Development Manager

Build Up: Northern Ireland

Salary:	£37,000
Duration:	Fixed term contract; one year (with a possible extension to five years in total if the funding for the delivery phase is successful)
Hours of Work:	Full time (35-hour week)
Terms and Conditions	Three months probationary period 25 days paid holiday per year FTE Pension in line with auto enrolment
Location:	Home-based in Northern Ireland, with travel across Northern Ireland and occasional travel to the National Churches Trust's Office in London or elsewhere in the UK
Reports to:	Projects Manager, Church Engagement Team

Introduction to the National Churches Trust

We want to keep the UK's wonderful collection of church buildings well maintained, valued and in use. Working on the ground in all four nations, we support churches of all denominations. Our vision is to see open churches thriving at the heart of their communities.

Our mission:

- We Speak Up: churches are valued and supported
- We Build Up: churches are well maintained, adaptable and in good repair
- We Open Up: churches are sustainable, open and welcoming support

Our values:

- Being straightforward in responding to others' needs
- Providing support that makes a difference
- Joining forces to achieve greater impact
- Driving change that brings our vision closer

Purpose of the role

Northern Ireland has an amazingly rich heritage of church, chapel and cathedral buildings that need support. If you're passionate about keeping places of worship of all denominations open and in good repair, we want to hear from you.

The National Churches Trust is looking for someone who can lead the successful one-year delivery phase of 'Build Up: Northern Ireland' to support church buildings and their dedicated volunteers, funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund through their Strategic Initiative for Places of Worship to help address some of the identified needs and aims of places of worship. Alongside preparing a successful bid for the full project, you will play an active role in supporting church buildings in Northern Ireland. This could be through the National Churches Trust's grants programmes, providing an in-person training workshop or online event, or being at the end of a phone call or email.

Innovation and learning are key at this stage, as you will pilot approaches that will help church buildings, for example through creation a maintenance toolkit, with the aim of developing a strong foundation for the four-year-project, which will follow.

We're looking for someone who has experience of managing successful projects and working collaboratively with partners to deliver impactful results. If this sounds like you, please apply.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Development Phase of Build Up: Northern Ireland project deliverables

- Lead the delivery of the Development Phase activity plan and timetable for the Northern Ireland: Build Up project
- Work with the Projects Manager to coordinate all aspects of project planning, consultation and activity
- Finalise tender brief and support appointing external support for KPI development, Logic Model and Theory of Change
- Monitor budgets, timelines, risks and reporting requirements
- Work with the Projects Manager to ensure compliance with The National Lottery Heritage Fund requirements.

Partnerships

- Maintain and develop relationships with churches, denominations, heritage organisations, statutory bodies and specialist partners
- Coordinate the Northern Ireland Steering Group and attend wider stakeholder forums
- Identify and engage new partners, particularly around volunteering, biodiversity, maintenance and heritage recording

Volunteer and heritage support

- Be a point of contact via phone, email and post for churches and volunteers across Northern Ireland
- Provide wrap-around-care to churches, including development support ahead of a grant application, grant assessments, and post grant decision support as required
- Ensure that information and guidance is relevant to Northern Ireland and is kept up to date
- Support the development of volunteer training and support programmes at places of worship
- Organise and deliver training events, networking and workshops that help keep churches open and in use
- Organise stakeholder meetings for churches, organisations and project partners as needed

Maintenance, grants, church recording and biodiversity pilot activity and planning

- Coordinate a pilot project for providing a maintenance toolbox for places of worship, including gathering and analysing feedback
- Work with churches to encourage best practice maintenance
- Coordinate development of church heritage recording approaches to take and guidance materials
- Coordinate the development of grants processes

Communications and advocacy. Taking the lead from and coordinating with the Communications and Public Affairs teams to:

- Support development of communications and public affairs plans for the project
- Promote the project through presentations, meetings, events and networking opportunities
- Help raise awareness of heritage issues places of worship face in Northern Ireland
- As required, contribute to newsletters, digital content, presentations, networking and stakeholder engagement activity

Delivery Phase application deliverables. Working with the Projects Manager and wider staff team, lead the preparation and submission of the Delivery Phase application to The National Lottery Heritage Fund. This will include:

- Coordinating the development of supporting documents, budgets, work programmes and evaluation frameworks.
- Finalising tender briefs and quotes for an external evaluator and other consultants or suppliers.
- Gathering and analysing evidence from consultations, surveys and pilot activity to inform the application.
- Working with external consultants and partners to develop specialist elements of the project.

Should the Delivery Phase application be successful and this role is extended, the following deliverables will be in place:

- All responsibilities listed within the Development Phase deliverables above and are still ongoing
- Working with external evaluator to monitor and evaluate the project
- Supporting the tender process, appointments and work with external consultants and suppliers where required.

Grants' administration & technical advice

- Provide wrap-around-care, including support ahead of a grant application, assessments, and post decision grants support as required
- With the Grants Manager and Projects Manager, administer grants programmes, including applications, assessments, claims and monitoring
- Liaise with applicant churches and provide guidance on processes and requirements for grants
- Support the organisation of grants assessment meetings and paperwork
- Monitor and support a balanced distribution of support for places of worship, taking into account their geography and traditions

Maintenance toolboxes and training

- Promote good practice in preventative maintenance and heritage care
- Coordinate the delivery of the maintenance toolboxes plan, including distribution
- Coordinate associated guidance, training and demonstration events
- Support participating churches and volunteers, gather feedback

Any other responsibilities as may be deemed fit by the Director of Church Engagement or Chief Executive

Person Specification: skills, experience and behaviour

- Educated to degree level **or** equivalent qualification/experience
- A qualification relevant to the heritage sector is desirable

Essential criteria

- Experience working in the heritage, voluntary, community or cultural sectors
- Experience coordinating partnerships and stakeholder relationships
- Experience delivering supporting events, meetings, training and volunteer activity
- Strong organisational and project management skills
- Excellent written communication skills, including report writing and writing funding applications
- Excellent attention to detail, with the ability to prioritise and work under pressure
- Ability to analyse and read figures, manage budgets, deadlines and competing priorities
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively
- A strong understanding of Northern Ireland's complex and layered historical context
- Willingness to travel, driving licence and access to a car
- Enthusiasm for the work and strategy of the National Churches Trust is an important element of the job

Desirable criteria

- Knowledge of historic church buildings and the places of worship sector
- Experience working directly with volunteers or community groups
- Understanding of heritage, conservation or community engagement issues
- Digital and presentation skills including experience with arranging events and training online
- Understanding of heritage policy and public affairs
- Knowledge of Northern Ireland's heritage and community landscape

- Experience of contributing to the monitoring and evaluation of project outcomes and key performance indicators
- Experience of The National Lottery Heritage Fund projects or grant programmes
- Proficiency in handling data through spreadsheets and database software
- An understanding of the principles and responsibilities of data protection and data management
- Understanding of GDPR

Key internal relationships:

Projects Manager, Director of Church Engagement, Church Engagement team, Communications Team, Head of Policy and Public Affairs, Head of Finance, Head of Stakeholder Engagement.

If the delivery phase is successful, a Heritage and Engagement Manager (Northern Ireland), will be recruited, with the project being delivered in collaboration with them.

Key external relationships:

The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Northern Ireland Steering Group, other heritage bodies and local organisations, local leaders and faith groups, denominations and dioceses, funders and supporters.

Further information

The National Churches Trust has always been a UK-wide charity, but through its pioneering 'Treasure Ireland' programme (2020-2026), delivered in partnership with The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Historic Environment Division at the Department for Communities and the Pilgrim Trust, there was an increased presence and activity to support church buildings of all denominations and their volunteers. You can read about it here.

'Build Up: Northern Ireland' is a new and bespoke project, funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and delivered by the National Churches Trust, which will build on this strong foundation to deliver a new needs led and targeted package of support to churches across Northern Ireland, which will include sustainable approaches to

maintenance, volunteering, heritage recording, public engagement and environmental sustainability.

There is one full-time post for the Development Phase of The National Lottery Fund project Build Up: Northern Ireland. The basic hours are 35 per week. There is potential for this post to be extended to five years in total if the funding for the delivery phase is successful, with a Heritage Engagement Manager recruited for

This role is home-based, in Northern Ireland and therefore will need adequate broadband and suitable conditions to be able to work effectively outside a formal office setting. There may be occasional travel elsewhere in the UK, including to the National Churches Trust office in Westminster, London.

It should be borne in mind that the National Churches Trust comprises a small staff, and you should be prepared to work as part of that team to ensure the delivery of the organisation's operations and objectives.

As a member of staff, you will have access to our employee benefits programme, managed by HSF, which offers a health plan, access to counselling and legal support, and a discount programme for benefits such as gym membership and personal accident cover. You will also have access to free communications events, resources and mentors through our Charity Comms membership.

The charity operates a group personal pension scheme and pays 10% employer's contribution for all eligible employees. The annual leave entitlement is 25 days, in addition to relevant national public holidays. Other general terms and conditions are set out in the staff handbook which is issued to all employees on appointment.

How to apply for the role

To apply, please send a covering letter (max 2 sides) detailing your interest in the role and how you meet the requirements, as well as a completed application form to rosalinde.debest@nationalchurchestrust.org

Closing date: 9am Friday 18 December 2026
Interviews: Please note, we are looking for a suitable venue in or around Belfast to carry out interviews between 11 and 19 January 2027. We appreciate your patience as we confirm these details.

For an informal conversation about the role please contact Catherine Townsend at catherine.townsend@nationalchurchestrust.org. Please note that any phone calls or email exchanges will not count in the formal application process for the role.

Thank you for your interest in the National Churches Trust and our mission to see open churches thriving at the heart of their communities. We look forward to hearing from you.