Church Support Officer

Reports to: Head of Church Support

Introduction

The National Churches Trust supports and promotes church buildings of historic, architectural and community value. We are the independent, UK-wide charity supporting churches, chapels and meeting houses of all Christian denominations.

Places of worship are an integral part of the UK’s architectural heritage and play a vital part in building and sustaining local communities. Church buildings are valued for many reasons. Where one finds solace, another finds inspirational architecture. Some churches provide poignant family memories, while others are commended for their presence in the community and the work they do in bringing local people together.

Incredible work is done by volunteers up and down the country to preserve these buildings for future generations and ensure that they remain at the heart of their local community. The National Churches Trust is here to help them address the challenges and opportunities they face. The Trust, founded in 2007, is the successor to the Historic Churches Preservation Trust (HCPT), created in 1953.

The aims of the National Churches Trust are:

- to help maintain the UK’s heritage of church buildings and to enhance their ability to serve local communities
- to promote the benefit to communities of church buildings and to inspire everyone to value and enjoy them.

The Trust’s website www.nationalchurchestrust.org provides more information about the organisation and its work.

Job description

The Church Support team works across our grants programmes as well as the NCT’s wider initiatives such as ExploreChurches and MaintenanceBooker. Staff offer support and advice to churches and also support local churches trusts. You will support the Head of Church Support to ensure that programmes are delivered according to best practice standards at all times, and that the impacts of our grants are known and recorded.

The National Churches Trust grants programmes allocate funds across Cornerstone, Gateway, Foundation and Micro-grant grant schemes annually. The grants team is also responsible for making recommendations to a number of trusts and foundations each year including the Wolfson Foundation. The Church Support Officer is responsible for providing effective administration, assessment and monitoring across the grants programmes, including management of at least one grant programme.
The NCT works with the local and regional churches trusts that are members of the Churches Trusts Forum, and our Gateway grant programme is one aspect of this work. Church Support Officers will be responsible for ensuring information is circulated to trusts, and information received is used to update our website and contacts. You will be expected to play a role developing and enhancing links with the trusts and supporting the submission and development of successful projects that will result in improved capacity.

You will support the Head of Church Support, working in collaboration with local leaders and faith groups, to implement a network of support within a key area of the UK where the NCT has been able to award fewer grants. You might lead on the implementation and management of projects in some of the following areas: Wales, the north of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

**Organogram (see appendix)**

Key Internal relationships:
Church Support team, Head of Church Support, Grants Committee, Fundraising Team, Communications Team, Head of Finance

Key External relationships:
Heritage bodies, local churches trusts, church dioceses and governing bodies, funders, key individual supporters

**Key tasks**

1. To provide effective administration for the Trust’s grant programmes across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland – with regional focus
2. To provide wrap around care to the churches and volunteers you are working with, including responding to enquiries, development support ahead of an application, assessing a grant, and post award/rejection support as required
3. To ensure that information and guidance on the Trust’s website and information sheets in respect of the grant programmes, funding and project advice is kept up to date
4. To assist with marketing the grant programmes
5. To ensure that data and information about grant applications is input onto Benefactor (and Raiser’s Edge) within the agreed time frame
6. To assess applications for grant funding, and to assist in the selection of grant candidates and the preparation of materials and documentation for grants committee meetings and interim decisions
7. To assist in collating recommendations and updates for other funders
8. To log feedback and relevant data from applicants to inform the process of review and development of the grants programmes
9. To assist on post-grant monitoring and assessment - to visit a selection of grantee churches on completion of works, maintain grantee relationship with the Trust and collate information and data needed for outcome monitoring
10. To support and consult with local churches trusts and partners
11. To take part in and present at events promoting the work of the Trust and its grant programmes as agreed
12. To provide administration for Trust events, competitions and awards as required
13. To ensure that the Trust's church support policies are communicated effectively and explained clearly on the website, on printed materials and within the team
14. Working alongside the Communications Team, circulate publicity materials, assist with press releases, identify suitable examples of support and grants for case studies, news stories and/or photo opportunities to promote the work of the Trust and to ensure effective marketing and promotion of our work with prospective grant applicants and local trusts. This could include social media
15. Work alongside the Fundraising Team to provide material for reporting to donors and other fundraising purposes
16. Undertake such other duties as reasonably requested by the Chief Executive.

**Person specification**

**Qualifications**
Educated to degree level or equivalent qualification/experience
A qualification relevant to the heritage sector would be desirable

**Knowledge**
Knowledge of standards or experience of project management would be desirable
Knowledge of how to use Raiser’s Edge, Benefactor or equivalent databases would be desirable

**Skills and Experience**

Desirable:
- Experience of grant and/or contract management
- Experience of contributing to the monitoring and evaluation of project outcomes
- Experience of working with spreadsheets and databases
- An interest in places of worship and an understanding of different Christian denominations
- An interest in heritage issues and knowledge of historic buildings
- An understanding of the principles and responsibilities of data protection and data management

Essential:
- Excellent presentation and interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate confidently, effectively and persuasively, both orally and in writing
- Report writing experience
- Excellent organisational and administrative skills, good attention to detail, and accuracy with the ability to prioritise and work under pressure
- Excellent IT and online skills
- A self-starter able to work both on their own initiative and also as part of a team
- Experience of relationship building and negotiation with a wide range of stakeholders
Enthusiasm for the work and strategy of the National Churches Trust is an important element of the job.

**Further information**

This is a full-time post and the basic hours are 35 per week. It is based at the National Churches Trust’s offices in Westminster but may occasionally require travel elsewhere in the UK.

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.

The basic salary is negotiable, depending on experience. The Trust 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.