



Job Description

Project Officer- Capacity Building

Job Title	Project Officer - Capacity Building
Salary	£25,000 - £29,000
Hours	37 hours per week
Benefits	5% Pension Contribution, 22 days annual holiday + 3 concessionary days & bank holidays (pro-rata)
Location	The Dudson Centre, Stoke-on-Trent
Special Conditions	Ability to travel in and around Stoke-on-Trent, with occasional weekend/evening work.
Responsible to	Capacity Building Lead

The Project Officer – Capacity Building will support voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations to strengthen their sustainability, effectiveness and impact. The role will provide practical, responsive and values-led capacity building support across governance, compliance, funding, organisational development and partnership working.

The postholder will also take an active role in VAST's Research, Evaluation and Network Development (REND) and other health research-related work, supporting learning, insight gathering and relationship building between VCSE organisations, statutory partners and wider systems. This will include helping VCSE voices, experiences and evidence shape local understanding, service development and decision-making.

The role spans multiple VAST projects and partnerships, contributing to training, networks, events and learning activity, and supporting VAST's commitment to community-led, inclusive and reflective practice.



Role and Responsibilities

VCSE Capacity Building & Organisational Support

- Provide tailored capacity building support to VCSE organisations, including areas such as governance, organisational development, funding support and best practice.
- Support organisations to identify strengths, challenges and priorities through diagnostics, action planning and reflective conversations.
- Keep up to date with relevant legislation, policy and sector developments sharing learning internally and externally.
- Work alongside the community development team to identify gaps and support grassroots organisations to address this.
- Promote good practice, peer learning and shared problem solving.
- Assist with monitoring and evaluation, including collecting data for reports on project progress.

Training, Networks & Sector Development

- Contribute to the delivery of VAST's training programme, including delivering workshops and supporting the development of bespoke training.
- Support the planning, delivery and facilitation of VCSE networks, events and learning spaces, both in person and online.
- Build and sustain positive relationships with VAST member organisations and partners, acting as an approachable and trusted contact.
- Promote VAST membership, services and resources.

VAST Services (1920)

Dudson Centre, Hope Street, Hanley, ST1 5DD

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Supporting VCSE Sector Involvement in Health-Related Research

The project officer will play an active role in VAST's work to ensure that organisations in the VCSE sector can actively participate in and contribute to Health Research Activity locally. This will include:

- Supporting engagement with VCSE organisations to gather insight, lived experience and evidence relating to community need, service delivery and system impacts.
- Contributing to learning-led, reflective approaches to understand what is working, where barriers exist, and how inequalities may be emerging or being reinforced.
- Supporting the ethical and inclusive involvement of VCSE organisations and communities in research and evaluation activity, ensuring participation is accessible, respectful and meaningful.
- Helping translate VCSE insight into learning, themes and messaging into insight that can inform partners, systems and decision makers, while retaining context and community voice.
- Supporting the development and facilitation of networks and spaces that enable VCSE organisations, researchers and statutory partners to connect, learn and collaborate.
- Working with colleagues to identify emerging issues, unintended consequences or gaps highlighted through activity, feeding these into organisational learning and improvement.

This work will be undertaken in line with VAST's values, emphasising trust, coproduction, proportionality and the responsible use of evidence.

Administration, monitoring and reporting



- Maintain clear, accurate and timely records of all support and engagement activity using VAST's CRM and monitoring systems.
- Contribute case studies, feedback, learning and insight for reports, communications and learning outputs.
- Ensure all work aligns with VAST's values, policies and procedures.

General Requirements

- Participate in regular supervision and team meetings.
- Undertake training and CPD as required for the role.
- Maintain a collaborative and flexible approach to VAST's work.
- Support the promotion of VAST and its services.
- Carry out any other duties that may reasonably fall within the scope of the role.

Notes: All jobs are subject to change from time to time and this job description will be reviewed regularly. The job description is a guide to the work that you will be required to undertake and represents a range of responsibilities in line with the grade of the post. This post is subject to a three-month probationary period.



1. Person Specification

Qualifications	
Full UK driving licence & access to a vehicle	<i>Essential</i>
Relevant qualification in community development, research or a related field	<i>Desirable</i>
Knowledge	
Understanding of the VCSE sector, including the operating environment, challenges and strengths of VCSE organisations.	<i>Essential</i>
Knowledge of organisational development and capacity building support, including governance, compliance and sustainability.	<i>Essential</i>
Understanding of funding, grants, tendering and contract delivery within the VCSE context.	<i>Desirable</i>
Awareness of equity, equality, diversity and inclusion principles.	<i>Essential</i>
Understanding of partnership working across VCSE, statutory services, health, research and wider system partners.	<i>Essential</i>
Awareness of learning led, reflective or evidence informed approaches.	<i>Desirable</i>
Understanding of ethical, inclusive and proportionate approaches to involving VCSE organisations in research or evaluation activity.	<i>Desirable</i>
Skills and Experience	
Experience of providing advice, guidance or capacity building support to VCSE organisations or community groups.	<i>Essential</i>



Ability to support organisations with diagnostics, action planning and problem solving in a supportive and strengths based way.	<i>Essential</i>
Experience of supporting funding applications, business planning or organisational development activity.	<i>Desirable</i>
Experience designing, delivering or supporting training, workshops, networks or learning events.	<i>Desirable</i>
Strong communications skills, with the ability to explain complex information clearly and appropriately to different audiences.	<i>Essential</i>
Ability to build and sustain trusting relationships with VCSE organisations, partners and stakeholders.	<i>Essential</i>
Experience of gathering qualitative insight, feedback or case studies and translating these into learning or evidence.	<i>Desirable</i>
Ability to work confidently with data, records and monitoring systems, maintaining accurate and timely information.	<i>Essential</i>
Strong organisational and time management skills, with the ability to balance competing priorities across multiple workstreams.	<i>Essential</i>
Confidence using Office 365, online platforms and digital communication tools.	<i>Essential</i>
Personal Qualities	
Reflective, curious and open to learning with an interest in understanding complexity, systems and lived experience.	<i>Essential</i>
Approachable, empathetic and respectful, able to work sensitively with organisations and individuals.	<i>Essential</i>
Proactive and self-motivated, with the ability to work independently while contributing positively to a team.	<i>Essential</i>
Flexible and adaptable, able to respond to changing priorities and emerging needs.	<i>Essential</i>



Able to use judgement, discretion and integrity when handling sensitive information and conversations.	<i>Essential</i>
Comfortable working in environments where learning, dialogue and adaptation are ongoing rather than fixed.	<i>Desirable</i>

Equity, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EEDI) and Equal Opportunities Statement

VAST is committed to fostering a workplace culture where equity, equality, diversity and inclusion are central to everything we do. We believe that our strength comes from the diversity of our people, partners and communities, and we are dedicated to creating an environment where everyone feels valued, respected and able to thrive.

We recognise that people have different experiences, needs and barriers, and we are committed to advancing equity by providing the support, adjustments and opportunities individuals require to participate fully. We also promote equality of opportunity by ensuring that no applicant, employee or volunteer is treated less favorably based on any protected characteristic.

In line with the Equality Act 2010, VAST is committed to ensuring that all stages of our employment practices – including recruitment, selection, development and progression – are free from unlawful discrimination. We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds and lived experiences, including those who are underrepresented in leadership roles across the voluntary and community sector.

We are dedicated to removing barriers, designing inclusive processes, and continually improving our practices to reduce the impact of bias and support fair outcomes for all. This includes welcoming requests for reasonable adjustments during the application and interview process, enabling candidates to demonstrate their skills and strengths on an equitable basis.



At VAST, everyone is welcome. We celebrate difference, champion inclusion and work to ensure that all individuals feel a genuine sense of belonging as part of our organisation.