

IVAR internship 2026: Recruitment pack

Message from Sonakshi Anand, Senior Researcher

Thank you for your interest in working with us at the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR). We're a small research organisation working with charities, funders and public agencies to strengthen communities across the UK.

We're looking for someone aged 19-25 to join us for a paid internship for a few months this autumn. You'll be involved in research: helping us collect and interpret evidence, write up findings, and contributing to conversations that matter. We'll shape the programme around your interests and support you throughout.

We're particularly keen to hear from people who haven't followed a traditional path into this kind of work. You don't need a degree or prior research experience. What we're looking for is someone who can bring fresh perspectives, ask thoughtful questions, and is interested in what we do. If any of this sounds like you, we'd love to hear from you.



About IVAR

IVAR exists for charities, especially the smallest and least heard.

We challenge the imbalances that hold the voluntary sector back, asking who holds power, whose knowledge shapes decisions, and how resources flow. We bring people together, ask the questions others don't, and push for change that sticks.

We're at an exciting point in IVAR's journey. Our new strategy gives us three clear aims:

1. To strengthen charities
2. To transform the funding sector
3. To be a healthy and fit-for-purpose organisation

As IVAR's intern, you will play a direct role in making progress against each of these goals – ultimately benefitting charities and the communities they serve.

You will work alongside a close-knit, friendly team of 13 core staff members, nine trustees, and a network of experienced associates.

Want to find out more?

We're running an [online Q&A webinar](#) on 8 July, 12pm. Lara Bautista, our previous intern and now our research officer, will share what the experience was like, and you'll have a chance to ask us anything. We'll also give a short introduction to our work and explain the interview process. [Sign up here.](#)

You can also send in questions in advance if you'd prefer.

If you have any general questions about the internship, please contact [Lara](#).



Researchers Sonakshi, Keeva, Jo and Alex celebrate the end of a project for Pears Foundation

The internship

We hope to create an opportunity for a young person, aged 19-25, to develop professional and research skills.

What we're looking for

We are particularly keen to hear from young people from backgrounds that are underrepresented in research and the voluntary sector.

That might mean you're from a Black or minoritised ethnic background, have a disability, come from a lower socioeconomic background, or simply haven't had easy access to this kind of opportunity before. We're not looking for a specific qualification or background, and you do not need prior research experience. We're interested in how you think, learn and communicate.

Here's what we care about:

- You're curious and genuinely interested in our work and the communities we serve
- You're a problem-solver and comfortable sitting with uncertainty
- You're a good listener and are interested in hearing different people's perspectives
- You can communicate and can express your ideas clearly and confidently
- You can manage your own time and workload, and ask for help when you need it
- You enjoy working both within a team and independently
- You're committed to IVAR's values and ways of working

No degree required. You do not need a degree to apply. We're absolutely fine if you have one, but we're not looking for it. Skills and experience can come from many sources such as paid work, community involvement, volunteering, caring responsibilities, living and lived experience, and more.

Eligibility. You must have the right to work in the UK. You will also need to be based within commuting distance of our office in Vauxhall, London, as we expect all staff to work in the office at least one day a week (Thursdays). An Oyster card will be provided to cover your travel to and from the office.

About the role

What you'll be doing

The exact types of activities you will do will depend on what projects we are currently working on and what you're most interested in, but you can expect to:

- Support research projects, including reviewing existing research, data collection through talking to people, reflecting on what you are hearing and writing up findings
- Contribute to IVAR's communications, including writing blogs and content for our website or social media
- Get involved in designing and delivering IVAR events – such as webinars, online and face-to-face workshops
- Join team meetings and get involved in the day-to-day life of a research organisation

You would also be expected to:

- Follow IVAR's Code of Practice and Equal Opportunities Policy
- Help look after your own health and safety, and that of others, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) guidance.

What we hope you'll get from it

- Hands-on experience in a range of research approaches
 - An understanding of how the voluntary and grant-making sectors work
 - Experience of a working in a small, collaborative organisation
- Greater confidence and a clearer sense of the work you enjoy and want to pursue in the future



Senior researcher Houda (left) facilitating a session with community researchers

Key details

Responsible to:	Sonakshi Anand, Senior Researcher
Works closely with:	Researchers across different projects
Location:	Hybrid – we currently work in the office at least one day/week (Thursday) at The Foundry, 17 Oval Way, London, SE11 5RR
Time period:	Either full-time (7 hours a day) over 5 weeks or part-time over 10 weeks (between 14 th September and 20 th November 2026)
Salary:	£103.60 per day (£14.80 London Living Wage; 7 hours per day)
Leave:	Pro rata based on the internship period, i.e. up to 3 days.

How to apply

To apply for the role, please email lara@ivar.org.uk with the subject line “Intern Application 2026” and share the following:

- A CV or resume
- A supporting statement (see below for guidance and formats)
- A completed Equal Opportunities Form (you can download the form [here](#))
- A note of your preference: full-time over 5 weeks, or part-time over 10 weeks

The closing date to send in your completed applications, including CV, supporting statement and the Equal Opportunities Form, is **Wednesday, 29 July 2026 at 12pm**. We will acknowledge your application within a week of receiving it.

Your supporting statement

Your supporting statement in a format that works for you, eg:

- Written (maximum of one side of A4)
- Slides (up to five slides)
- Video (up to three minutes)

To help guide what you include, here are some **optional** prompts to follow:

- What draws you to IVAR’s work? What about it feels relevant or interesting to you?
- What skills, experiences or qualities would you bring? These don’t have to come from formal work or study.
- Where do you hope to develop or learn from your internship at IVAR? How might this internship support your future goals?
- Are there any barriers you have faced (or might face) in accessing opportunities like this?

Some additional guidance for video supporting statements

Recording device: Use your phone, webcam, or video call platform like Zoom. If using your phone, record in landscape mode (horizontal) to ensure the video looks professional and fits standard video formats.

Sound quality: Film in a quiet space to minimise background noise.

Sharing Your Video: Upload your video to a platform like YouTube. Save your video as “Unlisted” on YouTube so it’s not publicly visible but can be viewed by anyone with the link. Share the link to your video in your application rather than sending the video file directly. This ensures easy access for the interviewer and avoids file size issues.

Timing

After the closing date (29 July), we will review all the applications. By the week commencing 3 August, we will inform all applicants of the outcome of their applications. If you are shortlisted, we will contact you with interview details and next steps.

Interviews

Interviews will take place online via Zoom on **Wednesday, 12 August 2026**. *If you cannot make the proposed interview date, please let us know when you apply, and we'll try to be flexible where possible.*

The interview will be an informal conversation with two members of the IVAR team. They will last around **45 minutes** and will be a chance for us to learn more about you, and for you to ask us questions about the role and working at IVAR.

You won't be asked to complete any tasks or preparation in advance. However, we will send you the interview questions in advance so you can prepare if you'd like.

Data Protection Note

Any personal data you provide (e.g., addresses, telephone numbers, employment history) will be used for recruitment purposes and shared only with individuals involved in the recruitment process. Data will be stored securely in accordance with our [Privacy Policy](#). If you have any questions about the processing of your data, please get in touch with IVAR's Data Protection Lead: diana@ivar.org.uk