

Our ref: PM
Your ref:
Date: 09 December 2021

Dear Applicant

Community Engagement Manager Kingston and Surrey

Thank you for your interest in South West London Law Centres and the post of Community Engagement Manager. Please find below the job description and person specification for this part-time role.

Our Law Centre helps local people across south-west London to access justice and uphold their everyday rights, by providing specialist legal advice on social justice issues including housing, employment, debt, benefits, asylum and immigration.

Without the free or low-cost legal services our charity provides, many people we help would be locked out of accessing justice, because they can't afford a lawyer. You can see our impact in our [annual review](#).

The Covid-19 pandemic has increased our awareness of the need for the Law Centre to be rooted in the community we serve, in order that we can be certain that we are reaching all those who need our assistance and to be sure that our services meet the needs of our community.

We have long been aware that Surrey has an advice gap for specialist advice in social welfare law. There currently is good provision of Citizen Advice across the county with some developing more specialist advice and representation services. Like many non-metropolitan areas, Surrey has been listed as a legal aid desert by the Law Society:

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/campaigns/legal-aid-deserts>

Legal aid deserts mean that people on low incomes facing important legal issues are struggling to get the local face-to-face advice they're legally entitled to.

We are seeking to map out the levels of need together with the current advice provision in Surrey with the view to assisting either the Law Centre to expand into Surrey or for another service to fully develop specialist legal advice.

This is a new post, initially funded for a 12 month period. Part of the funding has come from the Community Foundation for Surrey.

We are looking for an experienced candidate with a proven track record who can develop new relationships with the organisations that could refer to the Law Centre and who can help us to

develop new projects in accordance with the needs of the community. You will help develop referral links to the Law Centre as well as other advice services in Surrey. You will regularly report to a steering group.

We're the largest law centre in the UK and we provide a wide-ranging service helping thousands of people at difficult moments in their lives. Although recent cuts to funding and legal aid cuts since 2013 mean the environment in which we work is challenging, the impact of Covid-19 and the 50th anniversary of the UK's first law centre continue to highlight the importance of law centres' work in communities.

The Community Engagement Manager will be supported by the Senior Management Team, but will also need to be a self-starter who has the autonomy to think creatively, and the confidence and experience to lead our community work, and collaborate with our team of expert advisers and support staff. We have another Community Engagement Manager working in London who can offer guidance and support. You will regularly report to a steering group for Surrey that is made up of interested parties.

If you share our commitment to addressing injustice, discrimination, inequality and poverty, then this could be an exciting opportunity for you.

The application process:

To apply, please complete the application form which can be downloaded [here](#) or from our website at www.swllc.org/about-us/jobs/. Your application should address what we are looking for in our job description and person specification. Please return this by e-mail to recruitment@swllc.org.

The deadline for applications:

Applications received after the closing date and time of 12 noon on Monday 24 January 2022 will not be considered.

If you would like an informal chat about the post, you can email our CEO on Patrick.marples@swllc.org to arrange a convenient time to speak.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Yours faithfully,

Patrick Marples
Chief Executive

Job Description: Communications Manager

Hours of work: Part Time – three days (21 hours) a week

Responsible to Senior Management Team

Salary: £16,800, with an employee pension contribution of 4% salary.

Holidays: 17 days plus Bank Holidays

Location: To be based in a partner location with some remote working due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The post will involve travel in and around Surrey.

About South West London Law Centres

As a community Law Centre, we believe everyone should have access to justice, regardless of income. That's why we support local people to uphold their everyday rights through free community legal advice clinics, and free or low-cost casework and representation from our social justice lawyers.

It's how last year we helped 5,802 people to stay in their homes, clear debts, resolve employment problems, protect themselves and their families, and access social security payments to prevent them from being pulled into poverty. Find out more on our website about our impact: www.swllc.org/about-us/impact/

We are funded through legal aid, grants, corporate donations and in a limited way now charge for some services in employment and immigration.

About the Steering Group

The Steering Group is made up of interested parties seeking the development of specialist legal advice in Surrey. These include representatives from local Citizen Advice, Solicitors, the Universities and funders. We are seeking to expand this group to include some community representation.

About the role

Working closely with the Senior Management Team, the Steering Group and other staff members at both the Law Centre and our partners, you will lead and implement our community engagement strategy to develop specialist legal advice in Surrey.

You will identify community groups and organisations that support the local community and develop new referral routes into SWLLC as well as developing outreach locations and public legal

education to be delivered by our expert advisers. You will help to develop and coordinate advice in Surrey. You will aid us in developing new projects to meet the needs of the communities identified in Surrey.

About You

You will have a proven track record of working within community organisations; be highly organised; and believe in the Law Centre's mission to help people on low incomes to access justice.

You will be a self-starter, able to work proactively and independently, but also highly skilled in collaborating with team members, and communicating with clients on low incomes and vulnerable clients. You will have experience of working in the charity sector, and ideally also with volunteers.

Main tasks

1. To identify the full extent of advice provision and any advice gaps within Surrey and to research ways in which those communities can be better reached.
2. To engage with the local community to understand the areas of unmet need.
3. To research community groups and organisations that offer complementary services to the Law Centre with a view to developing new referral routes into the Law Centre and other advice service providers.
4. To explore the possibility of partnerships with organisations that may be able to work with the Law Centre to deliver services.
5. To manage relationships with organisations that refer to the Law Centre and to explore the potential to increase the number of referrals.
6. To establish outreach locations to enable the Law Centre to offer services to a wider network.
7. To explore ways in which we can reach those who are digitally excluded and to ensure that our services are accessible to all.
8. To work with the Law Centre's casework team and the Communications Manager to develop training for delivery in community spaces and online using our website and social media channels.
9. To work with the Communications Manager to increase the reach of Law Centre communications within the local community.
10. To develop new projects designed to engage the community with the Law Centre.
11. To identify gaps within the services provided by the Law Centre and to work with the CEO and the Deputy CEO to develop projects to address those gaps.
12. To work with the Law Centre casework team to identify possible areas for strategic litigation.
13. To regularly report back to the Steering Group on progress and developments.
14. To work with the Steering Group to develop a report on the levels of need and gaps in advice services that can be potentially developed in Surrey.

Person Specification

Essential Requirements

1. At least one year's experience working within a charity setting, either in a fundraising or communications capacity.
2. Educated to degree level, with at least 2:1 obtained OR substantial experience gained within a charity setting in a similar role.
3. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, and proven ability to forge new relationships.
4. Excellent written skills and proven ability to get the message across in different formats to attract a wide-ranging audience, including the ability to understand and communicate complex issues in a simple and engaging way.
5. Demonstrable experience of working with a number of stakeholders in a charity setting.
6. Experience of creative project management – from developing a concept and schedule, to engaging stakeholders at relevant points, and delivering projects on time and to brief and budget.
7. Experience in developing, arranging and hosting events, both online and in person.
8. An understanding of the charity funding cycle and the specific challenges faced by charities in the current environment.
9. An understanding of the diverse communities served by the Law Centre and the different, overlapping needs presented by those communities.
10. An understanding of the different organisations that refer to the Law Centre.
11. An understanding of the challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic in relation to those the Law Centre represents.
12. Commitment to the Law Centre's mission and objectives.
13. Energy, drive and a positive attitude.
14. Highly organised and able to manage your time well.
15. Flexibility and willingness to try new tasks.
16. Self-starter and a team player able to work as part of a wider organisation, including working with volunteers.

Desirable Requirements

1. An understanding of the work of law centres and the role they play within the communities in which they operate.
2. An understanding of the different communities within Surrey and the specific challenges faced by those communities.
3. Experience in developing and delivering training both in a professional and public setting.