



## **PAID VACANCY: HACKNEY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT OFFICER**

The Hackney Engagement Project will work with children, young people, adults and parents/carers who are affected by sickle cell disorder (SCD) across the borough of Hackney.

### **About the Sickle Cell Society**

The Sickle Cell Society is the only national charity in the UK that supports and represents people affected by a sickle cell disorder to improve their overall quality of life. The Society's aim is to support those living with sickle cell, empowering them to achieve their full potential.



### **Location:** Split between:

Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia Centre (457 Queensbridge Road, Hackney, E8 3AS)  
& Sickle Cell Society Offices (54 Station Road, London, NW10 4UA).

**Accountable to:** Chief Executive

**Manages:** Volunteers

**Hours:** 17.5 hours per week (2.5 days per week)

**Salary:** £15,000 per annum for 2.5 days a week (£30,000 pro rata per annum)

*Two years fixed term Contract*

To apply for this job, please read the **Main Duties** and **Person Specification** in this document and then complete the **Application Form** via the button below or at our website: [www.sicklecell society.org/hackney-officer/](http://www.sicklecell society.org/hackney-officer/)

**[Application Form](#)**

**Deadline: Wednesday 8th April 2020 - Interviews: Tuesday 21st April 2020**

## Job Purpose:

The Hackney Engagement Project will work with children, young people, adults and parents/carers who are affected by sickle cell disorder (SCD) across the borough of Hackney.

The Project Officer will seek to build positive relationships between different groups within the community to establish a community network across Hackney. The Project Officer will raise awareness of SCD with both those not affected and ensure those who are affected know how to access services and support to manage this complex condition.

The project aims to bring together, in one coherent programme, the different elements of support developed by SCS in Hackney over the last 4+ years. The successful applicant will co-ordinate and embed the following activities for people with SCD into a single, sustainable and community led/run programme:

- Build the capacity and support the successful development of SolaceSG (support group).
- Strengthen the knowledge/skills of SolaceSG volunteers to support a wide range of activities including administration, fundraising/sponsorship, delivery of activities.
- Support SolaceSG to identify potential mentees to engage with the SCS Peer Mentoring Programme and support peer mentoring activities to ensure the sustainability of SCS's successful pilot in Hackney (2018). Our peer mentors will continue to provide advice to young people on education/career development, relationships and well-being.
- Awareness raising locally of the different types of support currently available for people with SCD in Hackney, and how to access them via support of SolaceSG members to build relationships with local schools/colleges, GP surgeries etc to identify referrals.
- Quarterly SCS workshops/community events to engage/bring together children and adults whilst removing the focus from the burden of having to live with SCD. Facilitators will present topics identified by the local SCD community.
- To engage, train and manage volunteers to support the aims of the project





## Background to the Project:

SCD is a debilitating and life-threatening, genetic, condition which changes the form of normally healthy red blood cells into a 'sickle' shape making it difficult for cells to move freely through the body or carry enough oxygen. As such, it can cause severe pain, often resulting in hospital admission and treatment. SCD can also cause anaemia, fatigue and repeated infections, damage to vital organs, stroke, and even early mortality. Careful management of the condition can reduce its impact on daily life, but it remains extremely challenging to live with. Only around 50% of patients survive beyond their 50s. The impact on an individual's wellbeing is colossal and can result in isolation, anxiety, and depression through lack of awareness or understanding of how to manage the condition.

The National Haemoglobinopathy Registry (latest data 2018/19) identifies 1,068 SCD patients registered with hospitals serving Hackney; an increase of 95 since 2016/17. Hackney also has the highest concentration of young people under 21 years living with SCD in the country.

The Society helped establish and have been working closely with, the SolaceSG over the past five years. SolaceSG does a fantastic job of providing 1-to-1 support and group activities in the community. However, as the majority of volunteers are living with SCD themselves, it can be challenging to consistently run activities when they are coping with periods of ill-health and the emotional impact that living with the condition can cause.



Encouraging people to seek help in the first place requires an approach which highlights the benefits of friendships, mutual support and having fun together; taking the focus away from the anxiety of having to think about SCD. At the Society we have been providing quarterly workshops/events based on enjoyable activities the community want to take part in as a first step to building relationships and to demonstrate the ongoing benefits of meeting with peers, and talking about the issues and challenges they have in common through living with SCD.

Training and developing enough volunteers to provide activities regularly to suit different circumstances, eg: for working families, or those caring for young children, can be a challenge without a dedicated resource. A targeted approach to embedding a wider network of committed volunteers will enable us to draw different established programmes of sickle cell support together across Hackney to ensure sustainability and grow the resilience and improve the wellbeing of the SCD community.

## Person Specification

You are advised to read the following notes carefully. You must show in your application form how you meet the criteria listed below.

E- Essential

D- Desirable

## Qualifications

- A Levels, Graduate or equivalent- E
- GCSE English - E

## Experience

- Track record of delivering support sessions, advice or training within community based projects or programmes – E
- Experience of Project co-ordination, including monitoring, managing budgets, preparing reports and delivering excellent performance against agreed objectives and targets – E
- Experience of working on own initiative and with others - E
- Good knowledge and understanding of Sickle Cell Disorder or other long-term health conditions – D
- Knowledge and experience of supporting volunteers within community based projects or programmes- D
- Experience of data collection, analysis and reporting- D
- Experience of effective partnership working with a wide range of groups, individuals and organisations – E
- Knowledge or willingness to learn programmes such as Google Drive, Mailchip, Canva and other monitoring software - D

## Competencies

- Able to get things done in a timely manner – E
- Possesses excellent written and oral communication skills – E
- Ability to synthesise data into meaningful information – E
- Ability to manage budgets and resources – E
- Ability to work under pressure – E
- Possesses excellent IT skills (including Microsoft word, Excel and Power Point) E
- Possesses excellent time management skills and experience of prioritising effectively and working to strict deadlines – E

## Attributes

- Shows confidence in dealing with people and situations – E
- Excellent interpersonal skills – E
- Demonstrates a willingness to learn- E
- Is enthusiastic about the sickle cell cause – E
- Is creative and tenacious in finding solutions – E

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[www.sicklecell society.org/hackney-officer/](http://www.sicklecell society.org/hackney-officer/)  
Application forms should then be sent to [info@sicklecell society.org](mailto:info@sicklecell society.org)