

Firstport for Social Entrepreneurs Ltd

Head of Investment Programmes – Role Description

October 2025



Job title:	Head of Investment Programmes
Reporting to:	Group CEO
Salary:	£53,000 + 5% pension
Hours:	Full-time (Flexible patterns available)
Based:	Home working, with access to our office in Edinburgh and occasional travel throughout Scotland
Start date:	ASAP
Contract:	Permanent

About Firstport

The Firstport Group is 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' experience supporting thousands of entrepreneurs to develop, start, and grow their businesses.

- **Firstport** is the first port of call for social entrepreneurs. Its mission is to make social enterprise accessible, achievable and aspirational.
- **FirstImpact** aims to cultivate a purpose-led approach to business beyond social enterprise.
- **Firstfund**'s mission is to offer finance options that are culturally and commercially compatible with creating positive impact.

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 an accredited [Investor in Diversity](#) and, as such, we are committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion. 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 annual leave entitlement (including bank holidays). Office closure between Christmas and New Year, in addition to annual leave entitlement.
- Flexible working. We are open to all types of requests that allow staff to balance their lives.
- 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 and by reading our [Working at Firstport](#) guide.

Job description

We are seeking an experienced and strategic **Head of Investment Programmes** to work across the Firstport Group, overseeing the design, delivery, and performance of our current and future repayable finance programmes.

This is a senior leadership role and a key member of the **Firstport Leadership Team**, responsible for ensuring our investment activity delivers strong performance, sound governance, and measurable impact. Due to the nature of the Firstport Group structure, this role acts as the primary link between Firstport and Firstfund. In practice, this means leading the delivery of the Firstfund strategy and maintaining a close working relationship with the Firstport Board through regular engagement, collaboration and reporting.

The successful candidate will lead both the **strategic direction** and **operational management** of our investment programmes, ensuring these are delivered on time, on budget, and to a high standard of quality.

They will take a leading role in ensuring operational and financial processes, fund governance and risk frameworks are robust and effective, alongside overseeing all aspects of investment readiness support, pipeline development, impact investment and portfolio management. This will all be achieved through **building, leading and supporting a high-performing Investment Team** (currently a team of five, including four direct reports).

Current investment programmes include:

- **LaunchMe**, an investment readiness programme that supports social enterprises to secure social investment.
- **Step Up**, a 0% interest loan for social enterprises looking to replicate or grow revenue-generating activities.
- **The Catalyst Fund**, an innovative, revenue-based fund for ambitious Scottish enterprises unable to secure other social investment.

This is a particularly exciting time for the **Catalyst Fund**, our largest investment programme. We are entering the final stages of implementing a new strategy, rolling out additional strands in partnership with key collaborators. More information about this approach can be found on the social investment pages of our website: [The Catalyst Fund – Firstport](#).

Key duties & responsibilities

Strategic

- Provide support and guidance on the Investment Programmes and to the Investment Team to ensure the success of current activity and funds
- Engage in networking and relationship-building activities with co-investors, impact funds, and other stakeholders in the social investment ecosystem
- Position Firstport's investment programmes and funds as important contributors to the Scottish ecosystem
- Play a key role in business development, seeking and curating opportunities for Firstport to develop its role supporting start-up social enterprises within the social investment ecosystem
- Provide strategic leadership across the Firstport Group in relation to social investment and in partnership with the Group CEO, the Leadership Team and other key stakeholders
- Key point of contact for the Scottish Government, with responsibility for reporting
- Present financial performance, investment updates and operational reports to the Board and key investors, including the Scottish Government
- Represent Firstport externally at committees, fund boards, and strategic sector events.

Management

- Lead, support, and develop the Investment Team, fostering a culture of high performance through clear roles and responsibilities and a culture of collaboration and learning
- Provide clear direction, guidance, and support to direct reports
- Build team capability in fund management, due diligence, and social investment practices
- Support team development by attending and supporting Investment Team members in relevant Investment Committee and Firstfund board meetings as appropriate
- In conjunction with the CEO and other members of the team, attend meetings and events to represent the organisation.

Operations

- Lead the delivery of existing (and new) investment programmes and funds, ensuring effective and efficient fund management systems, processes, and compliance frameworks that meet the needs of social enterprises
- Implement and oversee robust financial controls and best practice in portfolio monitoring, risk management and reporting
- Support pipeline development, deal origination activities and screening alongside the Investment Team and with pipeline partners
- Oversee, and contribute where required, to all aspects of deal execution, including market and financial due diligence, structuring, preparation of investment committee reports and papers
- Primary lead and point of contact for the Investment Committee, including recruitment and management
- Oversee investment committee processes and support Investment Team members in the Investment Committee
- Oversee portfolio monitoring and input into support planning for investee organisations
- Manage all aspects of financial operations, including cash flow, management accounts, audit and statutory reporting (in partnership with Finance Officer, CEO and external accountants/auditors)
- Lead annual budgeting, forecasting, and long-term financial planning processes

- Work collaboratively with other teams (Comms, Programmes, Impact) to ensure the programmes reach their intended audiences and that processes are in place to report on their impact.

Person specification – skills and key qualities

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

Technical and Financial Expertise

- Experience of making investments on a scale and context relevant to this role
- Experience of making investments with social and/or environmental objectives
- Experience assessing loan applications
- Strong analytical skills, particularly of financial statements, models, and risk analysis
- Advanced financial analysis capabilities
- Proficiency in financial systems and reporting tools
- Proficiency in financial planning and management, including annual budgeting processes
- Knowledge of and interest in alternative investment vehicles

Leadership and Management

- Senior-level experience in a relevant investment, fund management, or financial environment
- Demonstrable people management experience, with the ability to develop and lead a high-performing team
- Strong organisational and operational skills, including building and embedding systems and processes
- An ability and willingness to step into (and out of) operations and detail as and when demand requires
- Proven ability to generate practical solutions from complex situations, balancing competing agendas
- Experience managing complex stakeholder relationships

Sector knowledge and commitment

- Genuine passion for social entrepreneurship and creating positive social impact
- Knowledge of the funding and support available for social enterprise and impact businesses in Scotland and beyond

It is also essential that you are eligible to work in the UK.

Desirable

- Experience/understanding of advising and supporting SME and/or social enterprises as they develop their business models
- Experience working in the third sector, impact investing, or with social enterprises
- Knowledge of the funding and support available for social enterprise and impact businesses
- CA or relevant professional qualification (or equivalent)