



Job Description

Job Title:	Project Support Officer
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Location:	Woodstock, Oxfordshire
Reporting to:	Project Manager
Responsible for:	N/A
Salary Band:	£25,000 - £32,612 gross per annum (pro rata)
Contract:	Full time permanent, with a probation period of six months

Plunkett Foundation is a national charity with a vision for resilient, thriving and inclusive rural communities. To achieve this, we support people in rural areas to set up and run a wide range of businesses which are genuinely owned by local communities, whereby members have equal and democratic control. Today, we represent over 800 'community businesses' in rural and urban areas throughout the UK, from shops and pubs through to woodlands, farms and fisheries.

Through our support for community businesses, we have a specific mission to create innovative, impactful and inclusive spaces.

We achieve this by helping community businesses to:

- Provide a wider range of services and amenities that communities value and need
- Stimulate the local economy through localised supply chains
- Boost opportunities for employment, training and volunteering
- Benefit people who are most disadvantaged and excluded in today's society
- Offset climate change through delivery of environmentally sustainable initiatives
- Harness digital technologies to enhance business performance
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion by creating safe and welcoming spaces for all.

In practical terms, Plunkett raises awareness of the community business model UK-wide and provides business support and training to help these businesses start-up and go on to thrive. As a membership organisation, we also seek to represent the interests of rural community businesses through research, policy and public affairs.

How we work

Plunkett Foundation operates as a team. This means that every member of staff is expected to support Plunkett as a whole, and as and when required, this means helping others to meet important targets or complete organisation-wide initiatives. As such, there will be times when you are asked to work on tasks outside of your job description – but it also means that the whole of Plunkett is there to support you when required.

We strive to live up to our values, and be inclusive, accountable, innovative and collaborative in the way that we work - both internally and externally - and we welcome applications from like-minded individuals. As a member of the Plunkett team you will demonstrate a knowledge, understanding and commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion and its application in all that we do.

Job Purpose:

This post will be a key post within the **Community Business Team** at Plunkett, a team that provides a single ‘front door’ for communities seeking information, advice and support when setting up and running a community business. The team supports communities via: an advice line (phone and email); the development of online toolkits and resources; provision of business support, peer-to-peer learning and training; and delivery of membership services. By building relationships with community groups, the team is able to direct them to the right support at the right time.

This role will work closely with Plunkett’s project managers and the wider team to support the delivery of a variety of funded projects. The post holder will be one of the first points of contact for communities setting up or running a community-owned business. As such, the role involves frequent interaction with community groups remotely by phone, email, social media and sometimes face-to-face. Working with Plunkett’s Community Business Officer, this role will also include supporting processes which relate to the allocation and monitoring of support for community businesses. The post holder will also provide administrative support to ensure the smooth running of several funded projects.

Training and support will be provided for the right candidate, and experience of customer service, dealing with people and developing good relationships will be important.

Principal Accountabilities

There are three key areas of accountability:

1. **Acting as the first point of contact for community business projects.** This will involve:
 - Answering queries that come into our helpline, by phone or email or social media, from early stage community groups and established community businesses and woodland social enterprises; taking calls, following up with appropriate support, and logging all activity.
 - Maintaining accurate data in the Plunkett Foundation CRM system (Salesforce), to ensure the information we hold about community businesses and woodland social enterprises remains up-to-date and can be used for reporting and outreach purposes
 - Working with the Community Business Team to ensure that communities in the early stages of their development receive access to relevant information, signposting and ongoing support to the stage that they proceed with their plans to create a community business
 - Working with the Community Business Team to provide continuing support as needed to open and trading community businesses, as they develop and diversify

- Supporting community groups to apply for funded advice and support when ready
- Ensuring groups are engaging with all aspects of the Plunkett Foundation's work that may be of benefit to them, such as promoting membership, policy and research activity, and training and resources available to them
- Monitoring and contributing to Plunkett Foundation's online peer support networks (Facebook groups) for woodland social enterprises, community shops and community pubs

2. Contributing to the allocating support processes. This will involve:

- Undertaking initial diagnostics with a community group requesting support to better understand its needs
- Providing general advice and support to community groups, setting up, promoting and facilitating online and in-person networking meetings
- Supporting the overall delivery, monitoring, allocation and support of specific community business projects as part of the team
- Developing a rapport with all community contacts, helping them to establish long term relationships with Plunkett Foundation
- Working closely with the Community Business Team to champion community needs and ensure they have access to the best possible support available at a given time
- Assisting with the management of allocations of support to beneficiaries and external advisers
- Administering funding support packages, including diagnostic support and assisting with application review
- Administering support allocation and funding panel decision meetings
- Providing a high standard of project management support to the Project Managers including the upkeep of databases, pro-active budget monitoring, event support and the preparation of reports

3. Play an active role in the Community Business Team, contributing to the delivery of the business support service and Plunkett's wider objectives. This will involve:

- Working collaboratively with team members to promote fee-based services, including membership, training and consultancy support, as well as charitable activities, such as community fundraising and corporate volunteering
- Supporting the delivery of projects, resources, events and membership activities as required
- Providing administrative support across the organisation as required; including contributing to reports, events, mail outs, survey work and impact monitoring
- Contributing to an organisational culture of maintaining good quality and accurate data, in respect of all work completed by Plunkett Foundation
- Acting as an ambassador for Plunkett, confidently representing the organisation at events and meetings organised by Plunkett or by partners

PERSON SPECIFICATION

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Plunkett Foundation is looking for someone who is:

- Confident, with good communication skills and happy to manage multiple interactions by phone, email, video call and in person, with a range of contacts
- Experienced in delivering great customer service and working with the public
- Highly organised, with an ability to prioritise and manage a busy workload and contribute effectively to project activity with tight timescales
- Proficient in using CRM systems (Plunkett uses Salesforce CRM) and maintaining accurate records
- A team player who thrives in a team-oriented, collaborative environment
- Personable, able to manage and develop relationships with staff and external stakeholders
- Prepared to listen to and learn from community businesses and the Plunkett membership network, to ensure our services remain fit for purpose and relevant to their needs