# Network and Communications Manager

**Salary Range:** £33,000 pro rata

**Contract:** 1 year fixed term with intention to extend

**Location:** Home-based with national travel when possible

**Hours:** 28 per week

**Closing date:** Friday 2nd July @ 5pm

**Interview Date:** Thursday 8th July (online)

# Introduction

*Do you want to improve the world for people who have been socially disadvantaged? Do you believe people with lived experience should be at the heart of this change?*

Historically, the voices of people with lived experience of social disadvantages have not been routinely included in decisions made about them; specifically decisions about policies and services made at both the national and local level.

Recently, some organisations and services have been working to ensure peoples voices are heard, empowering them to constructively engage with decision makers and make a difference to our world.

Expert Link is one of these organisations. We are a small, growing charity with a wide, national reach. Through our work we empower people with lived experience of social disadvantage to engage with national and local decision makers and charities on areas such as housing, homelessness and social security policy. We provide opportunities for people to communicate with each other, sharing opportunities and wisdom with a purpose to make positive social change.

The growth of our organisation has provided Expert Link with the resources to recruit a Network and Communications Manager to improve and increase the opportunities for people with lived experience to engage in our work, and amplify their voices in national and local policy decision making.

The right person for this role will be creative around communication, passionate about people, and committed to changing our world. As a member of the Expert Link team, you will be committed to the purpose and values of Expert Link, and encourage and support creativity, autonomy and working together.

It is critical to the success of Expert Link that we are an inclusive organisation where everybody has the opportunity to have their voice heard. We encourage applications from across the full spectrum of the lived experience community, including experience of homelessness, mental health issues, substance misuse, offending and domestic violence and abuse.

# About Us

Expert Link is a peer-led organisation that champions the voices of people with lived experience of multiple disadvantages (including homelessness, mental health issues, substance misuse, offending and domestic violence and abuse) to allow better policies and services to support them.

We aspire to a world where people with lived experience of multiple disadvantages are treated as equal partners in decisions made about their lives. To reach this vision, we influence national policies and equip local policy-makers, service providers and individuals with lived experience, to work together to design policies and services that are driven by the voices of people with lived experience – a process known as co-production.

We encourage genuine collaboration between policy-makers, service providers and people with lived experience of multiple disadvantages. We believe that co-production process should be guided by principles of collective power, equitable decision-making and by a strengths-based approach.

## Our values

We believe in humanity and the potential of all people. When we come from a place of honesty, we can create the change that we want to see and bring hope into our world.

## Our vision

Our vision is of a world where people with lived experience of multiple disadvantages are treated as equal partners in decisions made about their lives

In this world, best practices around co-production are well understood and co-production is prioritised by policy makers and those with power. This translates into investment and support for co-production at both the national and sub-national level across the UK.

People with lived experience of multiple disadvantages get all the support they need to be well, whatever it means for them. They are no longer experiencing stigma, are confident and aware of their own skills, can access opportunities to reach their personal goals and further develop their skills. As a result, they can live fulfilling lives, support peers and can voice their perspective to influence decisions made about their lives.

## Our purpose

Our purpose is to inspire, support and champion co-production, with the voices of people with lived experience at our heart

### Inspiring

Expert Link aims to inspire by walking the talk: we are a peer-led organisation that places the voices of people with lived experiences at the centre of our governance and decision-making processes. We also aim to inspire others by supporting them in their journey through co-production, helping them in overcoming barriers to engage with one another whilst recognising that organisations should determine themselves how they want to lead coproduction activities.

### Supporting

Through a comprehensive package of support Expert Link helps individuals and groups in overcoming barriers to effective local co-production. We supports individuals’ capacity, and gathers groups of people, inspiring and empowering them to lead positive social change together. We provide:

* Opportunities for individuals with lived experience to overcome stigma and negative labels and recognise their own strengths
* Opportunities for service providers, local authorities and other actors to get rid of stigma and negative labels and recognise strengths in people with lived experience
* Opportunities to build relationships with one another and define shared values
* Access to general principles on what makes good co-production
* Access to practical tools and guidance to support co-production activities

### Championing

Expert Link believes the voices of people with lived experience should influence national policy. Building on a movement of individuals and groups with lived experience and/or involved in co-production, Expert Link champions co-production by influencing national policy-makers to invest in this process and encourage their peers at the local level to do the same.

# Network and Communications Manager – Role Description

## Purpose

The role of the Network and Communications Manager will be to amplify the voices of people with lived experience of homelessness, mental health issues, substance misuse, offending and domestic violence and abuse. This will involve:

* Increasing the number of people with lived experience of social disadvantage who are meaningfully engaged in Expert Link’s work
* Supporting members of Expert Links network have their voices heard by national and local decision makers and the wider public
* Increase the impact of the Expert Link network on national and local decision making
* Raising the profile of Expert Link with relevant Government departments, national and local service providers, charities and other relevant organisations, and the wider public.

## Accountability

The post is accountable to the Policy and Research Manager.

## Location

The post is home-based. The post may require occasional travel within England.

## Main Responsibilities

### Strategic

* To develop and deliver Expert Link’s communications strategy (including internal network engagement and external communications), in partnership with Expert Link staff and network members.
* To work with the CEO and Policy and Research Manager to develop our national and local influencing work.
* To work with the CEO and Policy and Research Manager in developing new ideas and proposals for fund-raising bids to sustain the work of Expert Link.
* To ensure the successful long term strategic development of the Expert Link brand in line with our purpose.

### Network engagement

* To work with the CEO and Policy and Research Manager to design and deliver ways for network members to communicate with each other
* To engage people with network events and activities, including setting up Eventbrite, managing attendance and administering incentives
* To produce our newsletter including design, gathering content, editing, proofing and disseminating.
* To moderate our e-forums, including contributing content to ensure effective engagement

### External communications

* To work with members of our network to develop strong messages and stories about their lived experience and ideas for policy change
* To prepare communications material (e.g. articles, blogs, leaflets, videos, etc.)
* To maintain and develop content on our media channels (website, Twitter, You Tube, Facebook, Linkedin, etc.) to target and engage key audiences
* To gather feedback and intelligence on communications activity.
* To support the production of our publications including design, editing and proofing and in gathering case studies
* To coordinate the implementation of communications activity.

### General

* Roles and objectives in Expert Link may change. All members of staff are expected to be prepared to work flexibly in response to changing business needs.
* All members of staff are expected to undertake any other responsibilities or tasks that are consistent with their role and/or reasonably required by the Chief Executive.
* All members of staff are required to operate in accordance with Expert Link’s values, policies and procedures.

*This is a description of the job as it is presently constituted. It is the practice of Expert Link to examine job descriptions from time to time and to update them to ensure they relate to the job as then being performed, or to incorporate whatever changes are required to reflect business needs. This will be conducted in consultation with you. It is the organisation’s aim to reach agreement on changes, but if agreement is not possible, the organisation reserves the right to insist on changes to your job description, after consultation with you.*

# Network and Communications Manager - Person Specification

## General Requirements

### Essential

* Commitment to the purpose and values of Expert Link.
* Lived experience of social disadvantage (e.g. homelessness, mental health issues, substance misuse, offending and domestic violence and abuse).
* Ability to think creatively and courageously
* Highly effective at working in a small team, building strong collaborative relationships with colleagues, including a track record of sharing knowledge and learning from colleagues
* Excellent project management and ability to manage multiple priorities with tight deadlines
* Willingness and ability to work flexibly in response to changing organisational requirements

### Desirable

* Understanding of the causes of multiple disadvantage
* Knowledge of organisations and services working in a co-produced way.

## Experience and track record

**Essential**

* Experience of delivering effective communications strategies using a wide variety of channels
* Track record of achieving impact with communications, for example, achieving campaign objectives, social or attitudinal change and/or significant awareness and profile raising for an issue or brand
* Exceptional written and verbal communication skills and ability to adapt tone and content to a variety of difference audience segments in order to effectively engage and influence
* Track record of using social media to target and engage key audiences

**Desirable**

* Experience of network development
* Experience of print, design and brand management
* Experience of fundraising and income generation, including writing fundraising proposals

## Specialist knowledge

### Essential

* Knowledge and understanding of effective communications methods and styles that achieve impact with diverse audiences
* IT literate and able to use social media

### Desirable

* Good understanding of communication research and evaluation techniques

# How to apply?

To apply for this position, please produce a video telling us:

1. Why you think it is important that people with lived experience of social disadvantage have their voices heard by national and local decision makers
2. Why you would like to work for Expert Link.
3. Based on the Job Description, any information on relevant experience (including employment, voluntary work, training or other relevant expertise) which you feel will make you an effective Network and Communication Manager.

Your video can be up to **ten minutes** long.

Videos should be sent to [info@expertlink.org.uk](mailto:info@expertlink.org.uk) byFriday 2nd July @ 5pm

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an interview on Thursday 8th July (online)

Interviews will be conducted by a panel of people with lived experience of disadvantage and expertise in network development, communications and advocacy.

*If you have any questions about this post please email* [*info@expertlink.org.uk*](mailto:info@expertlink.org.uk)*.*

*Please note that all data will be held in the strictest confidence and in compliance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR and will only be used for the purpose of selection of the Steering Group.*

*Please contact* [*info@expertlink.org.uk*](mailto:info@expertlink.org.uk) *for a copy of our privacy notice for applicants*

*For more information about Expert Link please visit our website* [*http://expertlink.org.uk/*](http://expertlink.org.uk/)