

## **Voluntary Youth Manchester (VYM): PAID Research Role**

Voluntary Youth Manchester is seeking a researcher to research into our current membership and to create recommendations for VYM's activity and structure for the next three years.

This role is suitable for someone freelance or as a paid secondment from another organisation.

### **About us:**

Voluntary Youth Manchester is an independent, inclusive network of small to medium size organisations (neighbourhood based and city-wide) that work with young people and the communities who support them. The activities of the network are also open to Manchester-based staff in projects linked to larger organisations. With our roots in the practice and values of youth and community work, Voluntary Youth Manchester offers a positive collaborative experience for organisations in the voluntary, community and faith sector developing work with young people during their transition from childhood to adulthood. We seek to work in partnership with others who support young people.

The work of VYM encompasses:

- Independent Network – Mutual support together, regular information bulletins and website updates; sharing practice issues, learning together, identifying trends and generating knowledge rooted in the experience of young people and the organisations which support them.
- Capacity Building – Grassroots self-education, training, policy and practice development, rooted in dialogue and relationship with young people, and in an informal and empowering practice of support and education, open to all; partnering with other Manchester infrastructure organisations to strengthen practice and increase capacity and resources.
- Strategic influence – drawing on the knowledge generated from the grassroots, both in the city and beyond to: develop a powerful democratic voice in the City; provide representation at key meetings; encourage collective action; respond to policy initiatives.

VYM has no current staff members and is delivered by an action group of volunteers and trustees made up from people within the sector.

Since November 2016 VYM members have been undertaking a review of the Network with meetings and conversations across sector on future purpose and activities. These conversations have looked at the purpose and structure of VYM meetings, and have created a new structure and terms of reference for membership.

Our membership comprises of 156 members from 132 different organisations. This is a loose affiliation with no formal application process currently.

**For this research we want to explore:**

1. Who are VYM's membership e.g. Are they joining as individuals or as an organisation?
2. What is the make-up of staff and volunteers in our member organisations e.g. what qualifications do they have and what backgrounds are they from?
3. Are we reaching all the sector, and if not, where are the gaps?
4. What does our membership want from VYM?
5. Why do they want it from VYM and not other providers?
6. What have been the benefits/drawbacks of VYM membership in the past?
7. What they can put into VYM (time, money, resources or expertise)?
8. What should VYM Network prioritise in our 3 year plan 2018-2021?
9. What should our structure be like to support our functions?

Some points of consultation may include ways we can partner together to bring in and share resources such as:

- training opportunities
- action learning sets
- organisational policies
- premises
- staff
- consortium funding

We are also keen to explore ways we can work together to keep young people's voices at the heart of Devo-Manchester plans and ways we can ensure young people's priorities influence people in power, helping decision makers make better decisions about supporting young people's futures.

We envisage a desk top review of other data e.g. The State of the Sector research by the local infrastructure organisation MACC. We then see the consultation as a combination of questionnaires, phone calls and meetings to be able to engage a significant number of the membership.

We would like an end of research report, including recommendations, a list of current members and their email addresses, and a list of any new suggestions of members.

If you are interested in this role please send us your CV and a proposal of how you will undertake this task (no more than 2-sides of A4)

Please email this to to [voluntaryyouthmanchester@gmail.com](mailto:voluntaryyouthmanchester@gmail.com)

Applications Deadline: 13<sup>th</sup> August

Shortlisting: 15<sup>th</sup> August

Selection Interviews: 24<sup>th</sup> August 2-5pm

Start Date: September 2017

End Date: 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017

Total value of this contract is £1000 including all related costs.

**Our thanks go to Forever Manchester for funding this project.**