

# Director of member support & development

<b>Employer:</b>	Community Rail Network
<b>Salary:</b>	£40,000 - £47,000 pa, depending on experience
<b>Days:</b>	Full time
<b>Benefits:</b>	25 days' annual leave plus bank holidays (rising up to 30 days plus bank holidays, in line with long service); pension with employer contribution of 7%; flexi-time working (core hours 10am-3pm); access to Employee Assistance Programme.
<b>Contract type:</b>	Permanent
<b>Location:</b>	Home-based (location flexible, but with good transport links)

We are seeking a dynamic director of member support and development, to lead a team that supports, inspires and champions hundreds of community groups across Britain, engaging people with their local railways and delivering empowering community projects. You'll be helping communities to come together, take action and have a voice on sustainable and inclusive transport and development.

## About us

Community Rail Network is a national not-for-profit organisation, empowering communities to get the most from their railways, promoting sustainable and inclusive travel, supporting volunteering and place-making initiatives, and bringing people together.

Community rail is a growing grassroots movement made up of 75 community-based organisations, around 1,300 station friends volunteer groups, and other community-led initiatives across Britain. Their activities range from creative projects for young people, to advising train operators on service improvements, to building travel confidence with families and disabled people, to biodiversity projects at stations, to promoting greener travel and tourism by rail.

Our enthusiastic team of 22 people works mainly from home in different locations, but we come together regularly in person and online. We work collaboratively to advise our members, provide training, events and resources, run campaigns, and champion community rail and its insights via decision-makers and the media. We believe in developing our team and supporting everyone to reach their potential while having a good work-life balance.

## About this role

This role couldn't be more crucial to who we are and what we do: putting our members and their local communities at the forefront, empowering them to achieve their goals, and ensuring we and our partners are listening to and learning from their insights.

As a member of our senior leadership team, reporting to our chief executive, you will manage, lead and develop our support and development team, with nine passionate and knowledgeable staff.

Your job is to ensure the team excels and thrives in its work supporting and developing our membership to increase its impact, in line with our strategic goals and members' locally-determined plans and ambitions. This includes nurturing togetherness, positivity and innovation, ensuring strong collaboration with our other teams, external partners and funders, and bringing new opportunities into community rail, while sharing its insights and experiences.

It's an exciting time to be joining community rail, with the movement expanding, increasingly influential in rail and transport development, a burgeoning evidence base, and growing recognition of its relevance in tackling the climate crisis and social inequalities.

### **Main responsibilities:**

1. Manage, lead, support and develop our support and development (S&D) team, ensuring effective delivery and performance against our aims, objectives and plans, and ensuring the team's work is well-planned, coordinated, evidenced and reported;
2. Lead on the development, delivery and regular review of a strategy and annual plans, targets and budgets for the S&D team, engaging the team and our funders effectively in this process, drawing on member, partner and Board input, and aligning with our overarching strategy;
3. Nurture a member-orientated, empowering, positive approach in the S&D team, in line with our values, ensuring high-quality provision of support, advice and signposting, balancing proactiveness and responsiveness, and being attentive to members' needs and input, as well as wider contexts and opportunities;
4. Help our team to show positive leadership and provide intelligent, effective support, training and development services to our members around community engagement and empowerment, social inclusion and diversity, sustainable and healthy travel and socio-economic development – including by listening to members, continually developing the team's knowledge, skills and networks, and enabling the team to signpost, refer to and collaborate with organisations with useful expertise/services;
5. Coordinating with our other teams, forge and maintain strong external partnerships, especially leading on those that help us support our members better and bring them opportunities, such as with train operators, corporate partners, third sector organisations, and at operational level with devolved/regional/combined authorities;
6. Continually monitor and develop the S&D team's performance and impact, including using member, partner and colleague feedback, supporting staff to consider and maximise effectiveness, driving innovation and efficiencies, and developing ways to assess and evidence our impact, especially as our membership continues to grow;
7. Manage our activity supporting the creation and development of new or emerging community rail partnerships, station groups and community stations, and our support for those undergoing major change or challenges, ensuring this is carefully balanced with existing members' needs;
8. Ensure our members' voices, experiences and insights can be effectively used by our other teams and external partners, in their delivery, planning and strategic influencing work, especially ensuring that case studies, stories, examples and views are fed through to our communications, policy and events activity;
9. Play a key role in our liaison with and reporting to our own funders, and other major funders of our members, including ensuring effective monitoring and evaluation of our S&D work, collating good evidence of our own and our members' impact, and maintaining a robust awareness of and ability to advocate on opportunities and risks in community rail;
10. As a member of our senior leadership team, work closely with senior colleagues and across the organisation, and liaise with our Board as relevant, to co-ordinate and manage the delivery of our overarching strategy, reinforce our values, ensure the whole team is engaged with our mission and purpose, and to show external leadership across our members, partners and beyond.

### **Skills and competencies:**

1. Strong leadership and management skills, including a track record in managing, developing, drawing on and getting the best from a multi-faceted team, and working in and driving positive change in a complex, rapidly-evolving environment;

2. Significant experience and demonstrable experience in community engagement and community-led projects, ideally from both professional and voluntary positions, and ideally experience in supporting and advising community initiatives;
3. Experience in successfully planning, developing, delivering and evaluating programmes with positive social outcomes, including reporting to funders;
4. Experience working collaboratively and forming mutually-beneficial partnerships and professional networks, ideally with experience of developing corporate partnerships and/or funder relationships;
5. An understanding of how to evidence and increase social impact, particularly in relation to community development, empowerment and sustainability;
6. Awareness of and a strong commitment to community empowerment, social inclusion, social justice and sustainable development, with a good grasp of the importance of public transport and sustainable travel, and community-led action, to these agendas;
7. Excellent communication skills, articulate and assertive, with the ability to work constructively, diplomatically and persuasively with stakeholders at all levels and handle challenging situations;
8. Excellent organisational skills, with the ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines while dealing with competing priorities, and an evidenced ability to support a team to do so;
9. IT literate and competent using Office applications, the internet and CRM/database/recording systems;
10. Appropriate qualifications and professional development demonstrating knowledge and skills in line with the above, and a commitment to ongoing learning and development.

## To apply

Email [jobs@communityrail.org.uk](mailto:jobs@communityrail.org.uk) by 9am Thurs 7 November 2024 with two attachments: your CV and a covering letter of up to two sides of A4 summarising why you are the ideal person for this job, your relevant experience and competencies, and why you want to work for us. Please include a daytime phone number.

First interviews are scheduled to take place online Thurs 14 November. Second interviews are scheduled to take place in-person Tues 19 November, likely in London. Candidates shortlisted for interview will be contacted by phone about a week before. Due to limited resources, we are unable to provide feedback to candidates who are not shortlisted.

## Other information

As you will be home-based and managing a dispersed team, we are flexible about your location. However, you will be expected to travel to our office in Huddersfield for in-person full-team meetings quarterly, and you will need to bring your team together at a central location with similar regularity in between. On top of this, attendance at occasional in-person events and partner meetings, and visits to members to learn more about community rail and assist the team, will be important. We therefore welcome applications from those with decent public transport links, not too far from a railway station to enable journeys to be made sustainably.

This is a full-time position, 37 hours per week. We use a flexi-time system, with the core hours 10am-3pm, and we are committed to being a flexible, supportive and understanding employer. This is a permanent position with a probationary period of six months.

Community Rail Network is an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications from disabled people and Black, Asian and other minoritised groups, who meet with the skills and competencies for this role. We will provide reasonable adjustments for interviews as required.

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