

Research & Corporate Engagement Officer

Role Profile

Purpose

As the Research & Corporate Engagement Officer you will work in partnership with Heriot Watt and a range of pilot partner organisations in different industries across Scotland to deliver research and support the implementation of recommendations around the experiences of autistic employees within the workplace.

You will take an asset-based community development approach to creating, nurturing and supporting autistic-led forums in each of our pilot organisations empowering them to improve the experiences of autistic employees within these specific workplaces.

Using our research, you will deliver co-produced supportive assets for employers and an Autism Friendly Business Accreditation Scheme for organisations across Scotland widening the potential impact of this research in improving outcomes for autistic employees.

Using your knowledge and understanding of the corporate landscape, and your expertise in partnership-building and influencing you'll develop a network of organisations wishing to be involved in our Scheme providing vital income for Cornerstone to achieve its mission and vision to ensure the best life possible for all people with learning disabilities, autism and complex needs in Scotland.

Duties & Responsibilities

- Demonstrate a commitment to, and passion for co-creation and a strengths-based approach to community development throughout the lifecycle of the project
- Develop a knowledge, and understanding of different accessibility measures which could improve engagement with the project including where autism co-exists with another condition such as a physical disability
- Create, nurture, and support autistic-led forums at all pilot partner organisations
- Work with our Research Partner to co-ordinate and conduct a series of focus groups, and interviews with our autistic-led forums, and non-autistic employees
- Support our Research Partner with the development of a literature review as appropriate
- Work with Forums, and other stakeholders including colleagues to develop and deliver a suite of resources designed to increase understanding of how to support autistic employees in the workplace and improve outcomes for autistic employees
- Influence and shape the project through a social model of disability supporting autistic people, and their non-autistic peers to uncover the barriers to better working relationships together
- Develop with our autistic-led forums a Charter for Employers and an accreditation system to accurately reflect employer knowledge and commitment to supporting autistic employees
- Using a project management approach to progress both the research, and corporate engagement strands of this project and meet agreed funder outcomes
- Design evaluation tools and collate appropriate evidence to demonstrate the impact of our work
- Alongside our pilot partner organisations develop a strategy for launching and marketing our resources to a wider corporate audience going forward
- Engage regularly with our Trade Union UNISON about widening the impact of the project and ensuring accurate and up to date information about how trade unions can support neurodiverse employees
- Develop an understanding of how this project fits in with wider national priorities evidenced through the Scottish Autism Strategy (2018-2021), Learning Disability & Autism Transformation Plan and the Fairer Scotland Employment Action Plan
- Develop an expert understanding of applicable HR laws in Scotland, and how these can be used to better support autistic colleagues, and employees

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- Be cognizant of the range of different communication needs and styles and be willing to use tools already embedded at Cornerstone such as Talking Mats or BoardMaker to facilitate these
- Develop a network of stakeholders interested in this project, and steward this effectively contributing added value to Cornerstone through income generation
- Contribute to the development of a national autistic employee forum led by business leaders with autism across Scotland to galvanize further change over time
- Play a key role in progressing Cornerstone's vision and mission to ensure that all people with learning disabilities, autism and complex needs can live their best possible lives with their choices, and voices at its heart
- Undertake any other duties reasonable to the role including occasional evening and weekend work, and travel for in-person meetings where it is appropriate and safe to do so

Outcomes & Approach

- Ensure that the views and needs of people with autism inform and guide your work wherever possible
- Develop positive and proactive relationships with colleagues and other key stakeholders
- Act as a role model for Cornerstone's vision and values, behaving in ways that are in alignment with the organisations strategy and encourage and support others to do so
- Foster collaborative partnership working with other leaders and teams
- Support, value and empower your colleagues and help them strive for continuous improvement

Continuous Professional Development

- Use your own initiative, be confident in your own abilities, make solution focused decisions, seek guidance and support where necessary and be personally accountable
- Ensure full compliance with all relevant legal obligations including Health & Safety, GDPR, and Cornerstone internal policies and procedures



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Person Specification

| No. | 1. Qualifications * | Requirement | Measured Via |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| 1.1 | A relevant professional qualification | Desirable | Application |
| | 2. Skills, Abilities & Competencies | | |
| 2.1 | A caring, professional, person-centred and pioneering outlook. | Essential | Application/ Interview |
| 2.2 | An ability to build and sustain relationships with a range of stakeholders. | Essential | Application/ Interview |
| 2.3 | An ability to influence and achieve positive change or outcomes working with diverse stakeholders ranging from academics, employers and the people we support | Essential | Application/Interview |
| 2.4 | Strong organisational skills/project management | Essential | Application/Interview |
| 2.5 | An ability to work on own initiative with a creative, innovative and imaginative approach to tasks. | Essential | Application/ Interview |
| | 3. Experience | | |
| 3.1 | Experience utilising a project management approach or undertaking a partnership or stakeholder management role | Essential | Application/Interview |
| 3.2 | Experience of delivering or producing training resources and support guides and evaluating their success | Essential | Application/Interview |
| 3.2 | Demonstrable experience of managing projects with a focus on stakeholder engagement and/or co-production | Essential | Application/Interview |
| 3.3 | Demonstrable experience of working with a person-centred approach. | Essential | Application/Interview |
| 3.4 | Experience using MS Office Suite | Essential | Application/Interview |
| | 4. Knowledge | | |
| 4.1 | An understanding of a strengths or assets-based approach to working with distinct communities | Desirable | Application/Interview |
| 4.3 | An understanding of, or a willingness to learn about the autistic lived experience | Essential | Application/Interview |
| 4.3 | Understanding of how this project complements and contributes to the Scottish Autism Strategy (2018-21) & the Fairer Scotland Employment Action Plan | Desirable | Application/Interview |
| 4.4 | An understanding of the corporate landscape in Scotland and how to influence, and build relationships with corporate partners that result in positive outcomes for Cornerstone | Essential | Application/Interview |
| | 5. Values | | |



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| 5.1 | A strong commitment to professionalism and quality, combined with a practical 'can do' approach | Essential | Interview |
| 5.2 | A commitment to and passion for a social model of disability | Essential | Interview |
| 5.3 | A caring and professional approach to work with a willingness to commit to your own professional development and the professional development of others | Essential | Interview |
| 5.4 | A proactive solution focused approach to problem solving with a flexible approach to emerging or changing circumstances | Essential | Interview |

*At Cornerstone we are keen to attract employees whose own values and approach to work complement our purpose, vision, and values. Qualifications, experience, and competencies can predict and impact on your potential performance, however values and approach are essential.