

## **Digital Presence Project with Crossroads Community Hub-Ayrshire Food Hub (Furlough Volunteer Role)**

**Location: Remote working from home**

**Furlough Volunteer Post**

**Immediate start**

**Hours to be negotiated**

**Apply by 31<sup>st</sup> July**

**Important: this initiative is a not-for-profit organisation, and this role would ideally suit a person who is currently furloughed from their regular employment. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme states that furloughed workers may volunteer their time and skills to projects such as this one.**

**Please note that the application process for this and other volunteering opportunity is slightly different from our usual form. See "Application" section below.**

### **The Organisation**

“Crossroads Community Hub (CCH) formed in 2011, following the closure and demolition of the local rural primary school. At the heart of the project is the Hub building which we have raised £1.3million to build on the derelict site of the school commencing March 2019. The Hub will provide a focal point for the rural community (25,000) which is dispersed in 10 small towns and rural hinterlands, formerly home of thriving mining, lace and agricultural industries. Our Hub will be different from a standard community centre. In addition to a multi-use hall it will house a unique combination of a training kitchen, a farm shop, and community café and have a major focus on local food. Operational seven days a week, local people will benefit through new jobs, training and volunteering opportunities

Through our combined research, community consultations and current work in the community, we have identified six areas of need where our hub building and associated activities could have a significant impact:

1. Empower our community
2. Reduce isolation and social exclusion
3. Create new opportunities for business and employment
4. Create opportunities for lifelong learning and development
5. Tackle food poverty and deprivation
6. Improve overall health and wellbeing

The impact of our current outreach service is being carefully monitored and evaluated leading up to Hub opening. Our grant-funded members of staff and volunteers facilitate and evaluate cooking, gardening, social and peer support initiatives in advance of the Hub being built, with all activities being extended into the new facility when open.

Our Community Food Workers facilitate cooking classes for all ages, with many sessions running within Early Education Centres/Nurseries, Primary Schools and Community Groups. Classes bring children and their guardians together through the medium of food and support them to develop cooking skills, increase consumption of healthy home cooked food and improve their overall health and well-being. In addition to all classes and training activities Foodworkers facilitate

Fareshare distribution from two sites twice weekly. We supply fresh produce to the East Ayrshire foodbank and supplement their emergency food parcels with wholesome fresh produce/meals. The Darvel Hub had a busy calendar of weekly and ad-hoc events, including: Cooking and Zero Waste classes for all ages and abilities. Curious Kids classes run during the school holidays: children ranging from 4 to 14 attended fun classes on growing, cooking and the environment.

We facilitate and host many groups including: Peer support for physical and mental health; Mums and Bubs parenting support, Men's traditional gaming nights, Male youth traditional gaming nights, Arts and Crafts groups, Weekly free lunch club. We host Touched by Suicide, Home Energy Scotland at the facility.

Our food workers continue to strengthen our partnership objectives with the above groups and actively promote our food classes, Love Food Hate Waste, Re-use Recycle, craft groups and local food taster sessions throughout the catchment area.

Our Community Gardeners manage a network of Edible Bed sites (raised beds) where they support organisations to build, sow and maintain raised beds that produce fresh vegetables available for their community. Have partners in many schools, nurseries, a residential home, a sports center (development Trust). They work with the Community Justice (Community Pay back team) offering valuable time to support the volunteers at each site while developing new skills in gardening and growing.

We are currently working with NHS Health Improvement Team to develop further sites at HMP Kilmarnock and Cumnock Community Hospital. This project has attracted volunteers who offer a wealth of experience in horticulture and have openly said that they personally experienced positive rewards from their voluntary engagement with the project and our community.

Staggered sowing has allowed multiple harvesting periods to ensure that local beneficiaries are able to source fresh produce at regular intervals while reducing gluts or waste produce. Harvesting has also provided many social activities where Community Food Workers provide on-site cooking demonstrations with the fresh produce, and where volunteers, staff and residents can enjoy a wholesome meal.

Our response to the Covid-19 transitioned smoothly as we use the medium of food in developing each project initiative. Our goal is quite simple; Our staff skills and experience have helped to produce over 10,000 fresh and nutritious meals at our Darvel Hub during a 12 week period.

Meals are distributed by our partners, which, collectively, cover both urban and rural East Ayrshire. The partners, including East Ayrshire (EA) Vibrant Communities Teams, EA CVO Foodbank and Local Response Groups will receive staggered supplies, daily, twice-weekly or weekly dependent on need/geography, ensuring that individuals and families affected by the Covid-19 outbreak have access to fresh food supplies whilst reducing the risk for duplication of service provision thereby maximising supply where needed most.

Our Community Gardeners have secured facilities within our Edible Bed partners closed sites and are planting fast growing vegetables. Staggered sowing will ensure that a steady supply of potatoes, carrots, onions, cabbage, lettuce will be available for the community and also supplement our continuing food production, They will also grow tomatoes, peas, spinach, garlic etc which have been harvesting since late June.

While this vital work continues we are also looking forward to the opening of our new community facility, the Ayrshire Food Hub, during November, and, due to our focus on emergency food provision, we are sadly lacking the resources to market our exciting community facility effectively

## **The Role**

During these challenging times Crossroads Community Hub has suspended our public-facing activities whilst maintaining staff for emergency food provision activities. Our construction project ceased and has only recently re-commenced.

As we approach the opening of the new facility it is vital that the success stories Crossroads Community Hub generates are collated and shared in a way that helps demonstrate the massive social value and impact the organisation delivers. We also face the challenge of delivering a new model with income-generating activities within the new facility, and potentially, prior to the opening

Therefore, support is requested to develop digital and non-digital content for current and future use so that the Ayrshire Food Hub can be more visible to its stakeholders and the wider public. Help to develop a structured strategy for the use of this content and the appropriate channels to use to do so will also be appreciated.

## **Requirements:**

**Important - this initiative is a not-for-profit organisation, and this role would ideally suit a person who is currently furloughed from their regular**

**employment. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme states that furloughed workers may volunteer their time and skills to non-revenue generating projects, such as ESR.**

You will suit this role if you love sharing stories of real social value (and a love of food, family and our environment) and have an interest in how organisations can support individuals, families, small businesses and the local community, having a real impact on quality of life and future prospects.

You'll be organised in your approach to gathering and disseminating information, and able to take the initiative but have the judgement to ask questions when necessary. You'll also be able to demonstrate the following:

- Exceptional level of verbal and written English
- Firm knowledge of digital marketing methodology
- Creative graphic design skills
- Strong copywriting skills
- Ability to quickly develop a deep understanding of what the organisation does
- Inquisitive nature, not afraid to ask questions
- A strong desire to support community engagement during lockdown and going forward
- Empathy and emotional intelligence galore

You should be comfortable with being able to commit to the hours you agree to volunteer to support the organisation.

**If you have any questions about this role or the organisation please contact [team@aai-employability.org.uk](mailto:team@aai-employability.org.uk). Please do not under any circumstances contact the employer directly as their capacity is currently over-stretched.**

#### **Application:**

We understand that as a furloughed worker, you may not have an up-to-date CV. We will therefore accept a CV or a LinkedIn profile (send us a link). In addition, please forward a short cover letter explaining your interest in the role, your skills and your recent employment history. Send in an email, titled **Digital Presence Project with Crossroads Community Hub** to [jobs@aai-employability.org.uk](mailto:jobs@aai-employability.org.uk) (opens in new tab) **by 31/07/2020.**

Suitable candidates will be invited to a Skype call to discuss the role and the work of Crossroads Community Hub-Ayrshire Food Hub in more detail.

Please feel welcome to share this with anyone who might be interested!