

SUSSEX COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

Job Description:

Garden Volunteer Coordinator

Reporting to: Community Development & Health Programme Manager

Work pattern: Part-time 4 hrs pw, fixed term until 31st December 2026 in first instance

Based: Denton Island Community Centre in Newhaven

Salary: £26,232 - £27,291 per annum pro rata



The Organisation

SCDA was founded in 1997. Its primary purpose is the development of sustainable community-based regeneration initiatives addressing the economic, environmental, and cultural and community needs, and particularly addressing the needs of people with complex challenges in the community.

SCDA now runs a range of projects and services aimed at supporting community involvement across East Sussex. Funding has been secured from a range of sources including Lottery Community Fund and charitable trusts as well as contracts to deliver services and run projects across East Sussex, including from the DWP, ESCC & Home Office.

To support its core activities SCDA also runs a number of Social Enterprises. These include Denton Island Nursery, rated as 'Good' by Ofsted, and two charity retail shops.

For further reading and information regarding SCDA's Vision please visit:

<https://sussexcommunity.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Our-Vision.pdf>

There are 12 main service areas grouped under 3 broad headings:

Employability – supporting unemployed people across East Sussex, specialising in those who find it hardest to find and sustain paid work.

Community Advice & Wellbeing – delivering a variety of services aimed at promoting inclusion for people from culturally diverse communities; facilitating new work into tackling loneliness & social isolation; offering mental health support via a range of counselling services, support for those bereaved by or at risk of suicide, and offering access to a range of specialist advice provision through partners.

Community Development & Health – including Youth activity provision locally; delivering a range of services around emergency and community food & food security; green and open spaces; promoting physical activity and mental health; raising the profile of communities in which we work through regular community events; offering Family Learning and Inclusion activities for parents and carers of Under 5's.

SCDA has a strong track record in partnership working and in the quality of service delivery to meet the complex challenges experienced by many people within in the community, and helping make a difference.

The context of the job

The organisation, though fairly small in terms of staff at around 70 employees, delivers projects, services and activities across East Sussex. One of SCDA's Core Values is teamwork & supporting colleagues, and we therefore expect all members of staff to demonstrate flexibility within their specified job role, and offer support to other team members as and when required.

The post holder may be occasionally required to work a weekend to meet volunteer and community needs, e.g. a special volunteer gardening day or community interest

event. Flexing working hours in the week before or after such events occur is preferred, and from time to time very limited overtime may be available for special one off projects and only after prior authorisation by the line manager.

Job Purpose

The purpose of the role of the Garden Volunteer Coordinator is to recruit, supervise, coordinate, direct and support a group of garden volunteers and potential volunteers to maintain and upkeep the community garden at Denton Island Community Centre.

We anticipate circa 2 hrs of facilitating the weekly volunteer garden group and a further 2 hrs per week of associated admin, organising, comms, purchases etc.

Main Tasks

Recruit & register volunteers

- Build and maintain effective partnerships with appropriate referral agencies, other SCDA work streams, organisations and relevant professionals to assist in identifying potential garden volunteers
- Utilise various methods to promote volunteering and recruit garden volunteers directly
- Assist potential garden volunteers to register and explain what the community garden is about, as well as explain the potential volunteering opportunities we have
- Conduct confidential, one to one interview with potential volunteers and make an assessment of suitability for this type of volunteering.

Maintenance & upkeep of the community garden

- Lead on the maintenance and upkeep of the Denton Island Community Garden, including carrying out risk assessments, regularly monitoring the space, report any issues and work with Facilities & Premises Coordinator to rectify.
- Identify and request any items needed for the garden, using a small, allocated budget to support essential purchases (approved by Project Manager)
- Create simple, accessible guidance sheets for garden users (e.g., compost turning, tool storage, watering routines) and support staff and other projects to take part in this.
- Deliver training as required on garden tasks and 'how to's'
- Liaise with the Community Kitchen to plan what to grow and ensure produce supports their project needs.
- Lead a weekly volunteer gardening group (2hrs), preparing session plans and communicating with volunteers.
- Create an inclusive, welcoming and supportive environment for all volunteers.
- Co-ordinate with line manager & HR on appropriate SCDA or other training offers for the garden volunteer team.
- Ensure through regular check in's that the garden volunteers are remaining professional and bounded in their work.
- With support as needed from line manager, deal with any arising issues in the volunteering opportunity e.g. personality clash.

Management reporting

- Keep accurate records and provide written reports as required related to the community garden & volunteer cohort.

- Contribute to the preparation of reports for the management team, funders and others.

Other

- Meet with the line manager for supervision, to ensure any targets are being met.
- Promote and comply with SCDA's policies and procedural requirements with especial emphasis on Health and Safety Policy
- Any other duties commensurate with the role and in support of the service area.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Sussex Community Development Association is working towards equality and has policies relating to the equality of opportunity in employment and service delivery. All staff are expected to comply with these policies.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

All staff have responsibility to maintain the health and safety of themselves and others within the performance of their duties in accordance with SCDA health and safety policies and to undertake specific health and safety responsibilities as necessary.

This job description will be reviewed from time to time or as necessary and may be amended to meet the changing needs of the organisation. It will also be used as the basis for the determination of objectives and the content is subject to annual review.

Signed by post holder:.....**Dated:**.....

Person specification

Desirable qualifications:

- Degree or professional qualification, or equivalent professional experience

Essential experience:

- Previous experience in volunteer recruitment, direction, supervision and support to volunteers
- Previous experience of working with a wide range of socially excluded people, if possible on a 121 basis
- Able to maintain records for managers/funders and others as needed
- Boundaried and professional at all times
- Excellent organisational and record keeping & administrative skills
- Ability to develop an approach to your work which displays a good understanding of equal opportunities, access and inclusion
- Experience of partnership working
- Experience organising and leading small community sessions or group activities
- Experience working in food growing, gardening, or outdoor education
- Understanding of Safeguarding and lone working practices.

Essential skills, abilities and knowledge:

- A flexible approach to meeting a range of volunteer needs

- Knowledge of food growing and basic tasks required in a community garden (e.g., seasonal tasks, safe tool use)
- Able to work with minimal supervision but as part of a small team
- Good understanding of Safeguarding, health & safety and risk assessments in a community setting
- Good understanding of data protection requirements, confidentiality and professional boundaries.

Essential personal qualities:

- Tact, diplomacy and where necessary firmness
- Emotional resilience to work objectively and professionally with people experiencing complex challenges.

Circumstances:

- Able to physically manage the requirements of the community garden itself, digging, weeding, planting etc.
- Post is subject to a DBS check.