

Partnerships and Best Practice Lead

Location: This is a home-based role. There is an expectation of travel for in-person meetings, collaborative working sessions, relationship-building and partnership activity. Kids has office locations in London, Sutton Coldfield and Hull, and while there is no fixed pattern of office attendance required for this role, you will be expected to spend time with colleagues and partners in-person, helping to demonstrate and role-model our values.

Reports to: Director of Strategy, Partnerships and Advocacy

Direct Reports: none

Salary: £42,000

Contract: 36 hours per week. Fixed term one year in first instance with scope to extend, subject to funding.

About

For too many young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), the journey from childhood to adulthood can feel like falling off a cliff edge. Too often, they are left without the support, skills and connections they need to lead fulfilling adult lives - and the more complex a young person's needs, the steeper that cliff edge becomes. Meaningful, systemic reform is both essential and urgent. To create a support system fit for the future - one that addresses the stark inequalities in opportunity, access and outcomes faced by disabled young people - strong cross-sector collaboration is vital.

Kids' new *Ending the Cliff Edge* programme will build a national alliance of changemakers - young people with SEND, their families, practitioners, support organisations and service providers – who will work together to enable better futures for young people with SEND as they move to adulthood.

Together, this national cross-sector alliance will ensure that the voices and experiences of those most affected by a broken system are at the heart of shaping its replacement.

Role Overview

This Partnerships and Best Practice Lead will play a central role in establishing a new alliance led by Kids. The *Ending the Cliff Edge* programme is a new initiative focused on transforming the transition to adulthood for disabled young people. This role will drive forward our ambition to spread best practice, build evidence, and strengthen cross-sector collaboration so that more young people receive the support they need to thrive.

The postholder will take an iterative and partnership-focused approach, working closely with national partners across business, further education, employment programmes, and the voluntary sector. They will act as the connective thread between Kids' own delivery - and a growing network of organisations committed to improving disabled young people's journey to adulthood.

They will ensure the programme's work is coordinated, collaborative and impactful, supporting partners to adopt high-quality models, test innovative approaches, and generate strong evidence of what works.

Crucially, co-production and lived experience will sit at the heart of this role. The Partnerships and Best Practice Lead will ensure the insights of disabled young people and their families meaningfully shape the development, testing and sharing of practice. Their work will help build a sustainable legacy: a stronger, more consistent national approach to supporting young people into adulthood, informed by real experience and shared learning across sectors.

Key Responsibilities

- Build and maintain a broad collaborative partnership of cross-sector organisations, providers, and experts to achieve collective ambition of driving improvement in transitions support.
- Refine, capture and share best-practice models for supporting disabled young people into adulthood, ensuring they are evidence-informed and accessible.
- Support partner organisations to design, adapt and deliver pilots that test innovative approaches and generate strong evidence of impact.
- Expand Kids' national reach by growing the number of young people supported through improved transitions pathways, and increasing the number of businesses and providers engaged.
- Act as the central link between Kids' direct delivery and wider national partners, ensuring learning is shared widely and consistently.
- Represent Kids externally as a champion for high-quality transitions support, contributing to sector learning, collaboration and thought leadership.

Person Specification

The successful candidate will be a skilled collaborator, communicator and relationship builder, with a strong commitment to improving outcomes for disabled young people. They will bring experience of partnership working, programme development, and translating learning into practice. Crucially, they will have the proactivity, drive and resilience to help build and launch a new programme from the ground up, thriving in an environment that feels more like a start-up phase than a fully established operation. While they will work closely with the Director, service leads and fundraising colleagues, and be supported to harness existing relationships and networks, this role requires someone who is comfortable working with ambiguity, spotting opportunities, and turning ideas into action. They will be confident operating across sectors and engaging a wide range of stakeholders to build momentum and drive collective impact.

Essential Criteria

- **Proven experience of partnership development and cross-sector collaboration**, ideally involving education, employment, social care, charities or business engagement.
- **Experience of identifying, developing or sharing best-practice models**, and translating learning into practical, usable resources for others.
- **Ability to lead and support pilot activity**, including coordinating stakeholders, shaping delivery approaches, and gathering learning and evidence.
- **Excellent relationship-building skills**, with the credibility and confidence to engage organisations at all levels — from frontline practitioners to senior leaders.

- **Strong commitment to improving outcomes for disabled young people**, with a clear understanding of the barriers they face in the transition to adulthood.
- **Strong communication skills**, including the ability to communicate complex ideas clearly and accessibly to a wide range of audiences – from young people with SEND to civil servants and other decision makers.
- **Ability and commitment to deliver excellent stewardship** of existing programme funders and working with colleagues on cultivating potential new funders, underpinned by a sound understanding of the funding environment
- **Ability to work independently and proactively**, managing multiple strands of work, building momentum, and sustaining external relationships over time.
- **Experience of producing clear, accessible materials and resources**, such as guidance, frameworks, case studies or toolkits.
- **Strong organisational and project-management skills**, with the ability to coordinate activity across multiple partners and keep projects on track.
- **Evidence of using insight, data and learning to inform practice**, capture impact, and drive improvements.

Desirable Criteria

- Experience working within the disability, SEND, education, employment or youth sectors.
- Knowledge of transitions pathways and the wider policy landscape affecting disabled young people.
- Experience designing or delivering training, workshops or communities of practice.
- Familiarity with co-production or involving people with lived experience in service design.
- Experience capturing or evaluating outcomes and impact in a programme or partnership setting.

Interviews will take place on 21st and 22nd May 2026

