Charity and Development Work

Many students are attracted to working in this sector, seeing the job opportunities as something doing something ‘meaningful’. To succeed in this sector relevant experience, paid or unpaid, is essential to demonstrate your commitment. Few organisations offer structured graduate management trainee roles so many graduates will get in by starting at the bottom and working their way up. Others may qualify as a professional outside the industry and then apply for positions later e.g. with human resources or accountancy qualifications. You can read an overview of the career options available within the charity sector from the Prospects website.

Starting salaries can be lower than in the commercial sector but those that offer a graduate training scheme can be more reasonable. Some of these schemes are internships and can run just for a year but you can gain excellent experience. These include organisations such as Oxfam, Wellcome Trust, Barnardo’s and Amnesty International.

To break into development work it can be appealing to undertake a postgraduate qualification and these can be valuable but work experience is essential and this needs to demonstrate that you are committed to the organisation’s cause. You could focus gaining relevant work experience on a specific area of development such as poverty, housing, conservation, human rights or sustainability. Check the Student Societies at RUSU to see if there are any groups on campus you could get involved with.

Key Resources

Target Jobs
In addition to the Prospects website, Target jobs also offers a comprehensive overview of careers opportunities in this sector

ThirdSector Jobs
A global job vacancy website that you can search for opportunities according to type and place of work

Charity Jobs
Another global job vacancy website advertising vacancies from entry-level to director level

Red Cross
Advertises vacancies in the UK and abroad including a few low paid/unpaid graduate internships

Christian Aid
Advertises vacancies in the UK and abroad including voluntary opportunities

People and Planet
A student run pressure group that offers voluntary opportunities in mostly campaign type of activities

One World
Advertises job vacancies in the UK and Abroad including voluntary positions.

Access this page and more industries at reading.ac.uk/careers/resources
BOND
Advertises job vacancies in the UK and abroad including internships, voluntary opportunities and more

WANGO
Lists world associations of non-government organisations. The website has excellent information about current global news and the resources section has links to many global NGOs websites

World Bank
Has excellent, current information regarding global problems and advertises job vacancies for the World Bank across the world

Relief Web
Advertises global vacancies in development work that you can search according to how much experience you have to offer

United Nations
The United Nations Jobs Portal advertises worldwide vacancies but also has some nice case studies focusing on some of the UN personnel working in very different areas.

OECD
Advertises vacancies including the Young Professional Programme that is suitable for postgraduate students or those with specific experience and skills. There are some nice case studies of previous successful applicants on their website

Department for International Development
A UK government department that is working towards eradicating poverty across the world. Job vacancies can be found here and the Graduate Development Scheme offers graduates with relevant experience placements.

You may also be interested in...

- The Environment
- Government and Public Administration
- Social and Community