

Sessional Activities Assistant - Background information

About the Stuart Low Trust

The Stuart Low Trust (SLT) exists to provide support adults living in Islington and surrounding boroughs who experiencing mental health issues and socially isolated. SLT was set up in 1997 by Islington residents in memory of Stuart Low, who took his own life aged 27, when he couldn't find the right help at the right time. SLT aims to fill a service gap which continues, so that local people have quick access to community-based activity support groups.

We create safe, inclusive and welcoming spaces to reduce social isolation and stigma, by building resilience, mental wellbeing and coping skills. Through outcomes evaluation surveys completed at sessions, 90% participants report improved wellbeing at the end of the sessions. SLT is uniquely:

- **accessible** by offering support at times of increased risk from isolation at evenings and weekends.
- **inclusive** by avoiding the complex eligibility criteria of publicly-funded services.
- **community-embedded** by running all activities in collaboration with community partners.

About the SLT staff team

SLT is a small charity with 7 core staff and a current team of 6 sessional staff, who support the running of events and activities. In addition, 6-7 session leaders specialise in delivering nature, arts or wellbeing sessions, such as yoga, mindfulness and dance. SLT's core approach is also to work in partnership with community organisations which provide the expertise to run some of our programmes, including a local art gallery, local charities and a community farm.

A team of around 30 volunteers assist at activities and events, recruited and inducted by our Volunteer Support Manager, Hayley Page. At Friday events, the volunteer team is directly supervised onsite by Volunteer Supervisor Elisha Glace.

The sessional team are supervised and supported by Katy Connell, our experienced Sessional Team Leader. Sessional staff meet Katy once per month for a team meeting and every two months for 1:1 supervision, plus support in between as needed. In the sessional team, there are two other Hosts, who lead our Friday Evening Events. Currently, three sessional staff assist at Friday Evening Events and at our weekend activities via a rota mutually agreed with our Programmes Manager at least 3 months in advance.

About your role

The Sessional Activities Assistant role will help with the running of following three activities, encouraging and enabling participants to connect socially with other participants wherever possible. Three detailed job descriptions in our recruitment pack explain all the tasks to be completed for each role in a practical timetable:

- **Friday Evening Events** - Friday evening events run fortnightly on a drop-in basis at office-based venue the Jean Stokes Community Centre on the Caledonian Road and are SLT's flagship service.
- **Saturday Wellbeing Workshops** - Wellbeing Workshops run on Saturdays at Old Diorama Centre near Euston station in courses of 6 weekly sessions and support participants by providing a toolkit of coping strategies and techniques to use at home including gentle exercise, yoga, mindfulness, dance.
- **Sunday Philosophy Forum** – The Forum runs fortnightly is led by a team of volunteer facilitators under the expert guidance of philosophy graduates on Sundays at the Old Diorama Centre near Euston.

For the **Friday Evening Events**, the role is described as an 'Assistant', supporting a staff team of a Host, who leads the event, and Volunteer Supervisor, who oversees a team of volunteer helpers.

For the **Saturday Wellbeing Workshops and Sunday Philosophy Forum**, the role is described as a 'Host' as you will have sole responsibility for supervising any volunteer(s) assisting and supporting the Activity Leader of the activity, which is reflected in a higher hourly pay

About our Activity Programmes

SLT achieves our mission through delivery of free, socially therapeutic activities per annum in three holistic programmes: Arts, Nature and Wellbeing.

Nature Programme

- **Nature visits** – A programme of 18 visits to a wide variety of nature sites and activities through the seasons between March to November, including nature reserves, gardens, farms and canal walks.
- **Nature outings** – 6 Nature outings further afield, once per month April to September, including Kew Gardens and Kenwood House.

Arts Programme

- **Sunday Philosophy Forum** – As described above.
- **Art Workshops** - SLT runs fortnightly art activity workshops in partnership with and on the site of Estorick Gallery of Italian Art.
- **Art outings** – Visits have included private tours around the Neo-gothic mansion Two Temple Place, the British Museum and the Museum of London.
- **Choir** - The Choir runs at St Luke's Community Centre in South Islington.

Wellbeing Programme

- **Friday Evening Events** - As described above.
- **Saturday Wellbeing Workshops** - As described above.

Maximum attendance for most sessions is 12 participants, who must register with SLT and book on activities in advance. Friday events have regular attendance of 20-40 participants. All participants must abide by our Code of Conduct.

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