



Charity Manager of Slade Gardens Community Play Association

(CIO, registered charity no. 1080876) - www.sladeadventure.co.uk

We are looking for an exceptional Charity Manager to lead Slade Gardens Community Play Association (aka Slade Gardens Adventure Playground) — a much-loved, staffed open-access playground in the heart of Lambeth. This is a rare chance to take overall responsibility for a small, ambitious charity at an exciting moment: we are in the early stages of planning for a new building that will extend what we can offer to local children and families.

This is a genuinely hands-on, hybrid role. In this small organisation, one person will carry operational playwork leadership alongside fundraising, safeguarding, finance, governance, line management and community partnership. If you'd love being out in the playground itself as much as building the plans and partnerships that keep it thriving, we would like to hear from you.

About Slade Gardens

Slade Gardens Community Play Association is a small registered charity running a 1.25-acre staffed adventure playground, with a 5 & Under Stay and Play space, at 73 A&B Stockwell Park Road, London SW9 ODA in the heart of Lambeth. Our open-access service welcomes children aged 6–16 to come and go freely and to make full use of a rich physical environment — wooden climbing and play structures, a five-a-side football pitch, an edible garden, a pond and an apiary — in free play. Around this core sit our 5 & Under Stay and Play (ages 0–5), community and corporate volunteer days, a strand of work with young people up to 21, and venue hire for parties.

Our practice is rooted play that is freely chosen, with the adult as enabler rather than instructor. Children are supported to choose, take measured risks and direct their own play. A real understanding of, and commitment to, this way of working matters more to us than any single qualification.

We are a friendly, lively place to work, and a charity operating — like the whole sector — under real funding pressure. We need a leader who can both protect the everyday quality of play and secure the charity's future.

The role in brief

Reporting to the Board of Trustees, the Charity Manager has overall operational management of the playground and is the line manager for all paid staff, sessional staff and volunteers. They are the principal point of contact for the Board, funders and partner organisations, and the charity's lead on safeguarding, administration, fundraising and grant management.

Key terms

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| Job title | Charity Manager |
| Location | Slade Gardens Community Play Association, 73 A&B Stockwell Park Road, London SW9 0DA |
| Reports to | Board of Trustees |
| Contract | Permanent |
| Hours | 4 days (32 hours)/week. Some evening, weekend and school-holiday working; time off in lieu for agreed out-of-hours work. |
| Salary | £28,800-£32,000 for 4 days (£36,000-£40,000 FTE) |
| Annual leave | 25 days FTE (20 days) plus Bank Holidays; not normally to be taken in school-holiday periods |
| Closing date | 3 July 2026 (interviews from 13 July) |

What we're looking for

You will be experienced in working with children and alert to their play needs; practical and comfortable working outdoors in all weathers; enthusiastic, proactive, flexible and cooperative; an excellent manager and team leader; well organised and able to juggle many things at once; and an effective communicator with your team, the Board and the wider community.

Essential

- Substantial experience of working with children and young people in an open-access or self-directed setting — adventure playground, play scheme, Forest School, youth club or similar.
- Management experience: line-managing staff and volunteers, and running a small operational team across term-time and holiday provision.
- Charity or small-organisation administration: budget-holding, reporting to a board, and working with funders.
- Safeguarding: senior-level training (Designated Safeguarding Lead or equivalent), with a demonstrable understanding of safeguarding in an open-access setting.
- Current paediatric and adult First-Aid certificates (or willingness to obtain it on appointment).

- Eligibility for an Enhanced DBS check, with children's barred-list check, on appointment.
- A practical disposition: willing and able to work outdoors in all weathers and to be hands-on with site upkeep.
- A proven level of literacy and numeracy: able to produce good-quality written material (policies, reports and eye-catching publicity) and to manage a budget rigorously, with financial probity.

Desirable

- A Level 4 or higher qualification in playwork, children's play or a related field.
- Experience of working with children with additional needs and SEND, and familiarity with inclusive-play practice.
- An above-average understanding of child development and the ability to champion free play.
- Familiarity with the sector network — e.g. London Play, Play England, the International Play Association.
- A fundraising track record and bid-writing experience, particularly with trusts and foundations that fund open-access play.
- Experience of managing volunteer programmes and corporate-volunteer partnerships.
- An understanding of local government, and experience of working with local-authority officers whose duties cover statutory and non-statutory services to children and families.
- Comfort with the relevant compliance environment, e.g. GDPR and food hygiene.

We warmly welcome candidates from a range of backgrounds. A full Job Description is available on request.

How to apply

Please send your CV together with a supporting statement (maximum two sides) addressing the essential criteria to jobs@sladeadventure.co.uk. Informal enquiries and visits are warmly encouraged — please get in touch.

Our process has two stages:

1. Application: CV plus a supporting statement no longer than two sides.
2. Interview: a panel conversation and a short, scenario-based discussion, plus an informal visit to the playground during a session — for many candidates the most enjoyable and revealing part of the process.

Closing date: 3 July 2026.

Slade Gardens Community Play Association is committed to equal opportunities and to the safeguarding and welfare of children. All appointments are subject to an Enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references.