**Key Information**

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| **JOB TITLE** | Head of Strategic Partnerships |
| **ORGANISATION** | Gloucestershire VCS Alliance |
| **REPORTING TO** | Chief Officer – Gloucestershire VCS Alliance |
| **OTHER RELATIONSHIPS** | VCSE providers, Gloucestershire Commissioners, Funders. |
| **EMPLOYING BODY** | Gloucestershire VCS Alliance |
| **LOCATION** | Home-based, with some in-person team meetings. There will be a need to travel across the county. |
| **SALARY SCALE** | £37-40k depending on experience |
| **CONTRACT TYPE** | Fixed term for two years with scope for extension. |
| **WORKING HOURS** | 18hrs hours per week.  Occasionally, evening and/or weekend meeting attendance may be required. |

**Background**

In Gloucestershire, the current economic environment for the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) organisations is challenging. Grant funding and commissioning are increasingly competitive processes with not enough funding available for the sector to continue providing essential services. We believe that new ways of working are needed to ensure provision is retained and our communities have access to locally provided high quality services. This includes partnership development within the VCSE and creating effective alliance commissioning models.

**Job Purpose**

The purpose of this role is to strengthen the VCSE in Gloucestershire by identifying opportunities for strategic partnership working and developing and supporting partnerships to work together effectively. Our aim is to position the VCSE in Gloucestershire to be on the front foot when it comes to commissioning. We want to do this by developing collaborative partnerships that will attract inward investment and provide a viable model for local commissions.

The postholder will be someone who can develop key strategic relationships, provide innovative propositions that reflect the needs of Gloucestershire and the ambitions of the sector, and have the power to capture funders' imaginations in the commissioning process. We want someone to develop new concepts, new ways of working and produce well-written, high-quality tenders and proposals.

The postholder will create sustainable, effective partnerships that create long-term impact and generates a legacy of effective collaborative working. This will be done through robust governance, ensuring partnerships are mutually beneficial, and creating the conditions for learning and development.

**Key Responsibilities**

* Work with VCSE leaders to understand the barriers to partnership working and proactively create conditions whereby these barriers are overcome.
* Work with VCSE leaders to identify shared concerns and opportunities. This will be done through focus groups, coproduction sessions, and peer to peer workshops.
* Identify local, regional, and national high-level commissioning opportunities and work with sector leaders to generate compelling bids.
* Develop case studies that capture the impact on the local VCSE, of commissioning ‘out of county’ to deliver contracts.
* Create partnerships of willing VCSE organisations that can work in partnership to build capacity within the sector.
* Develop an in-depth understanding of the commissioning landscape.
* Support commissioners to engage effectively with VCSE organisations.
* Coordinate local VCSE organisations and get the sector ‘ready’ for collaborative commissioning using an ‘alliance’ model.
* Develop robust processes and procedures that support equitable decision making on spend and delivery within an alliance model.
* Develop appropriate governance that supports equitable partnerships to flourish, including Terms of Reference, decision-making protocols, and reporting mechanisms.
* Explore how organisations of every size can be a part of big scale contract delivery. Actively seek out smaller VCSE organisations that are not part of current consortiums.
* Foster innovative models of partnership development by working with local leaders, and horizon scanning for best practice at a national level.
* Research investment opportunities that will benefit Gloucestershire.
* Conduct regular risk assessments and keep VCS Alliance appraised of risk.

**Person Specification**

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| **Knowledge** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| A good understanding of the VCSE sector | **x** |  |
| A strong understanding of the Commissioning landscape in general and in Gloucestershire particularly. | **x** |  |

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| **Skills** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Recent, knowledge & experience in tendering for public sector contracts. | **x** |  |
| Ability to build collaboration between stakeholders with competing interests. | **x** |  |
| Excellent communication skills, including experience of providing information to a range of stakeholders. | **x** |  |
| Ability to ‘pitch’ ideas and present complex information in a clear manner. | **x** |  |
| Innovative, resourceful, and pro-active. | **x** |  |
| Excellent relationship building skills - we are looking for a natural collaborator comfortable working with people at all levels of an organisation. | **x** |  |
| Ability to understand complex systems, good analytical skills, and a practical approach to problem-solving. | **x** |  |
| Ability to manage parallel tasks, prioritise work and manage time effectively to meet internal and external deadlines. | **x** |  |

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| **Experience** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Experience of building and maintaining professional relationships with key stakeholders. | **x** |  |
| Experience of working independently. | **x** |  |
| Experience of partnership development and understanding of the complexities and sensitivities of collaboration. | **x** |  |
| Experience of project management and ability to work with multiple partners and create joint initiatives. | **x** |  |