VCS Engagement Officer (covid-19)

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# Recruitment Pack – VCS Engagement Officer (covid-19)

On behalf of Community Southwark, thank you for your interest in this role.

Community Southwark is the infrastructure organisation for the Voluntary and Community Sector in Southwark. We aim to bring about positive change for people living in Southwark by championing, supporting and working with the wonderful and diverse organisations and individuals that make up the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in Southwark.

We support non-profit organisations to run effectively, efficiently, sustainably and legally through providing a range of activities including training, face-to-face advice, online resources, holding events for information and engagement as well as hosting networks and working groups and providing policy insights and influence.

We also work with individuals and informal groups on social action, engagement, supporting campaigns, providing information on how you can get involved in improving your community and more.

We are a champion for the sector and look to ensure we have a seat at the right table on its behalf.

We also host Healthwatch Southwark. We have strong and productive links with the VCS in Southwark, its funders, Southwark Council, Partnership Southwark and the local NHS.

Southwark Public Health would like to engage local VCS groups in order to prevent local residents becoming infected with covid-19. The post holder will act as a project manager and liaison with the VCS and Public Health Southwark.

We welcome applications from all sectors and experience levels; the important thing is that you understand and are passionate about helping Southwark become a place where people can thrive. If you are passionate about the voluntary and community sector, able to communicate well, are strategic in your thinking and collaborative as well as pragmatic in your approach, we would love to hear from you.

We particularly encourage applications from disabled, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people and people from the LGBT community as they are currently underrepresented in the charity.

Chris Mikata-Pralat, CEO

# Background Information

## Southwark

Southwark is a densely populated and diverse inner London borough situated on the south bank of the River Thames, with Lambeth to the west and Lewisham to the east. Home to over 314,000 people, Southwark is a patchwork of communities: from leafy Dulwich, to bustling Peckham and Camberwell, and the rapidly changing Rotherhithe peninsula. The population is expanding, with a particularly high birth rate, low death rate, and high inflow of immigrants, compared to the rest of London. Similar to many London boroughs, Southwark has a young population (average age: 34.2 years). It is a multi-ethnic borough with almost half the community (47%) belonging to an ethnic minority, including the largest Black African population in the country. Over a hundred languages are spoken by children living in Southwark.

The London Borough of Southwark (LBS) is a product both of its rich history and a modern makeover: Once the Thameside ‘larder of London’ and home to brothels, immigrant workers and theatre people, Southwark is now home to the glittering redevelopment More London Riverside, including the capital’s City Hall and thriving business sector. Southwark is, however, a borough of contrasts with high levels of inequality leading to the conclusion that there are two Southwarks – one where people have better life chances and one where they have worse. ([A Tale of Two Southwarks Report](http://southwarkgiving.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/A-Tale-of-Two-Southwarks-1.pdf))

You can view the latest Joint Strategic Needs Assessment’s and profiles from Southwark Council [here](https://www.southwark.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/public-health/health-and-wellbeing-in-southwark-jsna/southwark-profile)

The voluntary and community sector (VCS) in Southwark is very vibrant and diverse and the full impact of Covid-19 on the sector is yet unknown but there is a general understanding that many organisations will be closer to risk of closing than before, with smaller organisations proving to be less resilient due to funding problems. We can also see that the inequality gap has widened, and many communities need the support of the sector now more than ever.

## Community Southwark

Our **Vision**: Southwark communities that have the ability and opportunities to fulfil and exceed their potential

Our **Mission**: To create strong foundations that supports all voluntary and community organisations, communities and individuals in Southwark to work together to improve practice, shape futures and change lives.

Our **Values**

* We are **Brave**
* We are **Impactful**
* We are **Collaborative**
* We are **Supportive**

These values are always underpinned by:

* our commitment to respecting diversity and promoting equality
* putting Southwark communities at the heart of everything we do

**Governance**

We are a registered charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee.

Our Board is at 10 members out of a possible 12. We continuously review our governance structures and aim for a diverse and inclusive board with the skills needed to represent the borough and Community Southwark.

Find out more on our [website](http://communitysouthwark.org/about-us/meet-our-team/trustees).

**The Team**

Please find details of all of our team members on our [website](http://communitysouthwark.org/about-us/meet-team/staff)

# Job Description

**Responsible to:** Healthwatch Southwark Manager (please see <https://www.healthwatchsouthwark.org/> for more information on Healthwatch)

**Salary:** £14,385.50 (equivalent to £28,771 per annum)

**Contract Duration:** 6 months (until 31 March 2021)

**Hours:** Full-time, 35 hours per week

**Direct reports:** Volunteers

**Location:** 1 Addington Square, Camberwell, London, SE5 0HF. Some travel will be required.

*Please note: This post may need to work from home following Covid-19 guidelines. Meetings may be held online, and travel may be limited to essential only.*

**Benefits:** 30 days holiday (exclusive of public/bank holidays) per annum pro rata, Flexible working, Pension – Employer contribution: 5%, Cycle to Work Scheme, 2 Volunteering Days per annum pro rata.

## Main Purpose

To engage the local VCS to help reduce transmission of coronavirus, and reduce inequalities in the impact of coronavirus, by supporting those who have been isolated/disconnected from, or unable/unwilling to follow, public messaging. This will include activities to adapt and disseminate messaging, and to help eliminate barriers to people following guidance.

Information and support on outbreak prevention behaviours should be widely accessible whether supporting identification of symptoms, accessing testing, taking steps to isolate and monitor symptoms, or tracing contacts. The initial broad groups identified by Southwark Public Health for targeting include:

* young people,
* older people,
* people from BAME backgrounds.

This is due to a mixture of factors for different groups including barriers to receiving and following messages, and increased risk if exposed to the virus. Further groups may be identified during the course of the project .

There will be two evolving, parallel programmes: community organisation small grants and liaison between the VCS and Public Health Southwark.

The programmes will learn from models in other boroughs, such as Hackney and Newham. They will align with and feed into ongoing development of the Council’s Outbreak Prevention communications and engagement plans.

## Principal Responsibilities and Accountabilities

##

## VCS Grants Management

1. Run three rounds of grants for VCS groups (£40,000 per round; £4,000 for 10 organisations) targeting relevant groups as determined by Public Health Southwark.
2. To clarify the programme’s desired outcomes and the application process for small grants to support practical solutions to challenges identified already and being identified by the community volunteers. Then, to support community groups (e.g. via meetings or networking sessions) to develop clear proposals and bids. (This is likely to take place via three rounds as intelligence develops).
3. Where available, to disseminate information about solutions to barriers to communities’ understanding of and adherence to public health guidance around coronavirus being trialled by other organisations and boroughs.
4. To support Council colleagues to evaluate bids and decide on grant awards.
5. To signpost the groups to further support (e.g. from Community Southwark) in implementing their projects and relevant organisational issues.
6. To manage the dissemination of funds
7. To conduct each project’s grant monitoring and evaluation in line with guidelines from Public Health Southwark.
8. To produce reports after each grant round and a summary report at the end of the project.

## Covid-19 Outbreak Prevention Liaison

1. To work with Public Health Southwark on distributing key messages to the grant recipients.
2. To work with Public Health Southwark and VCS groups on offering training to the grant recipients on public health messages and how to answer FAQs.
3. Liaising closely with the Council’s Public Health and Communications teams, rapidly sharing any changes to messaging with VCS groups (with further training if necessary).
4. Sourcing and disseminating materials appropriate to different communities and in different community languages.
5. In collaboration with CS and Council colleagues, sourcing and disseminating further information to help signpost and support communities as challenges emerge (e.g. food, finance) and, in collaboration with Healthwatch and CCG colleagues, around other health needs which become apparent in the course of work (e.g. GP registration, long-term conditions).
6. To work with community organisations to collate existing intelligence about barriers to communities’ understanding of and adherence to public health guidance around coronavirus.
7. To collate and organise the feedback collected from organisations and share it with the Council and relevant partners in a productive and timely fashion, helping to develop solutions. The postholder will attend relevant Outbreak Prevention committees and subgroups (within and outside of Southwark) and also work with Healthwatch colleagues in South East London to share findings further.
8. To work with the Healthwatch Research & Intelligence Officer to compile intelligence into a report to inform future programmes.

## General

1. To support Community Southwark’s mission, vision, values and strategic objectives;
2. To undertake other tasks from time to time and as appropriate, that may be required by management in line with the goals of the organisation
3. To work within all of Community Southwark’s policies, in particular the Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities and Confidentiality policies, and help to ensure that diversity and equality of opportunity is integral to the organisation’s work
4. Work to administration and communication protocols efficiently to ensure that organisational systems and procedures are implemented
5. To contribute to developing and managing an electronic database (AirTable), ensuring that all data is correct before inputting into Community Southwark’s systems.

## Changes

This is a description of the job as it is presently constituted. It is the practice of the organisation to examine job descriptions from time to time and to update them to ensure they relate to the job as then being performed, or to incorporate whatever changes are being proposed. This would be conducted in consultation with you through your Support & Supervision sessions.

# Person Specification

## Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Application** | **Interview** |
| 1. Knowledge and experience of developing, administering, managing, and monitoring grant programmes
 | **√**  | **√**  |
| 1. Ability to co-produce practical, effective programmes with a diverse range of people and communities
 | **√**  | **√**  |
| 1. Excellent presentation and communication skills both written and oral (including ability to contribute to high-quality reports)
 | **√**   | **√**   |
| 1. Ability to interpret a range of sometimes complex information [about public health messaging, good practice, and available support for groups/communities], and present it to diverse people in an accessible way
 | **√**  | **√**   |
| 1. High-level networking, influencing and listening skills
 | **√**  | **√**  |
| 1. Track record of good information/data management
 | **√**  |  |
| 1. Good organisational, time and project management skills including financial planning
 | **√**  | **√**  |
| 1. Skilled and able computer user in standard office software
 | **√**  |   |
| 1. An understanding of good governance and organisational management in a voluntary sector context
 | **√**  |   |

## Personal Qualities

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Application** | **Interview** |
| 1. Able to work flexibly and collaboratively as part of a small team, showing initiative and proactively and constructively approaching challenges
 | √  | √  |
| 1. Reliable and able to manage own workload
 | √  | √  |
| 1. Fully committed to equality of opportunity with practical ideas for its implementation within the scope of the post
 | √  | √   |

# Additional Information

**Hours of Business**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | **Office Hours** | **Flexitime** | **Core Hours** |
| Monday to Friday | 9.00am to 5.00pm | 8.00am to 6.30pm | 10.00am – 12.00pm 2.00pm – 4.00pm |

A flexi-time scheme is in operation within Community Southwark. The successful applicant must be willing to work within the scheme.  The person appointed may be required to work outside these hours.

**Annual Leave:** 30 days Annual Leave (pro rata for contract period). The leave runs from 1st April to 31 March.

**Pension Scheme:** In addition to the salary, there is a company pension scheme to which the company contribution is 5% of your annual salary and employees currently contribute 3% of their salaries.

**Cycle to work scheme:** The scheme allows employees to purchase bikes and accessories tax-free. This is done through a salary sacrifice agreement signed for up to £1,000 to be paid in monthly instalments.

**Childcare Vouchers:** Unfortunately, the Government closed the Childcare Vouchers scheme to new entrants on 4th October 2018. However, Tax Free Childcare is still available through GOV.UK

**Volunteering Days:** Employees are entitled to up to two days paid leave for undertaking voluntary activities.

**Other:** Successful applicants will need to prove their entitlement to work in the UK and may be subject to DBS checks.

# Application Process

If you would like to apply for this post, please send

* A full CV
* A 2-page covering letter outlining how your experience meets the job and person specification

to recruitment@communitysouthwark.org

**IMPORTANT:**We are committed to ensuring our recruitment procedure is completely free from risks of unconscious bias. We therefore kindly ask you to**remove your name and any indication of your gender, ethnicity or other personal information from both your CV and Cover Letter,**that's not related to your work experience or skill set.

If you wish to have an informal conversation about the role, please call Catherine Negus, Healthwatch Southwark Manager on 020 7358 7256.

We particularly encourage applications from disabled, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people and people from the LGBT community as they are currently underrepresented in the charity.

# Next Steps

**Closing date:** End of 31 August 2020

**Shortlisted candidates will be notified by:** 2 September

**Interviews:** 4 September (online)

**Preferred Start Date**: 1 October 2020