

Job title:	Relationship Manager (North of Scotland)
Reporting to:	SEF Programme Manager
Salary:	£35,000 per annum
Hours:	35 hours per week
Based:	Home-based, with frequent travel across North East Scotland
Start date:	ASAP
Contract:	Until 31 March 2026, with potential to become permanent

About Firstport

Firstport is part of the Firstport Group, Scotland's leading agency for supporting social entrepreneurs, social enterprises, and purpose-led businesses. Encompassing Firstport for Social Entrepreneurs, FirstImpact and Firstfund, the group has over 16 years of experience helping thousands of entrepreneurs to develop, start, and grow their businesses.

Our group vision is a society in which doing business is synonymous with doing good. Deliberately ambitious, our vision describes the prospect of a society where all businesses operate to the benefit of their communities, in harmony with nature, and with respect for future generations.

- **Firstport** is the first port of call for individuals who have a social impact idea and want to make it their business.
- **FirstImpact** is an expert ally to projects and businesses that are serious about social impact.
- **Firstfund** provides sympathetic finance to ambitious social impact businesses.

We are committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion, and we aim to recruit and retain the best candidates from the widest pool of talent, one which reflects the communities we serve.

We strive to create an environment where everyone can be themselves and do their best work. We offer:

- A generous holiday package with 33 days annual leave entitlement (including bank holidays) and office closure between Christmas and New Year.

- Pension scheme.
- Flexible working. We are open to all types of requests that allow staff to balance their life. More information about our culture, values and approach to work is available on the [Working at Firstport document](#).
- An Employee Assistance Programme, which provides access to a range of support relating to work/life balance, physical, emotional, and mental health.
- Bike-to-work scheme.

Find out more about us on our website – www.firstport.org.uk

Job Purpose

The Relationship Manager is responsible for managing Firstport's relationships with applicants, awardees, and key stakeholders as part of the Social Entrepreneurs Fund (SEF) programme.

The [Social Entrepreneurs Fund](#) is a Scottish Government-funded programme that provides small grants to individuals testing new ideas and start-up social enterprises building their trading, as well as entry level social investment. The portfolio of awards (Pounds for Purpose, Start It, Build It, Step Up) offers a unique pipeline of support and funding from idea through to investment.

This new role has been established to expand on Firstport's commitment to identify and support new and emerging social entrepreneurs, with a specific focus on North East Scotland.

We are therefore looking for dynamic candidates with excellent communication skills and a strong understanding of local issues, together with a passion for supporting individuals in the early stages of developing a social enterprise. The role is currently secured until the end of March 2026, with the potential to become permanent depending on funding.

Please note: While Firstport operates a home-based remote working policy, this role will require frequent travel to attend in-person meetings and events across the region.

Our successful candidate will be a confident communicator, at your most comfortable engaging face-to-face. You will have a passion for working with individuals and groups from a rich variety of different backgrounds, becoming instrumental in enabling them to overcome obstacles and challenges.

You will also have proven decision-making experience and can demonstrate the ability to assess applications and apply programme criteria to arrive at reasoned recommendations for our funding panels.

You will build relationships with applicants and support them to develop their proposals into social enterprises with the potential to become both financially sustainable and socially impactful. You will manage and monitor their awards, as well as help them to transition between programmes.

Liaising with relevant stakeholders, including business advisors, programme managers, and local and national strategic partners, you will work to cement referral pathways, and enable prospective and successful applicants to access the right support at the right time from both internal and external sources. This will involve raising stakeholder awareness of Firstport programmes and the support we can give their clients, as well as building your knowledge of other providers and how they can work with us to take our awardees further.

You will problem-solve to ensure the health of your awardee caseload, escalating to the SEF Programme Manager as needed.

Your contributions to the continuous improvement of the programme – including identifying, recommending and implementing changes as part of an agile way of working – will be crucial to the ongoing success of the organisation.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Leading development and implementation of in-person support sessions and networking events across Aberdeenshire and surrounding local authority areas
- Assessing new applications to the SEF programme and providing comprehensive written reports and recommendations for SEF decision-making panels
- Providing one-to-one support for successful awardees through effective and responsive grant management
- Proactively growing new and existing stakeholder relationships
- Engaging in relevant internal and external forums for networking, outreach, and sharing of best practice
- Supporting the development of relationships with key partners, including Scottish Government, local government, third sector, and support agencies.

- Referring, connecting, and signposting applicants and awardees to other support where appropriate.
- Maintaining standardisation of award management processes and procedures, ensuring easy transition between programmes.
- Identifying opportunities for continuous improvement, proactively capturing and responding to the needs of awardees.
- Keeping records and analysing output and outcome data which assist the evaluation of effectiveness of Firstport's award management activity.
- Contributing to the preparation of reports for Management, Board, and Scottish Government.
- Contributing to strategic alignment and strong collaborative relationships between programme teams.
- With other members of the programme teams, agreeing annual priorities for programmes work in support of the strategy, and develop and monitor annual work plans.

Person Specification

We are looking for talented people from a wide range of backgrounds and communities. Whether through lived or gained experience, or both, you will understand and share a passion for what we do.

Essential

- A confident face-to-face communicator, comfortable with delivering one-to-one support to individuals and engaging stakeholders as well as hosting larger public events
- Experience in engaging across cultures and with diverse audiences, both in person and digitally.
- Proactive, dynamic and motivated, with the ability to work autonomously
- A track record in analysing, planning, and making decisions.
- Willingness to travel regularly across North East Scotland
- Understanding and track record of working with networks in North East Scotland.
- Understanding of different business models and the opportunities and challenges associated with setting up a new business
- Proven experience of developing and maintaining good working relationships with a range of stakeholders, partners, clients, and communities.

- Coaching skills, with the ability to motivate clients and help them move forward.
- Digitally confident, open to using a range of tools (we use MS Office, Google suite, Slack, Trello, and Mural/Miro).

Desirable

- Experience of grant assessment and/or funding processes, preferably within the third sector.
- Experience of working with social enterprises.
- Experience of budget development and financial management.
- Experience of using Salesforce or other CRM.
- Experience in strengthening organisational processes and systems, including staff development.
- An understanding of and/or interest in digital ways of working and agile principles.
- Access to own transport (covered by our expenses policy).

Recruitment timeline

- Deadline for applications: **9am, Monday 4 August 2025**
- Interviews will take place on **Wednesday 13th and Thursday 14th August.**