

Senior Scientific Projects Officer

JOB DESCRIPTION

KEY DETAILS

Job Title:	Senior Scientific Projects Officer
Location:	Beacon, 66 Devonshire Road, Cambridge, CB1 2BL; hybrid working options available following a successful induction period
Responsible to:	Scientific Projects Manager
Hours:	Full-time (37.5 hours per week)
Term:	Funding secured initially until September 2027, with potential to extend
Salary:	£27,000
Starting date:	September – October 2024

ABOUT BEACON

Beacon (formerly known as Findacure) is a UK-based charity that is building a united rare disease community with patient support groups at its heart.

Our vision: a world in which no one faces their rare journey alone.

Rare diseases affect around 3.5 million (that's 1 in 17) of the UK population, and globally affect more people than cancer and AIDS combined. Misdiagnosis, delayed treatment, inadequate care coordination, and lack of support are common challenges faced by rare disease patients. Living with such conditions – frequently chronic, life-limiting and life threatening – can be profoundly isolating, affecting not only patients but also their families.

Patient groups play a pivotal role in breaking this isolation. They offer an invaluable service to their community, supporting them in their darkest hours and advocating for better research, treatment, and care. However, establishing and managing a patient group can be an overwhelming experience, with most voluntarily led by those directly affected by a rare disease.

Beacon tackles this challenge head-on. Through a variety of activities – including patient group trainings, community projects and research initiatives – we equip patient groups with the tools, confidence, and connections needed to deliver change for the world's often neglected rare disease patients.

Thanks to significant new funding, we have grown from a team of six to eleven in under 18 months. As we navigate our second decade of operation, we find ourselves in an exciting stage of our journey; embarking on new, ambitious, and international projects, and transforming our approach to existing ones.

As a result, we are seeking a Senior Scientific Projects Officer to join our established Science Team and support us through this next phase of our development.

OVERVIEW OF THE ROLE

As Senior Scientific Projects Officer, you will be pivotal in delivering Beacon's scientific training initiatives. Your role will involve creating and delivering educational content through written guides, webinars, and workshops, aimed at equipping patient group leaders and academics with the knowledge to contribute effectively to the development of new therapies for rare diseases.

Alongside the Scientific Projects Manager and other key team members, you'll work across two main areas of the charity's work:

1. **REMEDI4ALL:** A European-wide drug repurposing platform, aiming to expedite the use of existing medicines to address unmet clinical needs. Collaborating with our European partners, you will drive the creation of training materials focused on patient engagement and education within the drug repurposing community.
2. **Rare Disease Research:** Supporting the development of the UK rare disease research ecosystem, alongside LifeArc's newly funded Rare Disease Translational Research Centres. You will help establish new standards in patient-centred research, and disseminate the findings and insights from this innovative network to accelerate rare disease treatment development in the UK.

Across these projects, you will manage the development of educational materials, including writing and reviewing content, supporting and coordinating volunteers and pro bono contributors, planning and delivering live training events, and assessing needs through feedback and stakeholder engagement.

This role offers an exciting opportunity for someone looking to make a difference in the charity sector and thrive in a small team environment. The successful candidate will have a strong scientific understanding and experience in creating educational training materials, and/or medical communication. Your work will be crucial in driving forward Beacon's mission of building a united rare disease community with patient groups at its heart.

Responsibilities

- Responsibilities Designing curricula and programmes for live training sessions for patient group leaders, academics, and other stakeholders.
- Creating written and video training materials for our projects, both independently and with Beacon team members, collaborators, and pro bono supporters.
- Developing and maintaining the REMEDI4ALL Digital Repurposing Academy using a WordPress-based learning management system.
- Overseeing and coordinating the expansion of the REMEDI4ALL Digital Repurposing Academy.
- Delivering live training on various topics on behalf of Beacon.
- Leading project work, engaging with a diverse range of stakeholders, and representing Beacon at meetings and forums as you expand your knowledge and confidence.

- Researching and conducting interviews to identify the training needs of our target beneficiaries.
- Performing in-depth research to understand user needs and training experiences and incorporating into training content.
- Collaborating closely, primarily through virtual communications, with project partners across the UK and Europe.
- Managing and updating a database of drug repurposing training opportunities.

PERSONAL SPECIFICATION

This is a role suitable for someone with, ideally, 2 or more years of experience within science or medical communication - this may be in the form of medical writing, developing and delivering training or medical science liaison work - and looking to contribute to a non-profit environment.

Essential

- Scientific degree, or equivalent professional experience.
- Proficient in the creation of educational content, particularly in written formats.
- Ability to explain complex scientific processes to a general audience, in both spoken and written formats.
- A confident communicator, able to build strong working relationships with virtual and in-person teams.
- Excellent research skills, with experience in identifying, analysing and collating information from various sources.
- A patient-centric focus with appreciation of patient input in medical research.
- A proactive attitude with good initiative and a focus on impactful project outcomes.
- Attention to detail with a drive to achieve and maintain high standards.
- Drive, determination, and self-motivation, with a positive attitude towards work.
- Understanding of, and commitment to, the objectives of Beacon.
- Ability to deliver occasional out-of-hours work to accommodate Beacon events or travel in the UK and internationally.

Desirable

- Experience in project management.
- Experience working or volunteering with charities.
- An understanding of rare diseases and/or the UK healthcare system.

WORKING AT BEACON

Beacon is a small, tight-knit team, with a friendly atmosphere and strong commitment to our beneficiaries. We aim to give all employees opportunities to pursue their interests, develop their skills and shape their career path.

At Beacon, we are pleased to have flexible working practices that allow our employees to balance their personal and professional lives. We also recognise the substantial benefits of in-person collaboration and communication to the organisation and its staff. We offer flexible hours and hybrid working to encourage good work-life stability and ensure seamless teamwork across the organisation.

BENEFITS



25 days holiday, plus bank holidays and Christmas to New Year closure



5% pension contribution



Flexible working practices, including hybrid working and flexitime



Access to free mental health support, counselling and 24/7 telephone GP for you and your household



Shopping savings at major retailers and supermarkets

Time off in lieu to support appropriate work/life balance



A close knit and friendly small team environment



Valuable experience working in the charity and health sector



Discounted gym membership



Training budgets to support personal and professional development



Frequent opportunities to meet with beneficiaries, supporters and collaborators



Opportunities to expand your professional network through attending events in the UK and abroad.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Please email an up-to-date **CV and cover letter** to Eve Hewitt (Scientific Projects Manager) at recruitment@rarebeacon.org by **12pm on Wednesday 21st August**, outlining your interest in the role as well as any relevant skills and experience. Please ensure your name and the role you are applying for is noted clearly in the email subject line.

Shortlisted candidates will be contacted initially for a phone interview before a final round of face-to-face interviews at our Cambridge Office. We anticipate final interviews taking place between 27th August – 11th September, however recruitment may end early should a suitable candidate be found before the closing date.

If you have any questions or would like to have an informal discussion about the role, please contact us at the email listed above. **You must have a right to work in the UK. We regret we are unable to sponsor UK VISA applications under any circumstances.**