



JOB DESCRIPTION

Role:	Engagement Team Member (Fixed Term One Year Contract)
Location:	Kent, Surrey and Sussex
Responsible to:	Engagement Team Leader
Objective:	To consult, engage, train and work with service users, providers and other agencies to develop a wide range of innovative services that meet the needs of service users.
Salary:	Up to £25,000 depending on experience
Holiday:	25 days per annum plus public holidays
Probationary period:	The post is subject to a six month probationary period

USER VOICE

Why We Exist

We believe that the fundamental issue that causes the stubbornly high rates of re-offending and all the other associated problems is the 'us vs. them' culture.

Society feels frustrated with those who re-offend repeating cycles of behaviour and not engaging with rehabilitation services. Yet people with convictions feel marginalised by society, with rehabilitation services which are often inaccessible and unhelpful and a system that doesn't value their input.

Whatever the truth, we won't reduce crime unless we deal with this division. User Voice's core belief is that rehabilitation only happens when everyone in the criminal justice system shares responsibility for transforming the 'us vs. them' division into real collaboration.

Our Role

Our role is to improve rehabilitation through collaboration.

At User Voice we build the structures that enable productive collaboration between service users and service providers. We are able to do this because our work is led and delivered by ex-offenders. This gives us the special ability to gain the trust of, access to, and insight from people within the criminal justice system.

The entrenched exclusion of some of the people we work with can be a huge obstacle to service providers. The involvement of ex-offenders has many benefits, not least of which is the power of a narrative of success; working with ex-offenders can be a powerful way of motivating people who often have little self-belief that they can overcome the barriers they face. All the work User Voice has done suggests offenders want to talk to people who have 'walked in their shoes' and experienced similar life events.

What We Do

In order to achieve this we do the following:

- User Voice **Councils**, which provide a platform for service users to have a voice. They have been developed for use within prisons and in the community for probation, youth offending teams and other related services. Their democratic processes enable voices to be heard and focus on collective challenges and solutions.
- User Voice **consultations**, which are bespoke projects that help service providers and commissioners access, hear and act upon the insight of their users. These include research and specifically designed workshops and have ranged from working with drug users on recovery services, to engaging with excluded and vulnerable young people on the future of social work.
- User Voice **peer support**, sometimes, through the gate, which provide support for people in the community or those who are leaving custody; one-to-one sessions and peer-led groups give practical help and inspiration. Our supporters are uniquely placed to promote and ignite real change, as advocates and role models.

Impact

There are two sides to User Voice's impact:

1. Improving Services – with service user insight and experience, services can become more effective and accessible for hard-to-reach groups.
2. Promoting active citizenship – as service users engage with improving the services they access, they develop the skills and behaviours to become contributing members of society.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

User Voice's regional Engagement Teams are responsible for engaging with a diverse range of service users with different experiences in order to improve services and promote active citizenship. As balanced Teams they will have a range of complementary skills in order to achieve these aims, including service user engagement, service provider engagement, project management and administration.

Individual Team Members will demonstrate some, but not necessarily all of these skills and as a result will be responsible for different areas of delivery as assigned by the Engagement Team Leader as set out below.

Retention

- Providing training to an accredited standard
- Group facilitation, including meetings, focus groups, workshops and large events
- Recruiting and managing service users and volunteers, including providing clear activities, support and signposting them to further opportunities
- Build and maintain positive working relationships with service users, stakeholders and partner agencies

Engagement

- Service user engagement and recruitment, including through presentations, surveys, focus groups and workshops
- Staff engagement, including through presentations, staff meetings and individual meetings
- Stakeholder engagement, including other statutory and voluntary sector partner agencies

Co-ordination

- Contributing to the development of project planning documents and producing regular project reports
- Keeping accurate and up to date records, including project participants contact details, levels of engagement and diversity and equality monitoring data
- Assessing risk, working within safeguarding best practice and reporting incidents

In addition to the above duties, the post holder will be required to perform other duties, which are assigned from time to time. However, such other duties will be reasonable in relation to the individual's skills, abilities and grade.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential:

1. Experience of the criminal justice system and/or other associated systems as a service user with the ability and motivation to harness this experience positively in working with service users.
2. Ability to act as an effective, authentic and credible advocate for User Voice's values, methods and programmes with the ability to inspire and motivate service users
3. Ability to communicate confidently with clarity and enthusiasm around User Voice aims and objectives with partner agency staff
4. Well organised with the ability to prioritise tasks effectively and meet deadlines amid a range of competing demands
5. A strong and demonstrable commitment to the aims and values of User Voice
6. A strong and demonstrable commitment to and understanding of the promotion of equality and diversity
7. A strong and demonstrable commitment to and understanding of the promotion of safeguarding
8. Ability to offer peer support and be a role model for other User Voice staff and volunteers

Desirable:

1. Group facilitation and/or counselling skills
2. A background in, or experience of, engaging with adult and young people with convictions
3. Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTTLS) trained or relevant training experience of volunteers or peers
4. Good written and IT skills to support the co-ordination and management of projects

FURTHER INFORMATION

Equality and diversity

User Voice welcomes applications from ex-offenders and from all sections of the community regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age or disability.

Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) checks

This post is subject to an enhanced criminal record disclosure check via the new Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) processes, as the post holder will have regular unsupervised access to children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. The purpose of the check is to ensure that the nature of the applicant's criminal record, considered alongside evidence of the applicant's rehabilitation, does not indicate that his or her employment in this role would put current service users at risk.