



Programme Manager – Community Engagement

Application Pack

Spread the Word, London's literature development agency, is seeking a part-time **Programme Manager – Community Engagement**. The role will develop, support and grow our place-based community work in Lewisham to deliver on our strategic ambition to have Lewisham named the UK's first Borough of Literature.

About Spread the Word

Spread the Word is an arts charity and an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation. Founded in 1995 by novelist Bernardine Evaristo MBE and Ruth Borthwick (who went on to be Director of Arvon), we work to support, develop and advocate for London's writers and to develop a thriving and diverse literature scene in London.

Our vision:

Stories by London's diverse writers are reflected in and enhance our culture.

Our mission:

We create opportunities for storytellers, creatives and readers to change the conversations we have and reimagine the world we live in by:

- Running inclusive creative writing programmes and offering practical ways for writers to get their work into the world.
- Discovering Londoners who love words and nurturing those who want to write, read and share stories.

Our values:

Kind, Brave, Open

Our work:

Our work is focused on engaging Black, Asian, Global Majority, deaf and disabled, LGBTQ+, working class and low-income writers, and young people.



We have a national and international reputation for initiating change-making research and developing programmes for writers that have equity and social justice at their heart. In 2020 we launched *Rethinking 'Diversity' in Publishing* by Dr Anamik Saha and Dr Sandra van Lente, Goldsmiths, University of London, in partnership with The Bookseller and Words of Colour. Working with CRIPtic Arts, in 2022 we published *Access to Literature*, which presented the first national picture of the barriers deaf and disabled writers, creative producers and audiences experience in accessing the literature and publishing sectors.

We open up access to developing a craft and a career as a writer, by working across London and delivering a regular programme of free or low-cost workshops, events and masterclasses that are open to public booking and often run in partnership with publishers and agents.

We run national programmes like the Disabled Poets Prize and high-profile development programmes like the London Writers Awards that have found writers such as Natasha Brown and Tice Cin and the award-winning Early Career Bursaries for London Writers on a low-income. Our partnership projects include: the CRIPtic x Spread the Word Salon for D/deaf and disabled writers, Uprising & Resistance which uses poetry and visual art to respond to archival silences surrounding slavery in Early Modern London with John Hopkins University, Black Beyond Data and Ink Sweat & Tears, and, for young people, Nature Nurtures with the London Wildlife Trust, Black Girls Hike and London Youth.

We have been growing the work we deliver in our home borough of Lewisham including the annual Deptford Literature Festival and community projects with Youth First, Entelechy Arts and Triangle LGBTQ+ Centre, amongst others. We have a bold vision to make Lewisham the UK's first Borough of Literature.

www.spreadtheword.org.uk

About the Role

Spread the Word is delighted to be seeking a passionate and experienced Programme Manager to lead on our Community Engagement initiatives. This is an exciting time for the organisation as we seek to increase our reach and impact for London's writers.

As the Programme Manager for Community Engagement, you will be responsible for developing, managing and evaluating community-focused literary programmes in



Lewisham, supporting us to deliver on our vision to make Lewisham a Borough of Literature.

Your role will involve collaborating with local communities, writers, and partner organisations to ensure successful and impactful delivery of initiatives that promote inclusivity and engagement.

You will play a pivotal role in managing and delivering an annual programme of writing activities in line with the organisation's values, within agreed budgets and resources.

You will be able to demonstrate good practice and commitment to accessibility, diversity, equality and inclusion, as well as a passion for engaging people with words and stories.

The post holder will enhance Spread the Word's visibility, engagement, and overall impact. This multifaceted position requires excellent communication, engagement and project management skills. We're looking for a passionate and experienced person who is empathetic, curious, imaginative and interested in cultural democracy, community agency and activism.

Examples of our community-based work:

- Past: Comedy Novices project in Bellingham with Phoenix Community Housing engaging isolated adults aged 25+.
- Past: Film in a Day project with Youth First engaging vulnerable young people in Deptford.
- Past: Park Life Poetry Project with Lucas Vale Primary School and Friends of Brookmill Park engaging year 5 students with nature and creativity.
- Current: SLAM (South London and Maudsley Recovery College) + Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network, piloting a creative wellbeing offer for refugee women with view to make this a sustained strand of work.
- Current: Entelechy Arts' Meet Me at The Albany engaging Caribbean Elders group with telling their Windrush stories.
- Current: Lewisham Writes with Lewisham Libraries piloting an open access writing and wellbeing model for refugee women, with view to making a sustained offer.
- Current: Young Writers Collective with poets Remi Graves and Kareem Parkins-Brown, piloting working with young people to develop a co-created and sustained



creative offer for young people in Lewisham, Southwark, Greenwich and Bromley.

Based at our office at The Albany in Deptford, SE8, you will be a valued member of our small team that currently comprises of:

- Director (Full-time)
- Programme Manager - Writer Development (Full-time)
- Communication and Impact Manager (Part-time)
- Programme Assistant (Full-time)
- Bookkeeper (Part-time)

Job Description

Job title: Programme Manager – Community Engagement

Contract: Part-time, 3 days a week (24 hours), 1 year fixed term contract with potential to become a permanent post.

Salary: £22,800 (£38,000 FTE) + NEST pension

Ideal start date: May/ June 2024

Line Manager: Director

Location: Our office is currently based in Deptford, London. Hybrid working, 2-3 days in the office expected.

Holiday: 15 days annual leave, plus bank holidays.

Probationary period: 3 months, during which the notice period is 1 week. The notice period will then increase to 1 month.

Wellbeing support: Access to The Print Charity's confidential helpline (advice on wellbeing, personal finance, changes at work, family and personal, legal, counselling) with free confidential counselling offered.

Key Responsibilities

- Develop and deliver with the Director the Borough of Literature campaign, including community consultation and setting up of an advisory group as part of the work towards a significant multi-year funding application.
- Manage the Young Writers Collective and working with young people to co-create a new young people's offer.
- Sustain existing partnerships and community-based work and build new (strategic to grassroots) partnerships



- Open up pathways to hands-on community engagement and participation for Lewisham borough communities.
- Collaborate with staff and leadership to set strategies, goals and priorities, and pinpoint areas for initiatives to maximise these opportunities.
- Develop robust programmes that are dedicated to ongoing engagement with the local community.
- Ensure the design of all activities gives consideration to providing opportunities for community co-creation and participation.
- Ensure that the design of activities is accessible with the ability to reach marginalised and yet-to-reach groups.
- Develop monitoring and evaluation processes to measure the impact and reach of activities.
- Analyse data, prepare reports and complete tasks as assigned.
- Champion the programme.
- Set and meet annual targets.
- Develop innovative programming that is attractive to funders.
- Foster collaborative relationships amongst programme participants, building a community.
- Develop organisational partnerships across the local community and Greater London to further develop and resource our programmes.
- Create and maintain a database of individuals, community groups and organisations interested in taking an active role in the activities programme.
- Generate new ideas for community engagement and participation, measuring the effectiveness of these ideas through a test and learn approach.
- Ensure Spread the Word's activities are impactful and reach a wide and diverse community.
- Ensure that Spread the Word captures and communicates the impact of its activities programme as well as learns from its practice, in order to create increasingly informed future programmes.
- Produce reports and presentations demonstrating the organisation's programme impact and to identify and highlight where improvements can be made to stakeholders and funders.
- Understand the communities we work with and those we are still to reach.
- Cultivate a greater culture of community engagement.



Stakeholder Engagement

- Build, nurture and maintain strong relationships with partners, funders, writers, and other stakeholders and networks.
- Represent Spread the Word at events, conferences, and networking opportunities.

Team Working

- Work collaboratively with team members to deliver our vision and mission, and to ensure consistent, impactful community engagement.

Administration

- Be as the main contact for community engagement enquiries through meetings, on the phone, via email and virtual communication.
- Take care of community engagement administration, including budgets and evaluation processes.
- Provide support with preparing fundraising applications, board papers, evaluation reports, presentations, events, press and PR as necessary.

General

- Carry out duties in accordance with Spread the Word's policies, mission, vision and values at all times.
- Engage in training and professional development as appropriate.
- Act as an ambassador for Spread the Word as required, representing the organisation externally in the best possible light in accordance with the mission, vision and values.
- Support the team with ad hoc duties that might reasonably be deemed to be appropriate to the post.
- You will work with vulnerable adults, children and young people and will require a DBS check. If you do not already have this, we can apply for one for you.

Person Specification

Required skills and experience

- At least two years' experience working in community development/ engagement.
- Experience and understanding of co-creating with communities and participatory approaches in programming development.
- Understanding of safeguarding and trauma informed approaches.



- Experience of partnership and relationship development and management across sectors (e.g. arts, health and wellbeing, formal and informal education).
- Experience of working with young people and children.
- Experience in project design and delivery.
- Excellent project management, customer service and public speaking.
- Experience of impact evaluation against outcomes.
- Experience of developing partnership fundraising bids (work with Director).

Desired skills and experience

- Knowledge of Lewisham and its communities.
- Experience of activity reporting for funders/ donors for e.g. Arts Council England.

Personal Attributes

- Able to balance and prioritise a busy workload.
- Able to work to agreed deadlines and achieve targets.
- A good listener with a willingness to share knowledge and resources.
- Able to influence and convey passion.
- Empathy with the mission and values of Spread the Word.
- Demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility.
- Demonstrable knowledge of, and a passion for, literature and writing.

How to Apply

Job advertised from: Wednesday 14 February

Deadline for applications: 10am, Monday 18 March

Shortlist confirmed: by Wednesday 27 March

Round one interviews: Wednesday 10 April

Round two interviews: Wednesday 17 April

Please apply by completing the questions in [the online application form](#) and attaching the following files:

1. A cover letter outlining how you meet the job description and person specification and why you would like the role (no longer than 2 sides A4);
2. Your CV (no longer than 2 sides A4);



3. Completed Equal Opportunities form. The form will be separated from your application on receipt. [You can download it here.](#)

We particularly welcome applications from people who are currently underrepresented in the literature and publishing industries. If you rarely see people like yourself in the arts, for any reason, we particularly encourage you to apply to this role.

[Apply now using our online application form.](#)

The deadline for applications is 10am on Monday 18 March. Please note that late applications will not be considered.

If you are experiencing any issues with your application, please contact Emily Ajgan: emily@spreadtheword.org.uk

An **Online Information Session** for candidates who would like to find out more about the role will be held on Wednesday 21 February, 7pm-8pm with Spread the Word's Co-Chairs Aimée Felone and Simon Richardson and Director Ruth Harrison. [Please sign up for the session by Tuesday 20 February.](#)