationships, you'll embody ECU's values: justice, inclusivity, generosity and collaboration.

Our Board and team

Michael Jacobs

Michael is currently Executive Chair of ECU and from January 2021 will be Senior Advisor to the new Executive Director. An economist, he is Professorial Fellow at the Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Sheffield. He is a former member of the Council of Economic Advisers at the Treasury and a special adviser at 10 Downing Street under Gordon Brown, and director of the IPPR Commission on Economic Justice. His books include *The Green Economy* (1991) and *Rethinking Capitalism* (2016).

Laurie Laybourn Langton

Laurie is outgoing Executive Director of ECU and will continue to serve as an ECU Board member. An Associate Fellow at the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), where he led the award-winning *Responding to Environmental Breakdown* programme, he is also co-author of *Planet on Fire: A Manifesto for the Age of Environmental Breakdown*, to be published in 2021 by Verso Books. Laurie is a Trustee of the New Economics Foundation and was formerly the Director of the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change and Co-Chair of Trustees of Rethinking Economics.

Ian Christie

Ian is a member of the ECU Board. He is a senior lecturer at the Centre for Environment and Sustainability at the University of Surrey and knowledge exchange coordinator for the Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity. His earlier career included senior roles in think-tanks (Demos and Policy Studies Institute); in business (Henley Centre for Forecasting); and in central and local government. He is a Trustee of the New Economics Foundation and Perspectiva, and an Associate of WWF-UK and Green Alliance.

Yuanfen Yang

Yuan is a member of the ECU Board and deputy Beijing bureau chief for the Financial Times. She was previously China tech correspondent and a Marjorie Dean intern writing about development economics at The Economist. She is co-founder of the campaign Rethinking Economics, an international network of students, academics and professionals building a better economics in society and the classroom.

Anna Fielding (freelance)

Anna is currently Senior Advisor to ECU's leadership team and from January 2021 will be Chair of ECU. She is also Senior Advisor at Cohere Partners and a Trustee of the New Economics Foundation. Anna was previously CEO of the Finance Innovation Lab, a pioneering charity building a financial system that serves people and planet, and has worked in sustainable finance, academia, international development, campaigning and community health.

Michael Davies

Michael is a Programme Lead for ECU and helped set up the organisation in advance of its launch in September 2019. Before taking on this role, he worked for the Progressive Economy Forum, the Centre for Labour and Social Studies and as a researcher for Lord

Skidelsky. He is originally from Blackburn, Lancashire and holds a first class degree in politics, philosophy and economics from Oxford University.

Antonia Jennings

Antonia is a Programme Lead for ECU until December 2020, when she will join the Centre for Local Economic Strategies as an Associate Director. Prior to joining ECU, she was Policy and Public Affairs Manager at the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change, and she has expertise across post-neoliberal economic policy and economic democracy. She has a Masters with distinction in Politics and Communication from the LSE and sits on the Board of Rethinking Economics.

George Edwards

George is an Intern at ECU and from January 2020 will be our Programme Officer. George assists the Programme Leads with strategic convening, organising webinars, and developing Beyond Covid content. Before joining the ECU, George was a researcher at the Centre For Local Economic Strategies, specialising in data analysis and policy development to advance community wealth building around the UK.

Steering Group

Our Steering Group comprises leaders from a range of organisations working for economic change:

Eric Beinhocker

Executive Director, Institute for New Economic Thinking, Oxford Martin School

Sonny Bardhan

Head of Strategy, Omidyar Network

John Christensen

Director and Chair of the Board, Tax Justice Network

Miatta Fahnbulleh

Chief Executive, New Economics Foundation

Joe Guinan

Executive Director, Next System Project; Vice-President, The Democracy Collaborative

Mathew Lawrence

Director, Common Wealth

Laurie Macfarlane

Policy Fellow, UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose; Economics Editor, openDemocracy

Neil McInroy

Chief Executive, Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES)

Adam Ramsay
Co-Editor, openDemocracyUK

Carys Roberts
Executive Director, Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR)

Daniel Vockins
Director, New Economy Organisers Network

Danielle Walker Palmour
Director, Friends Provident Foundation

Job description

Executive Director

Location:	London, with the potential for some remote working <i>The ECU team are currently working remotely as a result of Covid-19 restrictions</i>
Contract type:	Fixed term for 2 years, with potential to extend, subject to continuation of funding
Hours:	Full time (37.5 hours per week)
Salary:	£60,000 - £70,000 dependent on experience
Reports to:	Chair of the Board

About the role

The Executive Director is responsible for the effective leadership of ECU, including setting strategic direction, overseeing the development and delivery of ECU's activities, overseeing work programmes, building and maintaining the organisation, maintaining and growing ECU's funding base, managing staff, and representing ECU to key stakeholders.

Building on ECU's progress and learning to date, you will maximise our contribution to economic transformation by identifying and mobilising action around strategic opportunities for systemic change. You will work closely with a broad range of organisations seeking a more sustainable, just and resilient economy, with a clear focus on influencing mainstream policy-making and media audiences.

Key responsibilities

Leadership and strategy

- Lead the development of ECU's overall vision and strategy, and oversee all programmes to ensure that the strategy is delivered effectively
- With the wider ECU team, undertake intelligence gathering and analysis on political and economic debates, and identify key strategic opportunities and challenges for the promotion of post-neoliberal ideas, narratives, policies and practice
- Ensure that ECU gathers evidence of its impact and uses this to learn from and continually improve the effectiveness of its work

External relationships

- Build and maintain relationships with individuals and groups working in mainstream institutions within politics, policy-making, business and the media, developing networks and coalitions that can advance ECU's agenda

- Build and maintain relationships across the range of organisations seeking systemic economic change, including ECU's Steering Group.

Team and programmes

- Oversee and where appropriate lead the delivery of ECU's strategy and programmes, particularly in relation to ECU's communications and political influencing work, and its Beyond Covid programme
- Take overall responsibility for programme and project management and support the team to maximise the effectiveness of programme and project delivery
- Line manage the Head of Strategic Communications, Programme Leads, and Finance and Operations Manager, and oversee the work of the Senior Adviser

Organisational development

- Take overall responsibility for finance and operations, guiding the work of the Finance and Operations Manager, and ensure that ECU complies with its statutory and funder reporting requirements
- Ensure the effective management of ECU's budget and finances
- Lead ECU's team and people development, with a strong focus on personal development, inclusion and anti-oppression approaches
- Develop and lead the delivery of ECU's fundraising strategy, maintaining strong collaborative relationships with ECU's current funders and building relationships with the potential to create new sources of funding for ECU
- With the Chair, develop and maintain a strong Board of Directors, and engage Directors in ECU's work both within and beyond Board meetings

Person specification

Essential

1. Deep commitment to ECU's purpose and values (set out below), with a passion for increasing the influence and impact of post-neoliberal thought and practice
2. An excellent knowledge of current economic and political debates, in the UK and globally, and particularly of ideas to build a more sustainable, just and resilient economy
3. A sophisticated understanding of how political change occurs, including the role of the media in driving change, and the ability to design and implement creative, high-impact strategic interventions which will promote systemic economic change
4. The ability to convene and mobilise a diverse range of individuals and groups to act on strategic opportunities for change, with the tenacity and resourcefulness to see initiatives through to completion

5. Experience of working in public policy, public affairs, public relations, or political work at a national level, with a track record of influencing political decision-makers and influencers
6. Outstanding interpersonal and influencing skills, with experience of managing senior stakeholder relationships and the ability to align diverse viewpoints around common interests
7. Significant programme management experience, with the ability to translate strategic vision into concrete plans and deliver complex projects to challenging deadlines
8. A people-centred, empowering manager, with strong line management experience and the ability to build inclusive, collaborative organisational cultures
9. Experience of developing, managing and reporting on project and/or organisational budgets
10. Experience of fundraising and an understanding of the nature and constraints of funding provided by charitable foundations.
11. Experience of working with or serving on a Board of Trustees or Directors, preferably within a not-for-profit context

Desirable

12. A broad network of contacts within mainstream media and policymaking
13. Experience of designing and implementing strategies to shift media narratives within both mainstream and social media
14. Knowledge and experience of monitoring, evaluation and learning in a policy context
15. A track record of attracting significant funding from trusts, foundations and other grant-making bodies

How to apply

To apply, please download an application form from econchange.org/jobs, complete it and send it to recruitment@econchange.org before the closing date. Please send your application as a Word document (not a PDF) and please do not include any other documents with your application - they will not be read.

Closing date for applications: **9.00 am, Monday 30 November 2020.**

First interviews will take place on **Monday 7 December 2020**, with second interviews on **Thursday 10 December 2020.**

Due to the volume of applications we usually receive, we regret that we are unable to offer feedback to individual applicants.

Equity, inclusion and diversity

We are committed to providing equal opportunities for everyone, regardless of their background. We believe this is crucial to ensuring the legitimacy and effectiveness of our work. We recognise that people face systemic oppression based on factors including their gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age and disability, and therefore we have a responsibility to centre anti-oppression in our work.

We acknowledge that people from a number of communities are underrepresented in our team and in the wider economic justice movement, and we're committed to doing what we can to address this. If you believe you would bring greater diversity to our team, we're keen to hear from you. We are open to assisting with childcare or other duties that may prevent candidates from attending an interview.

Get in touch

If you have any questions about the role, or if you feel you could succeed in this role but don't have all the characteristics we're looking for, please contact Anna Fielding on anna@econchange.org for an informal conversation.

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