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| JOB TITLE | Cross-Community Officer – Write the Future |
| REPORTS TO | Reporting to the Director, working closely with colleagues in both Fighting Words NI & Fighting Words Ireland |
| HOURS PER WEEK | 37.5 hours, full-time role |

OVERALL PURPOSE OF THE JOB

The Cross-Community Officer is a new role at Fighting Words being recruited to project manage the Write the Future initiative. Fighting Words NI is expanding and focusing particularly on extending our reach across Northern Ireland and the border counties, enhancing our work in the areas of reconciliation and disadvantage. We are also aiming to expand our work with young people beyond the school system – especially with youth clubs, arts centres, sports clubs and libraries.

This new initiative – Writing the Future – will run for 18 months from 1 Jan 2021. The project aims to work with young people using creative writing and expression to challenge the divisions and disadvantage impacting on their lives. Fighting Words NI will deliver creative workshops for up to 800 young people in youth clubs and sports clubs, across the region and in the border counties, with a focus on breaking down the enmity and barriers that exist given the cultural and society realities young people are living with.

To achieve this, the postholder will set up a new project to connect the creative, sporting and other interests of young people beyond school by providing a network of spaces and opportunities for creative thinking where they can write about the things that matter in their lives, including divisions and disadvantage in their communities.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Co-ordinate the Fighting Words NI engagement project on cross-community and reconciliation initiatives with hundreds of young people across NI over the next 18 months. Working with local and regional partners and Fighting Words in Ireland, the postholder will bring together children and young people from different traditions to imagine and create new stories and other types of writing. The postholder will deliver a programme of workshops, writing slams, and other activities, and publish their writing – highlighting the reality for young people from different traditions on this island through their own words, demonstrating that while the cultures, traditions, communities and contexts are different, everyone is equal, creative, and capable.

The Cross- Community Officer will:

- Establish a project partnership building on initial discussions with youth organisations, sporting organisations, and arts centres
- Identify a network of ten youth clubs and sporting clubs across Northern Ireland to link with; recruit and train 10-15 Volunteer Mentors connected to local arts and education centres to deliver workshops for young people with Fighting Words NI staff. Deliver a series of workshops in each location reaching at least 500 young people in total
- Together with Fighting Words in Ireland, identify six centres and partners in the border counties that will similarly link to youth and sporting partners. Recruit and train 10-15 Volunteer Mentors. Deliver a series of workshops in each location, reaching 300 young people in total
- Build partnerships and engagement with other key contributors and allies including Corrymeela, the Nerve Centre, Youth Action NI, Foroige, and public bodies such as Libraries NI, the Education Authority and CCEA
- Convene – online or (if possible) in person – a forum to bring some of the young people from all 16 centres together for activities such as writing slams, where they can share their own writing and collaborate on the creation of new stories
- Publish an anthology of the stories on-line and through our growing publishing and broadcast networks
- Expand the range of on-line creative writing tools and platforms available to young people and their clubs across the region, within the context of Covid-19 and the restrictions for children and young people
- Ensure the experiences and successes of the young people involved in the project are documented

PERSON SPECIFICATION

You will have:

Essential

- At least 5 years of experience working as a project manager, coordinating a programme of work or a team, with a plan, budget and responsibility for deliverables
- Proven ability to build and manage strong relationships with partners and other organisations
- At least 3 years of experience working with young people in a related field – education, youth work, arts or sports
- Cross-community experience, and a track record of work in the areas of community development, reconciliation, peace building, or conflict resolution
- Strong facilitation skills and communication skills, with experience of designing and delivering workshops
- Demonstrated passion for working with young people and excluded groups
- An interest in creative writing
- Experience of documenting, evaluating and reporting

Desirable

- Firsthand knowledge of working on digital platforms for organisational and education purposes
- Familiarity with the use of social media and digital marketing strategies
- Knowledge of the organisations and groups actively working with young people in one or more of the key areas of the project – youth, sports, arts – across Northern Ireland and/or the border counties in the Republic of Ireland
- Involvement in reconciliation/peacebuilding work at cross-community level
- Experience of working with volunteers such as recruitment, management, and training
- Experience of working to fulfil the objectives of public and private donors