



Real life. Real work.

Graduate Opportunities in Local Government



Of course you want to develop your talent. But perhaps that's not enough. Perhaps you want to make a wider impact that will also positively influence the world around you. Welcome to the ngdp. Our graduate programme is specifically designed to fast-track your career while helping local councils achieve their objectives.

Join us and you'll take on real work that's as worthwhile as it is rewarding. In this booklet we've spotlighted three projects that recent management trainees have led. There are plenty of other stories on our website ngdp.co.uk where you'll also find more details about the programme.

“I wanted to work in a community, not just an office.”

South Shields Town Centre Project

Holly Bainbridge
Northumbria University
Corporate Management

I'm the lead on this project, and it's probably been my biggest challenge yet. Partly because of the recession, there are a lot of empty retail units in South Shields. It's up to me to make the town centre more vibrant by filling those empty shops.

That's not as simple as just encouraging retailers into the area, although part of my strategy has been to do that. I've also worked with a design and media company to produce a promotional brochure, and asked local estate agents to use it as a selling tool when they're advertising properties in the area.

But I've been much more creative than that. I spoke to as many people as I could. That's really important, especially early on in your career because there's so much to learn. These conversations sparked ideas, and I've been able to co-ordinate the use of an empty shop for a local theatre group to use as a temporary box office and performance space. That took a lot of negotiation. After all, I was asking landlords to let us use their property for free. But I got to know them, gained their trust, explained the project and got them on-board.

I get to see the benefits of my work every day when I'm in the town centre – as do hundreds of other people. And, yes, in the short-term, I'm making South Shields more vibrant. But the long-term impact of that will be much further reaching.



“ I wanted to improve communities, not just bottom lines.”

Ethnic Minority Housing Strategy

Kaleem Hussain
Warwick University
LLB Law, LLM International Economic Law

I'm currently working on the Ethnic Minority Housing Strategy for Merton which was initially written for the period 2004-2006 and now needs updating for 2010-2013.

I started by reviewing the current strategy. But I couldn't do this without background information on nationwide and local housing issues and objectives, which is where my work really began. After I'd read up on key Government drivers like the new Equality Bill and highlighted potential new areas that need attention, I got in touch with a range of stakeholders from my line manager and colleagues, to members of the Joint Consultative Committee for Ethnic Minorities and local and sub-regional BME organisations.

Everyone I spoke to gave me valuable advice, but I think some of the best inputs actually came from the Community Input Workshop that I organised to find out what residents and organisations in the locality felt their key housing issues were. When I came to analyse all my research and make decisions on themes that should be included in the strategy, the input from local residents and organisations was invaluable. And that's important.

Because the people who came along to the workshops are the people who this project will affect the most. It's going to inspire practical initiatives that will shape their neighbourhoods.

Before I joined the ngdp I didn't think research usually involved so much front-line work, or delivering such tangible results. But whatever I'm doing – whether I'm sitting at my desk or out talking to people in Merton – it's making a positive impact on the local community.



“ I wanted to work with people, not just my colleagues.”

Victims of Violence Project

Katherine Benjamin
Nottingham University
Politics

I've worked on a variety of projects, but this is the most rewarding thing I've done. I'm dealing with a harrowing issue and delivering results that really matter.

Last year, three women in Islington died because of domestic violence. The police didn't know about any of these women, but they all probably came into contact with medical services in the borough. This project aims to stop domestic murders from happening by working in partnership with the local hospital, the Whittington. The hospital will ensure that victims of violence are referred to local support services who can help them. The project will also collect data on victims of violence attending the hospital to inform crime prevention strategies. This kind of data will allow us to share really important intelligence that never gets reported to the police.

Although a pilot had been run several years ago, the project had stopped because of resourcing and funding problems. My role was to get the project back up and running and gain people's support. I also applied for an additional £12,000 of funding from the Department of Health, which we managed to secure.

Now I'm making sure the project keeps growing once I leave it – getting the right structures in place to ensure its sustainability, and talking to our stakeholders. Everyone's really committed, from the team at the hospital to our partners in voluntary support services, and other bodies like the police. So I feel hugely optimistic about its success and hugely optimistic about this project developing to other medical services in Islington, like GP surgeries, so it can have an even greater impact on victim support and crime prevention.

I joined the ngdp because I wasn't interested in lining pockets: I wanted to put my efforts into something with social value. This project might actually save lives. It doesn't get any more valuable than that.

We hope you've enjoyed hearing more about the kind of work you could be involved in on the ngdp. Of course, our projects are incredibly diverse. But all of them promise the kind of challenges and opportunities that only come with doing real work. Not to mention the support and training you'll need to make the very most of the experience. For more information, and to apply, visit us at

ngdp.co.uk

