



Southampton Voluntary Services

Southern VCSE Collaborative (SVC) - Programme Director:

Job Description

Job Title: Programme Director

Accountable to: Chair of SVC Board

Management of: Multiple partnerships and sub-contractors across the local VCSE Sector

Hours: 30hrs (0.8FTE)

Salary: £44,000 per annum (£55,000 full-time equivalent)

Background:

Southern VCSE Collaborative (SVC) is a new special purpose vehicle to bring together voluntary sector organisations to deliver statutory contracts in a collaborative and efficient way.

Formed of 5 member charities, No Limits, Solent Mind, Southampton Voluntary Services (SVS), Citizen's Advice Southampton and Social Care in Action (SCiA), SVC seeks to maximise VCSE partnerships and provide the statutory sector with a vehicle for joint commissioning. The Programme Director will be technically employed by SVS for relevant employment issues, but seconded to SVC for management and supervision, being accountable to the Chair.

SVC does not directly deliver services itself, and instead works through multiple voluntary sector providers to ensure local services are delivered as close to communities as possible. SVC currently holds a 6year £2.8m pa contract with Southampton City Council delivered through 15 different voluntary sector providers. Our aspiration is to grow over the next few years to broaden the voluntary sector's capacity to deliver impactful and innovative services to local residents across the Hampshire and IOW geographical footprint.

SVC has been established as a pioneering approach and has been supported by Southampton City Council. This gives it real authority and credibility to act with influence, but will result in close scrutiny to monitor its success. The Programme Director's ability to manage key relationships and deliver tangible results will be critical to its onward development.

Purpose of the Role:

The Programme Director will provide overarching strategic and operational leadership of Southern VCSE Collaborative (SVC).

The role combines overall leadership, programme and partnership development, as well as oversight and performance assurance of the contracts in place. The postholder will act as the primary "face" of SVC with commissioners, statutory organisations and VCSE bodies and undertake the following prime responsibilities:

- System, partnership and programme development
- Manage VCSE relationships and consortium partnership(s)
- Manage performance of contract(s)
- Provide overall leadership and governance of SVC.

The role combines both strategic and operational elements, requiring strong system leadership alongside disciplined oversight of performance, finance and risk.

We are open to exploring different delivery models which allow us to achieve the same goals within this financial envelope (the budget is set).

This job description is based on 0.8FTE Programme Director, but we are also open to exploring fewer hours for the Director and then funding some operational admin support. Candidates are asked to propose their preference in the interview process.

Key responsibilities

1. System, partnership and programme development:

There is a growing recognition that partnership bodies, such as SVC, are required to deliver impactful community programmes in new, more innovative, and efficient ways. To achieve this, The Programme Director will:

- i. **Build relationships with system partners** across the Hampshire & IOW geographical footprint, including senior leaders in NHS Trusts, ICB, Local Authorities and other voluntary sector organisations.
- ii. **Position SVC as a key VCSE partner** within the system to enable new collaborative programmes of work.
- iii. **Develop new impactful programmes** in collaboration with partners to meet identified local community needs and which increase SVC's reach, influence, or capacity to respond to unmet or emerging community needs.
- iv. **Secure new contracts** & programmes of work over multiple years and arrange sub-contracting arrangements with appropriate VCSE providers.
- v. **Support the development of SVC's capability**, including skills, systems, and leadership required to operate effectively at greater scale.
- vi. **Champion a learning culture** that encourages adaptation, innovation, and continuous improvement across programmes and partnerships.
- vii. **Ensure growth activity is values-led**, inclusive, and aligned to SVC's overall purpose.

- viii. **Enable VCSE partners to benefit** from growth opportunities through participation, capacity-building, and shared development.

2. **Manage VCSE relationships and consortium partnership(s):**

Each contract will require a broad range of sub-contractors to work together to develop and deliver collaborative ways of working to maximise opportunities for innovation and improved outcomes for local residents. This will require the Programme Director to:

- i. **Build positive communications with the VCSE sector** and develop SVC as a positive pathway for engagement between VCSE and statutory partners.
- ii. **Foster collaboration** amongst partners, through developing trusted and values-led relationships
- iii. **Identify and realise synergies** and new ways of delivery for the benefit of local communities
- iv. **Manage the consortium partnership** to ensure it operates in a mutually respectful and beneficial way.
- v. **Oversee the implementation of IT infrastructure solutions** which can promote the VCSE services delivered within SVC to our local communities.

3. **Manage performance of contract(s)**

SVC is committed to achieving its performance indicators from across its board range of sub-contractors. This will require the Programme Director to:

- i. **Collate, analyse and report performance** against contract KPIs to commissioners
- ii. **Work with individual subcontractors** to improve contract performance as required.
- iii. **Develop and implement quality assurance processes** across sub-contractors to assure delivery of high quality outcomes
- iv. **Manage financial performance of the contract**, ensuring that the total contract sum delivers maximum impact for the benefit of its communities, with appropriate sub-contractor allocations and audit trails.
- v. **Develop a strong reputation** for SVC as an organisation that reliably delivers and achieves voluntary sector innovation.
- vi. **Work with contract commissioners** to ensure the contract delivers its stated goals and objectives

4. **Provide overall leadership and governance of SVC**

As a new organisation, the Board of Directors are committed to embedding excellence in its governance arrangements from the outset. The Programme Director will need to establish and then continually deliver on these aspirations in the following ways:

- I. **Report regularly to board** on overall financial and operational performance and risk. This includes assessing and managing the organisational risks associated with growth, **ensuring expansion is sustainable and does not compromise delivery quality or partner relationships.**
- II. **Develop and deliver an overall strategy for SVC**, ensuring it balances the desire for growth alongside effective partnership management, particularly with its voluntary sector partners, and strong contract performance.
- III. **Ensure SVC complies with its regulatory requirements**, with appropriate policies, procedures and support functions in place. This includes a sub-contracted finance function, delivered under contract by one of its member organisations. The Programme Director will also serve as Company Secretary and ensure appropriate filing with Companies House.
- IV. **Uphold at all times our values and organisational policies** to deliver agreed strategic goals.
- V. **Any other business reasonably expected by Board of Directors**



Southampton Voluntary Services

Person Specification

Job Title: Programme Director

Accountable to: SVC Board, with line management provided by SVC Chair

Essential experience

- Extensive experience of building and managing senior level commissioner relationships.
- Extensive experience of working in the voluntary sector to build mutually beneficial partnerships.
- Programme or contract management experience in complex, multi-provider environments.
- Experience of strategic financial and commercial decision-making across partnerships, including allocation of funding, managing financial risk and ensuring value for money.
- Experience of defining, tracking and realising KPIs and outcomes across complex programmes, including using data and learning to adapt delivery.
- Experience of working across organisational boundaries and partnerships.
- Experience of contributing to service development, innovation or new business opportunities within a partnership or system context.
- Experience of delivering programmes with demonstrable social value and community outcomes, not solely contractual outputs.
- Ability to manage complex programme risks, interdependencies and delivery trade-offs across multiple partners and systems.
- Credible and compassionate change leader, able to lead organisations and individuals through ambiguity, resistance and shifting ways of working
- Ability to design and evolve proportionate governance arrangements that support transparency, pace, accountability and trust across partners.

Essential skills

- Recognised programme or transformation qualification (e.g. MSP, PgMP, SAFe) or equivalent senior-level experience leading complex programmes
- Strategic leadership and system influence.
- Ability to use emotional intelligence to build trusted relationships with a broad range of VCSE partners, both large and small, as well as large statutory bodies

- Ability to identify opportunities for service improvement, innovation and future development.
- Strong analytical and data interpretation capability.
- Financial literacy and confidence in reviewing budgets and financial returns.
- Excellent communication and negotiation skills.
- Ability to manage risk and navigate sensitive performance discussions.

Essential personal attributes

- Credible, confident and values-driven external representative.
- Strong personal drive, initiative and accountability for delivery.
- Balanced and fair in performance and contract oversight.
- Collaborative but appropriately challenging, able to hold partners to account while maintaining trust, appreciating the broad range of size, skills, capacities and cultures across the voluntary sector partners.
- Organised, disciplined and detail oriented.
- Committed to transparency, integrity and system improvement.
- Comfortable operating in ambiguity and shaping emerging models in partnership, rather than relying on established structures.