

spark!
KICK
STARTING
CAREERS



Work Experience Manager
Recruitment Pack
September 2023

About Spark!

We believe it is possible for every young person to be ready, equipped, and able to enter the world of work, and with youth unemployment rising, there has never been a more important time for our services.

Working in partnership with schools and colleges, alongside a large and diverse range of employers and funders, we enhance young people's employability skills, knowledge, and experience, so that they are better prepared for and able to effectively transition into the workplace, finding and keeping a job.

We do this by enabling and supporting long-term relationships between local businesses and education to:

- create **high quality work experience** placements and internships
- broker inspiring **career mentoring relationships**
- deliver a range of **employability skills development** opportunities
- support **transitions into work**

Born out of the Hounslow Education Business Partnership, Spark! is now an independent charity, working across west London and beyond, with diverse groups of young people and employers.

We are a motivated and passionate team, led by the desire to positively impact on the employment prospects and life chances of young people. We endeavour to live our values; of **empowerment, collaboration, reliability, quality, and learning**, in our decision making and all that we do.



"The sessions have been amazing and made me smile and helped me to write out my plans for the future. I learned that goals can be small or big, or short term or long term, and I found out some of my strengths and weaknesses and ways to grow and learn from them."

Our Vision

A society in which all young people are ready, equipped, motivated, and able to enter the world of work.

Our Mission

To ensure all young people, particularly those who will most benefit, have access to meaningful employer engagement, work readiness skills development, and employment opportunities, enabling them to transition into sustained work and rewarding careers.

Our Values

Empowerment

We believe in empowering young people, ourselves, and others, to be self-determining in achieving personal and professional goals.

Collaboration

We believe that a collaborative approach is the most productive and effective way to work, and actively seek to be inclusive and partner with others in achieving our vision and mission.

Reliability

We strive to always be reliable, dependable, and trustworthy in our dealings and interactions with partners and beneficiaries.

Quality

We have a continuous commitment to the highest of quality, actively aiming to constantly improve what we do and how we do it.

Learning

We are a learning organisation, always seeking to listen, reflect, develop, adapt, and improve.

Our 2025 Strategy can be [read here](#).

About the role

This role is an exciting opportunity to take on responsibility for managing Spark!'s work experience programme, which comprises partnering with schools and businesses to source, develop, quality assure, and deliver hundreds of high quality placements every year.

Work experience is one of our most popular programmes, with many of our students, schools and businesses seeing a real benefit from introducing young people to the world of work. It's incredibly impactful and is often the most useful way to help young people to gain skills, build social capital, and make informed decisions about their future. It's an exciting time to get involved, as we move towards a more targeted approach, through our ['Way to Work' programme](#), for young people who will most benefit, whilst integrating work experience into more long-term and impactful approaches for schools.

In order to work effectively with the different stakeholders, you will be an empathetic individual, with an understanding of different needs (inc. young people, schools, and employer priorities), and you'll be able to respond flexibly to change. You will need an excellent attention to detail, the ability to coordinate multiple projects simultaneously, and be committed to ensuring every placement makes a real difference in a young person's life, working with employers and schools to shape safe, supportive, meaningful placements. You will have a passion for driving the agenda around work experience both internally and externally, and will constantly be looking to grow our employer partnerships and improve outcomes.

"I had struggled with finding my voice when it came to my career, as I lacked confidence. I have gained the knowledge that I needed, and this boosted my confidence massively."



Job description

The main purpose of this role is to be responsible for developing and delivering our work experience programme, with schools and employer partners, ensuring delivery is executed to a very high standard.

- Manage Spark!'s work experience programmes and delivery, including responsibility for ensuring health and safety, safeguarding, and quality assurance.
- Manage delivery with schools, efficiently meeting the needs of different groups of students and the agreed project parameters.
- Manage the delivery of employer-led work experience to provide high-quality services to business partners and to young people.
- Manage the ongoing recruitment of businesses and employers to secure hosts for work experience placements, thinking both short-term and strategically to ensure a diverse future pipeline.
- Deliver employability workshops, presentations and support directly with young people, school/college staff, parents/guardians, employers and volunteers.
- Be an active and vocal advocate for the value of work experience, driving diverse partnerships and cross-sector engagement.
- Coordinate quality assurance checks to ensure that each host is ready to host a safe, high quality, and meaningful placement.
- Ensure all work experience projects are delivered to an exceptionally high standard, quality assuring and continuously identifying and implementing improvements.
- Line manage our 'Programmes and Work Experience Coordinator', who will work alongside you to deliver the work experience offer.
- Contribute to the development and enhancement of Spark!'s programmes, through pro-active knowledge sharing and feedback.
- Represent Spark! professionally to beneficiaries, partners and other stakeholders.
- Maintain and continuously improve effective administrative systems and processes in order to maximise organisational efficiency.
- Support your own growth and professional improvement by taking part in professional development.



"It was a lovely, wonderful, and amazing place to have work experience. The Manager and employees were very kind and respectful. Thank you Spark! for offering me work experience."

Person specification

Experience

- Experience of working on and within youth-centred programmes, preferably with an employability or careers focus.
- Experience of working with and supporting employer partners, within a purpose-based organisation, such as a charity or social enterprise.
- Experience of working directly with the education sector (preferable) or other youth facing services.
- Experience of managing multiple priorities and stakeholder relationships at any one time.
- A track record of successfully coordinating and facilitating activities with young people and volunteers.
- Experience of building creative relationships and diverse cross-sector partnerships.
- Experience of delivering engaging workshops and presentations, for young people, employers and school staff.
- A knowledge of the west London labour market (preferable)
- Line management experience (preferable)
- A background, experience, and knowledge, in one or more of the following areas:
 - Careers and employability services
 - Education sector
 - Youth work
 - Training and facilitation
 - Personal and professional development

Skills

- Adept relationship builder, with the ability to engage and energise others.
- Excellent communication skills, able to speak confidently with young people, teachers, volunteers, and senior business professionals.
- Very organised, with an attention to detail, excellent time management skills and the ability to manage multiple priorities.
- Strong group work skills, with the ability to motivate, engage and involve participants in activities.
- Able to create compelling, professional, and accessible resources and tools.
- Able to explain complex concepts in a straight-forward and accessible manner.
- Able to self-manage, staying motivated and on-task.

Attitude

- Passionate and enthusiastic about improving young people's lives.
- Highly motivated and energetic.
- Thrives in a busy and fast-paced working environment.
- Positive and solution-focussed, able to maintain a positive approach to problem solving.
- Self-assured, with a 'can-do' approach.
- Welcomes feedback, with a desire to continuously improve and develop.
- A commitment to our organisational values of empowerment, collaboration, reliability, quality, learning.

Terms and Conditions

Job title	Work Experience Manager
Reports to	Head of Workplace Experience
Line management	Programmes and Work Experience Coordinator
Salary	£37,325 per annum
Contract	Full time, permanent
Benefits	28 days leave (inc. 3 days between Christmas and New Year) 6% matched pension contributions (after 3 months) Flexible working Life insurance Canada Life WeCare employee support package
Location	Our office is based in Brentford, London, and while remote-working is supported, some office-based work is necessary as well as visits to schools and businesses. Our work is primarily focussed across west London.

Diversity and Inclusion

We are committed to cultivating a fair and inclusive working environment, where everyone can be themselves and thrive. We actively encourage applications from people from black and minority ethnic communities, LGBTQ+ people, and people with disabilities, and those with lived experience.

We support flexible working and encourage a work from anywhere approach, although some office and site-based work will be required for this position.

How to Apply

Please apply by submitting a CV and covering letter, of no more than 2 sides of A4, explaining your motivation for applying and how you fulfil the role specification. Send it to georgiaford@sparkcharity.org.uk.

Application deadline

9am, Monday 16th October 2023

Interviews

Interviews will take place during the week of the 23rd October 2023.

Any questions?

Our Head of Workplace Experience, Georgia Ford, would be happy to respond to any questions you might have about Spark! and this role. You can e-mail her on georgiaford@sparkcharity.org.uk.

A selection of our hundreds of recent employer partners



A selection of our dozens of school partners



Some numbers from our last year (2022/23)

3287

young people on a Spark! programme and activity

61

schools and colleges participated in a Spark! programme

784

young people matched with a career mentor or work placement

369

local employers engaged as partners

774

volunteers supported delivery of activities and events

14,877

hours of volunteering given

89%

of young people would recommend Spark! work experience

85%

of young people state that they feel more prepared for work

98%

of young people would recommend a Spark! Career Mentor



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