

Adviser – Community Ownership Support Service

Job Description & Person Specification

Post	Adviser – Community Ownership Support Service
Location	This post will cover the Highlands & Islands and North East – office based in Inverness with the option for some home working.
Responsible to	Head of Community Ownership
Salary Range	£36,294 - £38,224 + pension (currently 11.5% employer contribution) The expectation is that we appoint at the entry level of the salary scale unless there are exceptional circumstances.
Length of Contract	Permanent – subject to ongoing programme funding
Hours	Full-time (35 hours) or Part-time (21 hours). We will also consider a secondment for this post. No overtime paid, but time off in lieu may be taken as appropriate
Leave entitlement	25 days p/a plus public holidays – pro rata
Probationary period	3 months
Closing Date	Monday 12 th February 2024
Interviews	

About the Development Trusts Association Scotland (DTAS)

The [Development Trusts Association Scotland](#) supports a developing membership of over 350 development trusts, making it one of Scotland’s largest and most dynamic community-led regeneration networks.

Development trusts are community-owned and led organisations, working to combine community-led action with an enterprising approach to address local needs. The aim of development trusts is to create social, economic and environmental renewal in a defined geographic area, creating wealth within that area and keeping it there.

The [Community Ownership Support Service](#), hosted by the Development Trusts Association Scotland, is funded by the Scottish Government to support community groups, local authorities, other public bodies in the sustainable transfer of assets into community ownership.

Job Description

This COSS Adviser post, covering the Highlands and Island and North East of Scotland will provide a range of services for communities from one-to-one advice at every stage of the asset

transfer process, access to Expert Help, networking and training opportunities. Support will also be provided to public bodies including information and feedback on asset transfer processes, facilitating cross departmental meetings and providing ongoing CPD workshops on community ownership.

Summary of main tasks

Community Organisations:

- Respond to enquiries from community organisations interested in acquiring or taking on assets, providing information and advice, as appropriate
- Assist organisations assess viability of proposed acquisitions; assisting with options appraisals and early-stage feasibility; provide developmental and business support
- Provide a critical friend role with community organisations with regard to business plans, funding applications, etc
- Provide facilitation / brokerage role between community organisation and relevant authority in reaching agreement on asset transfer.
- Assist community organisations access legal and other technical advice and support
- Attend and speak at relevant public meetings and board / management committee meetings
- Tap into relevant resources, providing access to support or training opportunities and signposting to other relevant agencies
- Identify and analyse barriers to communities progressing and seek opportunities to facilitate change
- Encourage and support the sharing of learning and information

Public Bodies

- Promote the service with public bodies and encourage uptake / engagement with asset transfer
- Develop relationships with public bodies; identifying and supporting asset transfer 'champions'
- Field enquiries from staff in public bodies, local authority officers and Elected Members re asset transfer
- Respond appropriately to requests for information and support regarding the development or review of asset transfer strategies and processes
- Encourage and support the development and improvement of asset transfer practice and provide information and support to relevant authorities

- Deliver training to Elected Members or Officers (departmental or inter-departmental)
- Encourage and facilitate peer support across relevant authorities on asset transfer

General

- Assist with the organisation and where appropriate the delivery of training events, seminars and conferences
- Maintain up-to-date and accurate records within the DTAS / COSS information systems for both internal operational use and to support the provision of reports to funders and other stakeholders
- Foster strong working relationships with key regional and national public agencies
- Contribute to the development of new information sheets and practical resources
- Contribute to earned income activities as appropriate, including the delivery of paid training, appropriate consultancy activities and participation in delivery of relevant programmes
- Carry out other activities in line with current and future operational policies of COSS and undertake any other duties relevant to the post.
- Promote the Community Ownership Support Service, DTA Scotland and where appropriate, the development trust approach.

Person Specification

		Essential or Desirable
Qualifications	Qualification to degree level or equivalent	E
Practical Experience	Providing business planning or financial or operational and governance advice to organisations at different stages of their development	E
	Experience of income generation and fundraising	D
	Mentoring organisations/ groups through the various stages of their development	D
	Working in partnership with a wide range of other organisations, including public bodies	E
	Organising/ managing events	D
Knowledge	Experience of the community-based regeneration sector	D
	Experience / knowledge of the relevant Community Ownership/ Land Reform policy and legislative framework	D
Skills	Excellent verbal and written communication skills	E
	Strong presentational skills and the confidence to represent COSS in external stakeholder forums	D
	Ability to work proactively and professionally to deliver a work programme	E
	Strong IT skills including Microsoft Office	E
	Ability to work well as a team	E
Personal Attributes	A strong commitment to development trusts and community-led enterprise	D
	Self-motivated, able to work unsupervised, to take the initiative and meet deadlines	E
	Highly organised with good time management	E
	Ability and willingness to travel throughout the country	E
	Willing to work some evenings and weekends with occasional overnight stays	E

To Apply for the Post:

If you are keen to be considered for this opportunity, please email kay@dtascot.org.uk with your CV and a covering letter detailing your reasons for applying and specific experience to match the criteria above by no later than 12 noon on Monday 12th February 2024.

If you have any questions regarding your application, please contact linda@dtascot.org.uk.

DTAS is committed to a policy of equality & diversity.

We take the collection and use of your data seriously, please see link to the [DTAS Recruitment Privacy Statement](#)

This position is funded by:



Background information:

The [Community Ownership Support Service](#), delivered by the Development Trusts Association Scotland, is funded by the Scottish Government to support local authorities, other public bodies and communities in the sustainable transfer of assets into community ownership. This adviser-led service covers Scotland, providing a range of services for communities from one-to-one advice at every stage of the asset transfer process, access to Expert Help, networking and training opportunities and access to a comprehensive web resource. The support provided to public bodies includes providing information and feedback on asset transfer processes, facilitating cross departmental meetings and providing ongoing CPD workshops on community ownership.

With the enactment of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016, community ownership is increasingly being recognised as a powerful tool in developing strong, independent and resilient communities. This was particularly true during COVID where asset owning community anchor organisations were seen to have played a key role in the resilience of their communities throughout the pandemic.

With tightening public spending the opportunities to take on publicly owned assets has never been greater. Community ownership and management of assets is not however without its challenges. There is a real need to support community groups through the asset transfer process from forming appropriate governance structures, building their capacity and crucially developing sustainable operating models that will support their facilities into the future.

The COSS team comes from a wide range of backgrounds including community development, training and development, business and regeneration. For this post we are happy to consider applicants with experience of community development or business development and/ or finance; either as an adviser or with practical experience of developing community enterprises.