

Lived Experience Project Associate Application Pack

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| Job Title | Lived Experience Project Associate |
| Contract | Fixed term – 9 months |
| Hours | Three days a week: 21 hours (we are open to discussing alternative working patterns or job share with the right candidate/s.) FTE: 35 hours a week |
| Salary | 3 days: £25,200 - £27,000 per annum £42,000-£45,000 pro rata |
| Location | Home based office (suitable workspace and reliable fast internet required) National Travel will be required (with some within the areas of Bristol, North Somerset, North East Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire). Frequency will likely vary across the project. |
| Application Deadline | Monday 3 rd February 2025 at 10am |
| Interview Date | 11 th , 14 th or 18 th February 2025 (online via Teams) |

If you have questions we welcome you to join the online Q&A session on Monday 27th January, 5-5.45pm.

You can sign up to join via the website. A recording will be available shortly after.

If you have a reasonable adjustment please email us at recruitment@ndconnection.co.uk

Recruitment details

[Recruitment Timeline](#)

Deadline for applications: Monday 3rd February 2025 at 10am

Applicants notified if shortlisted: Tuesday 4th February 2025 by 5pm

Dates of interviews: 11th, 14th or 18th February (online via Teams)

Interviewees notified if they have been appointed: no later than Friday 28th February

[How to apply](#)

The application process is two stages.

Stage 1: complete the online form.

- You will be asked to enter some of your contact details and details of previous work.
- You will then be asked to answer 3 questions.
- You will also be asked to complete an equity and diversity form. This is optional.

Stage 2: If you are shortlisted you will be invited to attend an online interview. You will be sent the interview questions 5 days ahead of the interview date.

As part of the interview, you will be asked to present on a question for 10 minutes. We will share the presentation topic when we invite you to attend the interview.

[Safeguarding](#)

Successful applicants are required to complete an enhanced DBS check. A positive check would not necessarily prevent you from getting the role.

[References](#)

Appointment is conditional in receiving two satisfactory references

[Probationary period](#)

3 months

About Neurodiverse Connection

Neurodiverse Connection is a neurodivergent led Community interest Company.

Our mission is to:

- Listen to and amplify neurodivergent views and voices.
- Give additional consideration to intersectionality and how we can support the amplification of views and voices that are often unseen and unheard.
- Support people from different neurologies to understand each other, facilitating solutions to the double empathy problem.
- Lead on changing understanding of sensory and social processing differences, particularly in relation to the built environment.
- Challenge the common misunderstandings and misconceptions of autism and support an improved understanding of neurodiversity within health and social care.
- Promote an improved understanding of neurodivergent culture and communication.
- Support neurodivergent people to have equal opportunities in life.
- Support neurodivergent people to have equal opportunities and outcomes in health.
- Support neurodivergent employment, including in leadership positions and facilitating change for the neurodivergent community.

How we work

Neurodiverse Connection is a new Community Interest Company. We are working to be a neurodiversity affirming and supportive organisation. We want to support you as an important team member to work on projects that you love, that align with your interests and skills, and enable you to have a balanced and rewarding work and personal life. We welcome you working with us and providing gentle challenge if we don't get this right, so we can learn together. We want to see neurodivergent people treated better, and that starts with us. We hope you'll work with us to champion this approach for other people, too.

[Our commitment to you](#)

It's part of our mission to be a great place to work and to demonstrate how to work in neurodivergent affirming ways. We believe this is beneficial to everyone, regardless of neurology.

We aim to:

- Enable you to shape your role to your strengths and interests.
- Offer flexibility in delivery hours, within agreed parameters.
- Work to make Neurodiverse Connection an organisation that you enjoy being part of, that supports you in your role, that recognises your contribution and that delivers great outcomes for the neurodivergent people we work to support.
- Support to develop in your role through access to training, shadowing and mentoring.
- Access to supervision and a reflective space to support you in a lived experience role.
- Involve you in shaping and directing the organisation.
- Listen when we don't get it right, and welcome constructive feedback.
- Involve team members in development opportunities and spending the social value we've accumulated together.
- 35 hour working week (pro rata).
- 4% work place pension contribution.
- 26 days annual leave plus bank holidays (pro rata).
- Access to a wellbeing fund.

Job Description

Role Summary

We are excited to recruit a Project Associate with Lived Experience of mental distress to Neurodiverse Connection. We have been commissioned to deliver a Lived Experience Review by a NHS organisation, as part of their Quality Transformation Plan for Inpatient care. This role will be co-leading this project.

The project seeks to understand the experience of patients (and their families/carers) who have been patients in out of area placements in the independent sector. This will be facilitated through either in-person or online interviews conducted by individuals with lived experience from Neurodiverse Connection.

The project also seeks to gather the views and experiences of care from those within seldom asked groups to understand the inequalities experienced. It is anticipated this will be facilitated through in-person or online workshops and we are exploring creative methods to gather this feedback. These sessions will also be facilitated by individuals with lived experience from Neurodiverse Connection.

The learning from the project will be combined with existing learning from Trust and presented to the Trust as a written report, alongside an in-person workshop to explore and reflect on the learning.

The post holder will be shaping and delivering this project, alongside individuals from the NHS organisation and with the support of our current Lived Experience Project Lead and a project assistant at Neurodiverse Connection. Administrative and communications support from Neurodiverse Connection will also be available to support the project.

Role Description

- To co-lead the recruitment of participants, through liaising with NHS and private organisations, and utilising own networks.
- To co-lead the development of interview schedules and interactive feedback workshops.

- Organise and co-ordinate workshops with seldom heard groups and those with lived experience of out of area inpatient admission.
- Ensure participation in the project is accessible to all.
- To co-lead the data collection, ensuring quality and high levels of data governance.
- Conduct interviews with those in those participating in the lived experience review, both face to face and online.
- Facilitate group workshops with seldom heard groups.
- Conduct qualitative analysis of the data to identify themes, and incorporate these into feedback and recommendations to the commissioning NHS organisation.
- To provide written and verbal progress reports.
- To ensure that all the work is rooted in the lived experience of patients and carers.
- Provide leadership support to the research assistant.
- To represent Neurodiverse Connection nationally, regionally and locally as appropriate and to promote the work that we do.
- To work alongside the Neurodiverse Connection staff and associate team to ensure delivery of high-quality work.
- Travel nationally, with some within the areas of Bristol, North Somerset, North East Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire, will be required to deliver work to teams and organisations.

Personal Specification

Note: we welcome applications from people who are able to meet these essential requirements with support through access to work. We welcome you identifying accommodations that you need that would support you to thrive at work and deliver this role.

We are committed to ensuring people are able to develop within the role, so training and shadowing will be available, and we welcome conversations about what you need in order to develop and deliver in the role.

Experience

Essential

- ◆ A commitment to the Neurodiverse Connection Mission. To have a passion and drive to improve neurodivergent lives, and the lives of people accessing mental health services.
- ◆ Identify as Neurodivergent (self-identification is welcomed) and practice current neurodivergent affirming approaches.
- ◆ Lived Experience of mental distress.
- ◆ Significant experience of mental health services either as a patient or carer, and willingness to bring a lived experience lens to this work.
- ◆ Experience working in a neurodivergent affirming way and adopting a trauma informed approach.
- ◆ Experience of working collaboratively with staff across a range of organisations and sectors.
- ◆ Experience of challenging the common misunderstandings and misconceptions of neurodivergence and support an improved understanding in a neurodivergent affirming way.
- ◆ Experience of providing constructive challenge and influencing positive change.
- ◆ Experience of conducting and analysing qualitative research.
- ◆ Experience of conducting research interviews and/or focus groups.
- ◆ Experience of working alongside people with lived experience, neurodivergent individuals and people with a learning disability.

Desirable

- ◆ Experience of developing and managing projects.

- Experience of working with the NHS.
- Experience of facilitating large workshops.
- Experience of designing and delivering creative co-design workshops.
- Experience providing support to junior members of a team.

Ability, skills, knowledge

Essential

- Be a good communicator, with the ability to work credibly with multidisciplinary teams and facilitate meetings.
- Excellent knowledge of mental health services in the NHS.
- Excellent understanding of a variety of qualitative research methods.
- Excellent understanding of research ethics, data protection regulations and best practice around data collection and storage.
- Confident speaking publicly in a range of forums.
- Able to work with people who have different perspectives and values and provide constructive challenge to support change.
- An understanding of the inequalities faced by minoritised groups.
- Be self-motivated and work independently as well as be a flexible member of a small team.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to work with people from a variety of backgrounds and experiences.
- Ability to produce work accurately and to a high standard with emphasis on attention to detail.
- Excellent organisational and planning skills, able to prioritise work and adapt to changing circumstances.
- Ability to work to timescales and deadlines in line with budgets.
- Willingness to work across a range of locations, predominantly throughout the South West region of England, occasional overnight stays may be required.
- Ability to identify needs, gaps in knowledge, and ask for support.
- Ability to work flexibly to meet varying demands.
- Reasonable level of computer literacy. The role will include frequent use of Microsoft Word, Outlook and Teams.

Desirable

- An in depth understanding of the current themes and discussion points in the neurodivergent community.
- An in-depth understanding of the barriers faced by people from ethnically and culturally diverse groups.
- An in-depth understanding of the barriers faced by seldom heard communities such as those who identify as LGBTQ+, those with mental and physical health conditions, those in contact with the criminal justice system, trauma survivors and those at greater risk due to socio-economic factors.
- Familiarity with the Patient Carer Race Equity Framework (PCREF).
- Knowledge of co-production approaches and principles.