



# SOULFUL Internship

Feed your soul for a year.  
Live in an intentional community  
with people with learning disabilities.



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# The Soulful Internship Role

<b>Job title:</b>	Soulful Internship
<b>Hours:</b>	32 hours a week of support, 8 hours of a facilitated spiritual development course.
<b>Stipend:</b>	Room and board covered (including rent, meals, and bills), plus a monthly allowance to cover additional expenses (to be confirmed April 2024 dependent on inflation, at least £330/month)
<b>Where could I do the internship?</b>	In 2024, the Communities in Manchester, Kent, and Edinburgh are accepting interns.
<b>Would I get holiday?</b>	Of course! 28 days in England, 29 in Scotland.
<b>Do I need care experience?</b>	None at all. You would receive support and training. We just ask that you come with an open mind!

## What would I offer?

- Your time
- Your stories
- Your skills (creative and manual skills are always welcome)
- Your support - enabling people with disabilities to lead rich and fulfilling lives
- Assistance with household tasks
- Emotional, social and pastoral support (being a supportive friend)

## What would I receive?

- Daily meals, a private bedroom, and bills
- Allowance of about £335 a month (subject to inflation)
- Being part of a community where diversity is celebrated
- Welcome, value, respect, friendship
- Training paid for by L'Arche
- Time and space for personal growth and reflection
- Eight hours a week of a facilitated Spiritual Development course
- Disclosure check certificate (DBS/PVG)
- Lots of support
- Three free retreats a year

## What kind of support would I receive?

### Interns have four supporters:

- Supervisor - a senior assistant based in your house who would help you with your training and support work
- Accompanier - an experienced member of L'Arche who would meet with you monthly to talk about your experience of community
- Facilitator - a weekly meeting in small groups with a facilitator who would guide you through the spiritual development course
- Buddy - you would be paired up with another intern in your Community to provide peer support



# Training and Spiritual Development

## **What training would I receive?**

You would receive a mixture of in-person, pre-recorded, and Zoom training on supporting people with learning disabilities and First Aid. You would also carry out self-assessment with your supervisor. You would receive a nationally recognised qualification called the Care Certificate. There would be opportunities for ongoing development training, such as Makaton (sign language) training. This training would all be free.

You would also join the spiritual development course.

## **What is involved in the Spiritual Development course?**

The course is a chance to reflect on where you are in life, where you find meaning, and what you're learning in L'Arche. Interns meet weekly with the facilitator either online or in person. This meeting might involve listening to a talk, discussing a topic, making art together, sharing stories, meditating, and much more. Interns attend three in-person retreats over the year.

The year is split into three parts. The first part (September to December) is called 'Telling Our Stories' and looks at where we have come from, accessible storytelling, and how L'Arche fits into our stories. The second part (February to April) is called 'Finding the Beauty' and focuses on noticing what is special about our day-to-day and building a practice of mindfulness. The third part (May to July) is called 'Imagining Tomorrow' and asks what if we took a little piece of L'Arche with us on the next step of our journey.

## **Do I need to be religious?**

We welcome people who are religious and those who are not religious. Our only requirement is that you are open-minded and interested in spirituality.

## **What if this is my first time living away from home?**

Some people who come to live in our Communities are eighteen and spending their gap year in L'Arche. It's a great way to have a 'soft launch' into adulthood and learn life skills like cooking and cleaning in a safe space.

## **Am I too old for this?**

No! Our diversity is our strength in L'Arche and we love have a broad range of people living in our Communities. Some of our live-ins are eighteen and straight out of school, learning to be adults. Others are in their early twenties and wanting to take some time to recharge after university. Others are people taking career breaks. And some are retired people who didn't want to live by themselves.

## **What would I actually do in my 32 hours on rota as an intern?**

You would be supporting our members with learning disabilities. This involves a mixture of different activities: personal care (like supporting people in the shower), accompanying people on trips, giving medication, cooking, cleaning, sharing life. Offering support and care in this way involves some hard work and resilience, as well as lots of fun and laughter. It's a chance to build deep, trusting friendships with people with learning disabilities.

As members of a team, live-ins work with salaried Care Assistants to facilitate the wellbeing and independence of people with learning disabilities.

We asked our live-ins what a typical L'Arche day looked like for them. Go to the next page to find out.



# A day in the life

MORNING

## Monika



Had the morning off so I meditated in my room before repotting some of the plants in our garden

Did some grocery shopping for the evening meal

Made cups of tea and chatted with core members



Put the laundry on and started cooking for the house - I had help from two core members: one on carrot grating duty, the other cleared the dishes for me!

Helped in administering medication to those who needed it



Ice Cream Night!!!

House prayer night - we passed a candle and shared the good things that happened in the week

Helped two core members with night time routine



Handover to the waking night team

## Sofia

Had a lie-in followed by breakfast in the garden - the sun was shining!

Chilled in my room and listened to an audio book before my shift started



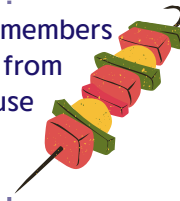
Took part in a reflection session with Live-Ins from Other Communities

Collected core members from their day workshops

Caught up with news from colleagues

Supported a core member to go to the toilet.

BBQ with core members and assistants from a different house in the London Community



Helped with core member bedtime routines

Cleaned the bathroom and kitchen

Chilled downstairs with other Live-Ins once the core members were in bed

## Danny

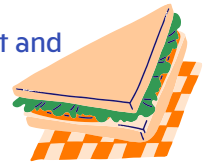
Made a special breakfast for everybody



Assisted core member with showering, getting dressed, brushing teeth, medication and combing his hair

Weekly team meeting

Another assistant and I made salad and sandwiches for lunch, along with some Core Members



Assisted a Core Member to join a Zoom meeting

Core member and I chatted together while doing some tidying and cleaning

Finished shift at 4.30pm

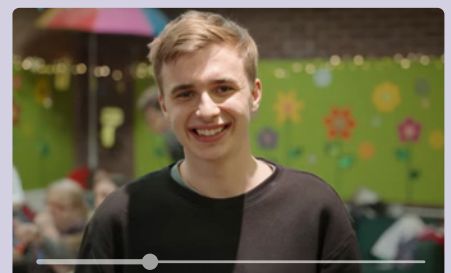
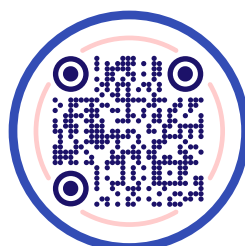


Spent the evening hanging out with another assistant and eating together in the garden

AFTERNOON

EVENING

**We asked Danny to share his experience living in L'Arche for a year. Watch by using the link below [bit.ly/soulful\\_year\\_danny](https://bit.ly/soulful_year_danny) Or Scan the QR Code.**



# Who We Are...

## Our Community

L'Arche is an international federation of Communities of people with and without learning disabilities sharing life together. There are eleven Communities in the UK, from London, to Preston, to Inverness. Each Community is made up of a handful of houses where our members live together, an office, and workshops. While on the Soulful Internship you would be living with a few other people with and without learning disabilities in one of our houses. Our houses are normal neighbourhood houses with kitchens, sitting rooms, bedrooms, and bathrooms. They're warm and hospitable.

L'Arche began in the 1960s as a Catholic intentional community. It grew out of radical political roots based on the Christian idea that social hierarchy needs to be upturned. Today, we are deeply inclusive of people of all faiths and none, all classes, all identities, and we are committed to LGBTQ+ inclusion. The Soulful Internship is for everyone interested in care and living in a friendly, homely community.

## What We Believe

Two approaches have become very important in the care sector over the last twenty years. Coproduction is the idea that power around decision-making should be shared with the people using health and social care services. Person-centred care is care that takes the whole person into account and listens to their wishes and experiences.

These practices are built into the fabric of L'Arche Communities. For the fifty years of L'Arche in the UK, we have built relationship and community life together as people with and without learning disabilities. We have learned that care is grounded in friendship and seeing the other person as human and deserving of love.

For us today, being a good carer means being friends with the people you support, being authentic, and bringing your whole self to your Community. Living in the same house as the people you support helps you to recognise them as a human being capable of love and creativity, rather than as a set of tasks to be completed.

This program is the perfect preparation for a career in care because it combines the opportunity to learn best practice in the health and social care field, with sharing life with people with learning disabilities.

## What We Do

People with learning disabilities are at the centre of our communities, and we call them 'core members'. Our members without learning disabilities spend between fifteen and forty hours a week on rota supporting our core members. This support might involve cooking meals, cleaning, accompanying them to activities, helping them in the shower, or just chilling and chatting. Some of these supporters are live-out assistants (people who live outside of L'Arche but spend their days with us) and others live in the community.

From September 2024, we're introducing three new programs for living in: the Soulful Internship, the Care Apprenticeship, and the Community Builder. The Soulful Internship is a fully funded year-long experience where you'll spend 32 hours a week supporting housemates with learning disabilities, and at least eight hours a week on a spiritual development course led by a facilitator.





# At L'Arche we value...

## **Treating people with dignity and respect:**

We value every person and celebrate who they are. We do not just tolerate diversity, but actively embrace it in our Communities. A key way we demonstrate dignity and respect is by being fully present to each other when we are together and listening deeply to one another.

## **Friendliness and welcome:**

We are deeply committed to building friendships together, which calls us to live life with a joyful and grateful spirit.

A key way we demonstrate friendliness and welcome is by offering meaningful invitation and welcome to newcomers and also to each other on a daily basis.

## **Empathy:**

We are committed to understanding and sharing the feelings of one another. We prioritise the qualities of compassion, caring, and kindness to nurture empathy. A key way we demonstrate empathy is through the quality of the shared life we build together.

## **Integrity:**

We strive to have integrity in everything we do and in every relationship we build, seeking to be authentic and honest, trustworthy and open because to build meaningful relationships we need to reveal who we are. A key way we demonstrate integrity is through our willingness to be both vulnerable and courageous.

## **Commitment to community building:**

We choose to share life together rather than merely work together. Sharing life means we create mutual relationships with one another and also share responsibility for the life and wellbeing of the Community as a whole, practicing forgiveness and celebration and creating a place of belonging that is open to all who share our mission and values.

A key way we demonstrate our commitment to community building is through our nurturing of our shared spirituality expressed through the Community traditions and practices that shape our daily life together.

## **Openness to reflection, learning and growth:**

We are personally committed to growth and development in the dimensions of L'Arche identity and mission and also support the growth of the whole Community by nurturing the gifts of each person, creating a learning culture together and being attentive to our personal and communal spiritual life. A key way we demonstrate our commitment to learning is the frequency and quality of our personal and group reflective practices and processes.

## **Commitment to the vision and mission of L'Arche:**

We actively engage in all dimensions of L'Arche mission and practice both personally and communally. A key way we demonstrate our commitment is our visibility as people with and without learning disabilities together engaged in our local neighbourhoods and the wider world in order to shape a more human society.



# Application Process

We welcome applications from people at all stages of life and no experience of professional care is necessary. You might be taking a gap year before or after university; you might be in your forties taking a sabbatical; you might be retired and looking for community. The application process is designed to help both you and L'Arche decide if this is the right thing for you at this stage of your life. It's not a competitive process and we're not trying to catch you out.

**There are four stages to the process:**

- 1. You submit an application by answering the questions on our online form.**
- 2. We interview you. This is a conversation about what you would hope to learn from the year and whether L'Arche would be a good match for you.**
- 3. You submit a CV. We ask for the CV after the interview as we know that writing a CV can be a daunting experience. We will send you a format for you to fill in if you don't already have a CV.**
- 4. Subject to a DBS or PVG check, we offer you the role.**



We want this internship to be accessible to people of all backgrounds, ethnicities, religions, and LGBTQ identities.

Get in touch with Dom at:

**[livein@larche.org.uk](mailto:livein@larche.org.uk)**

If you have any questions.



# Key Words

## Learning disability

A learning disability affects the way a person learns new things throughout their life. It can be different for everyone and may be caused by things such as brain development, genes, or health conditions.

## Soul

Our soul is deep within each of us, a part of us which expresses deeply who we are. Our soul connects us to ourselves, to each other, and to whatever we believe is beyond us. Everyone has a soul.

## Spirituality

If the 'soul' is something inside each of us, 'spirituality' is the practice of noticing and looking after your soul, and connecting to something deeper. Everyone has a spirituality but what this looks like varies depending on your faith or religious background.

## Soulful Internship

A year-long program of living in a L'Arche Community which combines support, spiritual development, and community building.

## Intentional community

A group of people who commit to living by a shared set of values.

## Care

Care is at the centre of the human experience. It includes everything from relationship, to love, to professional support. We believe good care is grounded in friendship, and is something done with people rather than to people.

## Core member

L'Arche's term for our members with learning disabilities.

## Rota

Other employers might call this a 'shift' but we find this phrase too transactional. Your rota is when you are scheduled to be supporting a core member. You might say you're 'on rota' or you are 'rota-ed' or that you 'have your rota for next week'.

## Care certificate / Super Certificate

The nationally recognised care qualification that all our assistants earn. .

## Assistant

The overarching term for people who we have on our rotas in L'Arche. We use this word more to talk about live-outs (people who don't live in L'Arche but spend their days with us). You would be called a 'live-in' or an 'intern'.

