

Practical ACTION

Job Profile
COMPANY SECRETARY



Practical Action

ABOUT US

We are an international development organisation putting ingenious ideas to work so people in poverty can change their world.

We help people find solutions to some of the world's toughest problems. Challenges made worse by catastrophic climate change and persistent gender inequality. We work with communities to develop ingenious, lasting and locally owned solutions for agriculture, water and waste management, climate resilience and clean energy. And we share what works with others, so answers that start small can grow big.

We're a global change-making group, working with communities who are vulnerable to poverty and climate change to support them to change their world. Together we develop innovative, community powered and locally owned solutions that achieve transformative change in lives and livelihoods. And we work with a range of partners, including governments, business and international organisations to ensure improvements are sustained and scaled and to change the systems that keep people poor and vulnerable.

We were founded in 1969 by radical economist EF Schumacher who challenged the development thinking of the time. He believed in solutions suited to context, equipping people with the skills and knowledge to change their situation, economic systems that work for all and living within the planets means. This ethos continues to fuel all our work. Schumacher was the author of 'Small is Beautiful: A study of economics as if people mattered'. In our work we start 'small', ensuring we understand what is already working but we aim big focussing on what will deliver the systems change required.

We have over 50 years of experience working across Africa, Asia and Latin America. Our group consists of a UK registered charity with experienced country teams, an expert consulting service and an independent development publishing company. We combine these specialisms to multiply our impact and help shape a world that works better for everyone.

OUR AIMS

We work across four thematic areas. Much of our most impactful work combines our expertise across issues to solve complex and interconnected problems such as supporting smallholder farmers with renewable energy to increase yields and open up bigger opportunities for the wider economy.

Harnessing energy that transforms for the one billion people without electricity, and the three billion people without clean cooking solutions. We're bringing together rural communities, displaced people, energy providers and decision makers to put clean energy to work. By 2025, our work with partners will have led to affordable, low-carbon energy access and cleaner cooking for two million people in 'last mile' communities and 18 million people through wider systems change.

Building resilience that protects for vulnerable people whose lives and livelihoods are threatened by climate-related and natural hazards. We're working with people threatened by natural and climate related hazards, reducing vulnerability and minimizing the impact on their lives and livelihoods.

By 2025, our work with partners will have enhanced risk knowledge systems so that four million people living in hazard-prone, climate-vulnerable communities are better protected.

Making cities fit for people for the millions of people living in urban slums and settlements without proper sanitation, clean water and waste services. Our work with communities is making cities in poorer countries cleaner, healthier, fairer places for people to live and work, with clean water for drinking and sewage safely contained, collected and processed. By 2025, our work with partners will have led to improved water, sanitation and waste management services for one million people living in slum communities and a further 2.4 million people through wider systems change.

Cultivating farming that works for smallholder farmers struggling to make a sufficient income and adapt to the negative effects of climate change. We're teaming up with smallholder farmers, many of whom are women, so they can adapt to climate change and achieve a good standard of living. By 2025, our work with partners will have improved food security and incomes for two million people in rural communities and a further one million people through wider systems change.

Practical Action

ABOUT THE ROLE

Our Vision

Practical Action's vision is of a world that works better for everyone.

Title	Company Secretary
Reporting to	Chief Operating Officer
Directorate	Operations
Scope	Oversight and management of UK legal budget.
Location	Hybrid, must be able to commute to/ work from Practical Action's Rugby Office in Rugby when required.
Duration	Permanent – Full time however this is negotiable
Grade	B
Travel	Not anticipated

About the role

The key function of this role is to support all Practical Action entities and subsidiaries in providing effective and efficient legal, governance and operational support. The role will support the Board and Senior Management by keeping abreast of developments in the legal and regulatory environment and acting as focal point for providing/securing specialist advice to support decision making. The role also manages and develops several internal systems.

About you

We are seeking an experienced, dedicated and detail-oriented Company Secretary. This role involves a variety of responsibilities aimed at ensuring the smooth operation of compliance, legal, and company secretarial functions across our global organisation.

Accountabilities

- Oversight and management of UK legal budget.
- Ensure that all legal registrations for all PA offices and subsidiaries are maintained and that relevant documents are available to key staff and governance bodies.
- Ensure all returns to Companies House/Charity Commission are made and that Board/Committees sign off as needed.
- Maintain statutory registers including register of members, register of People with Significant Control, Register of Directors (including residential addresses), register of secretaries and register of charges.
- Provide specialist support to GLT, Chair of Board of Trustees and Chair of Finance, Audit and Risk Committee in relation to governance, legal and regulatory compliance. The role will act as secretary to FAR.
- Maintain lists and records of staff and trustees holding Powers of Attorney and ensure that

these are renewed or replaced as needed.

- Provide governance information for the Annual Report, statutory audits and other purposes.
- Work with the Executive Assistant to the CEO to ensure that Admin Control is up to date and incorporates all of the above.
- Stay abreast of legal and regulatory changes and notify relevant staff of any implications.
- Oversight of the Annual Legality Questionnaire.
- Lead on annual review of Practical Action's insurance requirements to ensure insurance needs are met whilst delivering good value for money.
- Provide support on Practical Action projects relating to charity governance e.g., development of Governance manual, Governance self-assessments and GDPR.
- Contribute to the monitoring of GDPR compliance as a member of the GDPR management team.
- Support the trustees to administer the Defined Benefit pension scheme as requested.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential

- Knowledge of legal and regulatory requirements for charitable companies and experience of developing and implementing policies and systems to ensure compliance.
- Good knowledge of GDPR with ability to develop robust systems to share and protect personal data.
- Organised, thorough and with good attention to detail.
- Highly numerate with a strong capacity to analyse and utilise complex data.
- Strong team working with the confidence to seek advice from expertise elsewhere.
- Strong IT skills including the ability to specify or design new systems.

Desirable

- A background in international development including some time spent working overseas.
- A good understanding of the role of internal audit, finance and other key departments.

Why join us?

The opportunity to work for an organisation that is making a positive difference to the lives of people worldwide, a friendly and supportive culture, and working with values-driven and highly engaged colleagues are just some of the reasons we think Practical Action is a great place to work.

Our open plan offices are located in the centre of Rugby and near to Rugby train station.

In addition, we offer the following benefits:

- Full time roles are contracted at 35 hours per week.
- Hybrid/flexible working options.
- 27 days' holiday rising with continuous service, in addition to public holidays.
- Pension scheme - employer contributes 10.5% of salary and the employee contributes a minimum of 5%.
- Enhanced family friendly policies, including maternity, adoption, paternity, and shared parental leave.
- Life assurance (3 x annual salary).
- Bike to Work scheme.

The successful applicant must have the pre-existing right to both live and work

in the UK. This is a hybrid role, and you must live in a commutable distance from our Rugby office, as you would be expected to attend the office on regular occasions.

Additional information

Practical Action believes that having a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace culture based on respect will enable us to be an effective organisation. We seek to create an inclusive workplace in which people are accepted as individuals, regardless of their differences and where they feel their contribution is valued. Practical Action is an equal opportunities employer, and we encourage applications from under-represented groups.

We stay committed to cultivating an inclusive and diverse working environment and believe that people from different backgrounds or cultures give us different perspectives, and the more perspectives we have, the more successful we will be. By building a culture where everyone feels heard, respected, and valued we give everyone working with us the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Practical Action is committed to safeguarding and protecting children and vulnerable adults and as such candidates will be subject to pre-employment checks including criminal checks and terrorist financing.

Closing date for applications: 5th December 2024. Please note that should we recruit a suitable candidate before the closing date, we will close applications earlier than the specified date.

If you do not hear from us within four weeks of the closing date, please assume your application has not been successful on this occasion.

HOW TO APPLY

If you want to work for a charity with significant people ambitions, then we would like to hear from you. For more information, please visit our careers page.

To apply please submit a copy of your CV and send us a supporting statement that includes the answers to the following questions:

1. Why do you consider yourself a good candidate?
2. Please explain briefly your most relevant experience?
3. What do you think the most important tasks are for a Company Secretary?

Please send your CV and Supporting Statement to
[**recruitment@practicalaction.org.uk**](mailto:recruitment@practicalaction.org.uk)