# Faith Community Development Worker

## Background

This role will play a critical role in developing a Derby Faith Alliance whose vision is a city where the diversity, expertise and richness of faith communities actively contributes to the building of vibrant, resilient, green, and growing neighbourhoods.

Local Authorities and Central Government increasingly recognise the role faith-based organisations play in the resilience of communities and the importance of working collaboratively with them to respond to societal issues such as Health Inequalities, Poverty, Social Justice, and Crime & Community Safety.

National research acknowledges the significant contribution of faith groups and has brought into sharp focus the marked increase in scale and innovation of their work during the pandemic, but also places them in the centre of our post COVID recovery and rebuilding of civil society as part of a faith ‘new deal’.

This is reinforced by the work that the Multi Faith Centre and its partners have been doing to understand the local picture.

Our work has highlighted new experiences of collaboration and partnership across the city and pointed towards changing relationships between faith organisations and local authorities, and what the implications might be for future policy. We have also learned that there is a desire amongst faith communities to organise and act strategically and a willingness to be active partners in the city’s recovery and renewal, but more needs to be done to support and develop partnership and collaboration.

Building on the momentum built over the last two years, a Faiths Steering Group has been established. This group includes representatives from Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Jewish, and Christian faith communities along with Community Action Derby and Derby City Council’s community development team. The group is chaired by the Very Revd Peter Robinson, Dean of Derby.

Together we are developing a faith alliance or equivalent body to enable the faith sector to organise and act strategically as a valued partner in the city’s post-COVID19 recovery and beyond. The group is bringing forward proposals to ensure broad representation and diversity of membership to ensure all faiths are engaged.

Given that a strength of faith communities is its hyper-local approach and its experience of working with the need of the most challenged communities, we believe that the sector is a huge, but under resourced asset to the city that can, if supported appropriately, be an effective partner in the Levelling Up agenda and meeting the needs of local people.

## Job Description

Salary: £27,500

Full-time role, 37.5 hours per week, fixed term for 12-months.

Reporting to: Director of Multi Faith Centre, who convenes the city’s Faith Steering Group.

The Faith Steering Group is mandated by Derby's Stronger Communities Board to bring forward proposals for developing the city’s faith infrastructure and a Faith Forum through which the sector can organise and act strategically.

### Role Summary

The Faith Community Development Worker will play a key role in developing partnerships and engagement activity, building sustainable relationships with faith communities across Derby. They will support the development of inclusive faith networks and infrastructure, using a community development approach.

We are looking for someone with demonstrable experience in the following areas:

* Leading and delivering effective community organising and engagement strategies within faith communities and neighbourhoods across Derby.
* Creating stakeholder engagement plans using a range of tools and approaches.
* Exceptional networking, influencing and negotiation skills, with ability to forge relationships in situations where divergent views exist.
* Understanding of culturally competent approaches and the importance of building equitable plans for engagement.
* Designing community participation approaches which position local faith communities at the heart of leading change.
* Knowledge and understanding of the Faith and VCS sectors and grassroots organisations.

### Responsibilities

* To prioritise those communities who are under-represented and unengaged, undertake outreach to build relationships and engagement across the city’s diverse faith communities.
* To audit faith community assets to show baseline intelligence of the number, geography, contacts database, size of congregation, physical assets and networks, and community / neighbourhood needs and priorities.
* To create an up-to-date database, with necessary GDPR permissions to enable future faith community engagement, consultation, and co-production.
* To encourage the participation of faith organisations, communities, and places of worship in consultation and co-production opportunities.
* To assist with identifying opportunities to work collaboratively and in partnership with other faith communities to identify and meet the needs of local neighbourhoods.
* To support and strengthen faith community infrastructure, including work with local authorities, community organisations and networks.
* In response to identified priorities, support the development of community initiatives, helping to get new partnerships and projects off the ground.
* To work with local faith sector co-producing projects to support local identified needs.
* Support the development of faith community-led projects and new faith community groups as appropriate.
* Support local faith groups to create new opportunities for community involvement and social action.
* Pro-actively engage with a wide range of stakeholders and deliver engagement, consultation and co-production activities across the city.
* Support the development of innovative approaches to engagement of faith communities in civic society across Derby.
* Build strong, effective, and sustainable relationships with faith communities and partner organisations with shared purpose for positive community development.
* Share good community development practice with faith communities, practitioners and council representatives.
* Attend any relevant community groups, forums and networks and network in relation to faith community development / engagement and share relevant learning.
* Support and contribute ideas in the development of the city’s Faith Steering Group and faith infrastructure to achieve objectives that benefit communities and neighbourhoods.
* Work with the Faith Steering Group, faith communities and local authority stakeholders to assist with securing external funding for the development of faith infrastructure and project work.
* Support the work of the Faith Steering Group, assisting with collation and circulation of notes when required.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

The ideal candidate will be able to demonstrate the specifications listed below. Applications are welcomed from candidates who can demonstrate a good range of these specifications.

### SKILLS

* Ability to interact with culturally diverse communities in a manner which inspires trust and confidence.
* Ability to express oneself effectively, verbally and in writing, at a range of levels and with a variety of partners and stakeholders.
* Ability to maintain effective work relationships and a positive attitude towards collaborative work with peers, colleagues, and other professionals.
* Ability to organise, plan and prioritise using own initiative, including when under pressure and meeting deadlines.
* Ability to lead and complete work.
* Knowledge and ability in the use of I.T. systems.
* Ability to produce high quality written reports.

### EXPERIENCE and KNOWLEDGE

* Experience of working in a community development environment.
* Experience of co-production with community groups
* Experience of planning and leading group activities for community and neighbourhood groups.
* Experience working in the field with culturally diverse communities and/or faith communities.
* Experience in assessing and reviewing support needs and creating strengths-based support plans.
* Experience and skills in project development, monitoring, evaluation and data collection.
* Experience of building relationships and working in partnership with a variety of organisations and individuals.
* Understanding of the inequalities that exist within the city of Derby.
* Understanding of the wider determinants of health and wellbeing.
* Conversant with safeguarding procedures.

### ATTRIBUTES

* Self-motivated but able to work as part of a team.
* Energetic
* Commitment to inclusivity, equality and diversity
* Accepting of supervisory guidance and advice.
* Car driver, access to car or full access to equivalent transport.
* Ability to work flexible hours, including evenings and weekends.
* Smart/casual appearance appropriate to the occasion.

### How to apply

We hope that you will consider making an application. If you have any questions about the appointment and would like to have an informal conversation, please contact the Director, Geoff Sweeney on [g.sweeney@derby.ac.uk](mailto:g.sweeney@derby.ac.uk) who will arrange a call.

To apply please send a CV (not more than three sides) plus a short covering letter outlining your motivation and how you meet the requirements to [g.sweeney@derby.ac.uk](mailto:g.sweeney@derby.ac.uk)

**Closing date Thursday 22nd September 2022**

**Interviews Thursday 29th September 2022**