



Nova VCSE Advocate Vacancy

Role Description For:

Wakefield Young Carers Strategy Group

The Wakefield Young Carers Strategy Group ensures that the health and wellbeing, and needs of young carers are prioritised, understood, and adequately met by services in the district. This Group will work in partnership to develop a Wakefield Young Carers Strategy with the aim of improving young carer health and wellbeing and access to young carer support and information. A key priority of this work will be to ensure that the voice of young carers is captured and fed into the priorities and targeted work relating to this group.

In partnership and facilitated by Nova, the Wakefield Young Carers Strategy Group is recruiting a Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector Advocate.

Overview of the role

The VCSE Sector Advocate will attend board meetings and champion the sector. They will provide knowledge and insight about the needs of VCSE groups and the diverse communities they serve, sharing information from and to the sector. The role is not to lobby for an individual organisation or viewpoint but to advocate for the collective sector, promoting collaborative working.

The Advocate will have lived experience or be connected to the lives, needs, and challenges that young carers experience, and be able to promote opportunities for young carers to share their own voice. They will have a strong working knowledge of services that young carers access and an understanding of the gaps in provision, barriers and difficulties accessing support. The Advocate will be connected to VCSE organisations that support young carers, either through specific carer-focussed services or more universal support accessed by young carers.

The Wakefield Young Carers Strategy Group meet quarterly, and we ask that interested applicants commit themselves to these meetings.

If you would like to see the Terms of Reference for the Wakefield Young Carers Strategy Group, please request using the contact details below.

Who we are looking for

You will be a leader from the VCSE sector with an excellent understanding of the Wakefield District VCSE sector and ability to effectively communicate critical issues and influence decision making and policy. Please note that you do not have to be a CEO to apply for this role: you may be a volunteer, board member, or work in front-line service delivery. We encourage a range of VCSE leaders with different leadership experience to apply.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Advocate for and, where possible, represent the VCSE sector at the Wakefield Young Carers Group, drawing upon knowledge of the broader sector beyond your own organisation
- Provide key insight about VCSE organisations supporting and providing services for young carers
- Advocate for and champion the voice of young carers and advocate for young carers to be recognised as experts in care
- Improve young carer identification and self-identification
- Identify gaps in provision and solutions to improve services for young carers
- Share information to promote positive young carer wellbeing
- Stay updated and knowledgeable about national and regional initiatives to support young carers
- Commit to attend all relevant board meetings or give sufficient notice if you are unable to attend
- Commit to board meeting preparation time, including reading relevant papers and preparing presentations where required
- Maintain regular contact with Nova for ongoing support and feedback
- Communicate information and insight from board meetings back into the sector and to peers.
- Attend VCSE Voices meetings and offer peer support and development to other VCSE Advocates

Skills and Experience

- Strong understanding and working knowledge of the Wakefield District VCSE sector
- Strong working knowledge of cross sector services and support available to young carers in Wakefield District
- Experience developing service user-led activities or strategies
- Experience supporting young carers or providing services in a VCSE setting
- Experience recommending change and improvement
- Ability to advocate for the sector, champion success and recommend support needed
- Experience of developing and influencing policy
- Effective communication and active listening skills, with experience of public speaking
- Ability to think strategically and solve problems
- Ability to work collaboratively to develop and achieve successful outcomes

Additional Information

A range of support is available for Advocates – when and if needed – to enable successful participation in board meetings and decision making processes. Support will consist of a full induction to the role with tailored training, secretariat support, briefing and peer support.

A cohort of VCSE Advocates attend 20 boards, and together they form a wider VCSE Voices Network. The Network meets regularly for peer support, discussion and to develop the role of Advocates, providing a central hub of VCSE knowledge and expertise.

Nova value the expertise and time commitment needed to fulfil the role of VCSE Advocate. As such, Advocates will be paid backfill: the successful applicant will be paid at a rate of £24.89 per hour, which will apply to both preparation time and meeting time. Hourly payment is inclusive of incurred travel expenses. However, for advocates with disabilities, additional expenses will be paid.

How to apply

You can apply by sending a short-written statement or a video explaining your experience and relevant skills, and why you would like to get involved to vcsevoices@nova-wd.org.uk

We want as many people to be involved as possible. If you are considering the opportunity but would like a more detailed discussion about the role, the support available and commitment, or if you need support with your application, please contact VCSEVoices@nova-wd.org.uk

Applications will be reviewed by current VCSE Advocates, and there will be informal interview process with a view to the successful Advocate assuming their role in as soon as possible.