



The
Democratic
Society

Local Democracy Project Officer (UK)

About the Role

This post is a central delivery role that will help The Democratic Society (Demsoc) achieve our ambitious plans to support a range of organisations such as local authorities, government departments and civil society organisations to find new and better ways to work collaboratively with citizens. It will suit a proactive self-starter who wants to be at the forefront of greater participation and dialogue in decision making and who is committed to the engagement of citizens and communities in local democracy.

The Project Officer will be involved in a wide range of work including an exciting new two-year project that looks to pilot and test new ways for local authorities to use participatory democracy techniques and civic technology to develop a model for local participation. The successful applicant will need to have a multi-year experience of working in or with local government and will be well placed to support authorities as they work through changes in culture and practice, including with direct support, situational analysis and identifying opportunities.

Whilst every project is different and therefore the duties will change accordingly, for the most part, the Project Officer will play a key role in driving everything forward from planning to implementation. This will directly underpin the delivery of client projects and will be inextricably tied to successful project outcomes.

The successful applicant will have a strong understanding of the importance of engagement and co-production and a creative and innovative approach to working with groups and communities, along with strong analytical and communication skills to interpret and present the outcomes of our work.

We offer the chance to work with a high performing small dynamic team in an evolving organisation, that fosters collaborative practices both internally and externally, and flexible working (based on client needs). This role will be based in the UK, and there is the opportunity to work remotely in this position, or to work within one of our existing hubs (Manchester, Edinburgh or Brighton).

Responsibilities

You will help deliver and drive Demsoc's UK programme delivery. In particular:

1. **Project delivery**, such as:
 - specialist delivery on participatory and co-productive activities, including designing materials, delivering events and producing reports on the outcomes of the processes.
 - facilitating deliberative activities, and creating environments that allow civil dialogue and input from all participants

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- research and analytical activities, including designing and running focus groups, situational analysis and desktop research.
2. **Project collaboration**, including:
- working with a wide range of project team members from both internal and external organisations
 - liaising with partner organisations and stakeholder groups to ensure that the delivery of our projects is open and inclusive
 - linking with a range of organisations and bodies to learn from others as well as sharing our learning
 - making the best use of digital technology to distribute, promote and provide a platform for work generated by project participants and drive audiences to engage with our work digitally
 - Alongside our senior team, devise projects and programmes of activity that contribute to our organisational values, goals and objectives
3. **Project management**, including:
- To provide information for project documentation regarding the planning, delivery and outcomes of our projects for a range of stakeholders.
 - To ensure projects are delivered to the required level of quality and defined timescales.
 - To support the Project Manager in the planning and execution of UK projects, identifying any risks that are likely to affect delivery of project objectives and to be part of the risk reduction process.
 - Assist in the analysis and evaluation of our projects

Key Competencies

Initiative: you can organise your own workload to meet business needs, use initiative to independently respond to unanticipated problems or situations.

Team work: you work collaboratively as part of a team to deliver a service to others.

Equality: you support and protect equality and diversity and respect customers, clients and other members of staff regardless of gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or ethnic origin.

Customer service: you work with a focus on delivering services to clients, acting with integrity and respect on behalf of the organisation and honouring confidentiality.

Problem solving: you have strong problem-solving skills with the ability to anticipate issues and resolve matters independently, developing sound pragmatic solutions.

Strategy: you ensure that at all times your work informs, reflects and supports the Democratic Societies prevailing aims and objectives.

Person Specification

The ideal applicant will be an inspiring colleague and someone who takes pride in their ability to get things done and achieve tangible results. They will be organised and focused on detail, taking responsibility for managing their own workload and be enthusiastic about delivering positive project

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outcomes. They will also have strong problem-solving skills with the ability to anticipate problems and resolve issues independently, planning solutions and make sound pragmatic decisions

For this role, it is essential that candidates have direct experience of large- and small-scale project delivery, working in complex and creative environments and maximizing the impact of a project in achieving successful outcomes. A background delivering projects for externally funded programmes would be advantageous.

The successful candidate must additionally demonstrate understanding and experience of various techniques for community engagement and have the knowledge and enthusiasm for engaging people in participatory democracy. Facilitation skills to enable participative discussions while maintaining a respectful environment and working with group dynamics whilst managing an activity process, would be highly desirable.

The Project Officer will have worked in partnerships, establishing and maintaining positive relationships at all levels and with a variety of stakeholders, for example; community organisations, clients, public sector organisations and members of the public. Experience of working with local government is highly desirable but not essential - however, the successful applicant must have a highly developed understanding of the public sector and voluntary and community sector landscape.

The Project Officer will also be someone with dependable administrative and IT skills (e.g. MS Office, Google Documents, Apple office software and social media platforms) in order to carry out research, analysis, produce reports and create electronic presentations.

Demsoc is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes all suitably skilled persons regardless of their race, sex, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, education or age.