

# Applicant Pack – Rural Community Network

Community Relations Support Officer – Cohesion, Sharing and Integration – 21 hrs a week



## BACKGROUND

### Rural Community Network

Rural Community Network is a voluntary membership-based organisation supporting rural communities across the region. RCN works with rural communities to address issues relating to poverty, inequality, community and good relations.

RCN adopts a community development approach to its work. Areas of work include community development training, action research, policy analysis, peace-building, strategic planning, consultation, mediation and facilitation.

**Our Vision** is of vibrant, articulate, inclusive and sustainable rural communities whose contribution is valued across Northern Ireland.

**Our Mission** is to provide an effective voice for and support to rural communities, particularly those who are most disadvantaged and excluded.

**Our Values** are set within the context of community development which is a long-term value based process which aims to address imbalances in power and bring about change founded on social justice, equality and inclusion. The values we bring to our work are:

- Community Empowerment
- Social Justice
- Collective Action
- Working/Learning Together
- Equality and Anti-discrimination



## Rural Community Network Job Description

**Job Title:** Community Relations Support Officer – Cohesion, Sharing and Integration

**Line manager** RCN Director

**Responsible to:** Community Development Officer - Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (CDO CSI)

**Salary:** NJC scale pt 30 £34,373 pro rata – 21 hrs per week is £20,623.80

This is a fixed term contract to March 2023. Continuation beyond March is subject to funding.

This post is funded by the Core Funding Programme of NI Community Relations Council

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### Main Duties

To work with RCN's Community Development Officer for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (CDO CSI) and existing staff, to implement RCN's work on Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (CSI).

To support rural communities to contribute to a cohesive, shared and integrated future across Northern Ireland.

To work with existing staff to co-ordinate the implementation, monitoring and dissemination of rural community development support initiatives to address social need, social exclusion, social cohesion and community capacity in rural communities at a regional level.

### Specific Duties

1. To work with RCN's Community Development Officer for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (CDO CSI) implement the CRC core funded work package: focusing on addressing sectarianism and racism and promoting the value of cultural diversity and encouraging peace and reconciliation work throughout rural communities.
2. To support the capacity and confidence building of rural Section 75 groupings in attaining equality of opportunity.
3. To support RCN staff, members and other agencies /organisations in their work to ensure that Cohesion, Sharing and Integration is integral to their delivery and workplans.
4. To work with RCN's CDO CSI to initiate, develop, promote and manage a range of CSI events and activities for our membership
5. To work with RCN's CDO CSI officer to develop and deliver support programmes to meet the needs of rural communities that are excluded, marginalized or have a lack of community cohesion.
6. To seek to identify those who have not engaged with community development and CSI work develop initiatives to address barriers to participation.
7. To work with RCN's CDO CSI to develop, design and deliver training programmes (accredited and non-accredited courses) on CSI and cultural diversity.
8. To develop and maintain collaborative relationships within the Community / Good Relations sector and other appropriate agencies and organisations.
9. To support members of the Beyond Belfast practitioners' forum to reflect on their practice, to improve their skills and support their networking as appropriate.

10. To work with RCN's CDO CSI to develop systems to monitor and evaluate projects and to ensure learning is shared within the sector and with our funders.
11. To work with RCN's CDO CSI to review policies, highlight and discuss emerging issues, extract best practice and learning methods from the sector and adapt and change these to support RCNs development in this area of work.
12. To work with RCN's CDO CSI to undertake community action research in CSI and cultural diversity and assist with the production of reports.
13. To act as the RCN representative on bodies who seek to increase levels of participation and community activity.
14. To ensure that all necessary information is provided for the purpose of record keeping, financial accountability and funding requirements ensuring that all projects are delivered on time and remain within budget.
15. To work with RCN's CDO CSI prepare and present reports and publications to the RCN Board, members and RCN sub-committees as required.
16. Undertake such other duties as shall be reasonably required from time to time.

**Personnel Specification**  
**Community Relations Support Officer – Cohesion, Sharing and Integration**

	Essential Criteria	Desirable Criteria
<b>Qualifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Degree level qualification in social science or relevant discipline. (A)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community development, rural development or equivalent qualification. (A)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Recognised/accredited training qualification in community relations/political development. (A)</li> </ul>
<b>Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 3 years' experience in the past five years of a community relations role or support role. (A, B)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 years' experience of devising, developing and delivering accredited and non-accredited community-based training programmes. (A)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 years relevant experience in project co-ordination. (A,B)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Experience in the development of community relations support / resource materials. (A,B)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Experience of working directly with groups to provide support and guidance on community relations issues. (A,B)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Experience of working in single identity and cross-community work (A,B)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Applying to different funding bodies for projects</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Experience of organising events, e.g. seminars, conferences (A,B)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Development of creative methodologies for engaging communities in peacebuilding work (A, B)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Experience of undertaking research and the development of research papers and reports (A, B)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Experience of working within a rural context. (A,B)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Experience of cross sectoral working. (A,B)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Experience of facilitating reflective practice. (A,B)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Experience of co-ordinating community relations activity and networking across sectors. (A,B)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Experience of working with training and education organisations and awarding bodies/authorities i.e. OCN. (A,B)</li> </ul>

<b>Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Ability to communicate clearly – orally and in writing. Evidence of report writing and presentations. (A,B,C)</li> <li>❑ Ability and willingness to work in a team and individually. (A,B)</li> <li>❑ Proven facilitation and community engagement skills. (A,B)</li> <li>❑ Proven experience of teaching, administering and managing accredited and non-accredited adult training programmes. (A,B)</li> <li>❑ High level of IT literacy to include use of MS Office and similar packages. (A)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Experience of working with OCNs/Awarding bodies for adult education programmes.</li> <li>❑ Experience of marketing and communications in relation to project promotion</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Knowledge of voluntary, community and statutory sector. (A,B,C)</li> <li>❑ Knowledge and understanding of community development values and principles. (A,B,C)</li> <li>❑ Knowledge and understanding of the values and principles of community relations work</li> <li>❑ Knowledge and understanding of a range of community relations issues in rural areas within a policy context. (A,B,C)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Working knowledge and understanding of issues relating to social cohesion, sharing and integration in a rural context. (A,B)</li> <li>❑ Knowledge of the current community and voluntary sector funding environment. (A,B)</li> </ul>

The A, B, C codes identified in the above specification indicates the format where each criteria will be assessed from, i.e. from the application form or interview or both. The format for each code is identified below.

<b>Personal</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> High degree of organisational ability, self-motivation, personal initiative and meeting tight deadlines. (A, B)	<p>Willingness to work outside of normal working hours to meet the needs of rural community groups.</p> <p>Proven ability to work as part of a highly motivated team (A.B)</p>
<b>Transport</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> A full driving licence and access to transport for work purposes or access to another form of transport that would allow the post holder to meet the travel requirements of the post.	

**A – Application Form**

**B – Interview**

**C - Presentation**

# Equal Opportunities Policy

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## Objectives

The purpose of this policy statement is to proclaim and emphasise the commitment of RCN to equal opportunity for all staff and volunteers. It affirms that the Corporate Management Team and the Board of Directors will rigorously observe the principles and actively pursue the objectives set out in the discharge of their responsibilities so that the policy is fully implemented. The policy will ensure that unlawful discrimination of any kind is not shown towards any job applicant or employee.

RCN is an Equal Opportunities Employer. This means that RCN does not permit unlawful discrimination of any kind against any person on grounds which include gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religious belief, political opinion, race, age or disability. Unlawful discrimination is defined as treating a person less favourably than others are, or would be, treated in the same or similar circumstances. To this end RCN will:

- (i) fulfil its responsibility towards its employees and the communities in which it operates.
- (ii) recognise and to the best of its ability, fulfil its legal obligations under the Fair Employment & Treatment (Northern Ireland) Acts 1998; the Equal Pay Acts (Northern Ireland) 2010; the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Orders 2010; the Disabled Persons (Northern Ireland) Employment Acts 1945 and 1960; the Disability Discrimination Act 2005; the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997; the Employment Equality (Age) Regulation (Northern Ireland) 2006; The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulation (NI) 2006 and other relevant legislation. It is noted that the existence of law cannot of itself ensure that any policy of non-discrimination will work effectively. This will be achieved only if staff and volunteers at all levels examine critically their attitudes towards other individuals and to ensure that no trace of discrimination is allowed to affect their judgment. Staff and volunteers should be aware of the forms which unfair discrimination can take, guard against them and avoid any action which might influence others to discriminate unfairly.
- (iii) there must be no direct discrimination against any eligible person, whether in recruitment, training, promotion or in any other way. Direct discrimination means treating a person less favourably in such areas as gender, marital status, religion etc.
- (iv) similarly, there must be no indirect discrimination which occurs where a requirement or condition is applied equally, but is of such a nature to lack sufficient relevance to the job and may be perceived to be unfavourable for particular groups, in that a considerably smaller proportion of the group can comply with it.

- (v) it is the policy of RCN that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunities for employment on the basis of their merits and abilities which are appropriate to the job. RCN will review periodically its selection criteria and procedures to fulfil this aim.
- (vi) RCN will implement the measures for monitoring perceived religious affiliation of job applicants and employees and further monitor the gender, age, marital status and disability status of these persons.
- (vii) This policy will be clearly communicated to all management, staff and volunteers, and it should also be made known to potential applicants. All existing members of staff and volunteers will receive a copy of this statement, and its contents will be reflected as appropriate. It will also be made clear to potential applicants through job advertisements that RCN is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

### *Responsibilities*

- 1 RCN will ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable treatment on grounds which include gender, sexual discrimination, marital status, religious belief, political opinion, race, age or disability. RCN will ensure that sources of job applicants, such as advertisements, are non-discriminatory.
- 2 Vacancies will be advertised in accordance with RCN's Recruitment and Selection Policy.
- 3 Specific responsibility for the practical application of this policy falls upon staff professionally involved in management, recruitment, training and employment administration.
- 4 Specific responsibility for ensuring the introduction and implementation of an action programme designed to consolidate and, where necessary, improve RCN's procedures in the interests of Equal Opportunities rests with the Finance & Human Resources Sub Committee.
- 5 All RCN employees have a responsibility to accept their personal involvement in the practical application of this policy.
- 6 RCN will take all appropriate disciplinary action (including dismissal) against any employee who is found to have contravened RCN's Equal Opportunities Policy.