

RECRUITMENT PACK



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#SharedReading

The Mansion House,
Calderstones Park
Liverpool
L18 3JB

r The
Reader

About The Reader

"Who knew that reading – which I was told was a solitary affair – could bring people together in the same way that a book can bring a reader to the world?"

Lemn Sissay

The Reader is a national charity that wants to bring about a Reading Revolution so that everyone can experience and enjoy great literature, which we believe is a tool for helping humans survive and live well. By reading with school groups, families, adults, looked after children, older people in care homes, adults with physical and / or mental health conditions, people coping with or recovering from addiction and individuals in the criminal justice system, our work is helping to improve wellbeing, reduce isolation and build stronger communities.



Shared Reading is a powerful group experience that brings literature to life. A group of two or more people – one of them a trained Reader Leader – meet, usually weekly, and read great novels, poetry, plays or other literary matter, aloud. It's not a course, it's not a book club.



Reading the literature aloud, sharing it in real time, means that everyone is involved in a live experience.

Our Vision is of a world in which everyone has 'something real to carry home when day is done'.

Our Mission is to bring about a reading revolution so that everyone can experience and enjoy great literature, which we believe is a tool for helping humans survive and live well. Everything we do – from our Shared Reading groups to our social enterprises, from our publications to The Storybarn at Calderstones – brings people together and books to life to make this happen.

The Reader At Calderstones

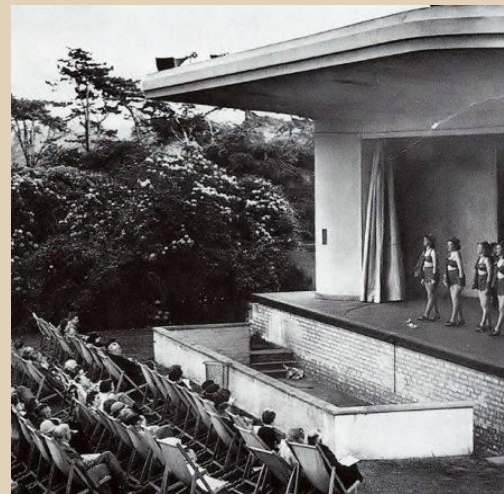
Our Head Office is based in the Mansion House in Liverpool's Calderstones Park.

With the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Liverpool City Council (LCC) and grant funders, The Reader has transformed the Grade II listed Mansion House in Calderstones Park into an international flagship project for Shared Reading, a model reading community, which opened in September 2019.

The Reader at Calderstones offers a working model of a community that has literature, art, heritage, wellbeing activities, food and fun at its heart. It's the first community of its kind in the UK and indeed, the world - a place where everyone can come to find something real to take home at the end of the day.

The Reader at Calderstones is home to the Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company's social enterprises, the Reader Café, the Ice Cream Parlour and the Storybarn, our imaginative play space, which generate income to support our charitable work. The Storybarn welcomes 6,000 children and family members and 74 schools and 3000 pupils, inspired by a lifelong love of reading for pleasure.

This a place unlike any other, where everyone is welcome, and where anyone can come to experience literature, find and share meaning, be nourished, develop new skills and explore creativity.



What our staff say

"The overall friendly vibe in the office, the teamwork and culture of helping each other out, the focus on staff members as individuals and the culture of empathy and kindness that working with literature fosters - it is the nicest place I have ever worked"

Employee Survey, November 2019

"The Reader staff are a warm, generous and supportive team. A real cliché but it really does feel like one big family where everyone has your back"

Employee Survey, November 2019

Shared Reading Reach

People who took part in Shared Reading activities told us:



94% said it *"makes me feel better"*



89% said it *"helps me connect with others in a different way"*

*Feedback from our Community Survey, September 2020
– 351 individuals surveyed, response rate 84%*

Our Impact

We regularly capture the impact that Shared Reading has on readers and volunteers, on children and adults, in prisons, in health and social care and in the community. These stories inspire us to do more to help people build deeper connections with each other, and themselves.



719

groups and 1:1 readings
taken place between
2019-2020



28,154

beneficiaries engaged
with our activities



13,766

beneficiaries reached
through Shared Reading
activities

Thanks to the support of the players of the People's Postcode Lottery, we're making important investments in our people, systems and processes that enable our work to thrive.

- We've transformed the way we deliver Shared Reading under the banner 'The Reader at Home', bringing the connection and comfort of great literature to new and existing audiences in need of wellbeing support, distraction and meaning during Covid.
- We've created and curated over 100 pieces of digital reading content and grown our followers on Facebook by 50%.
- We were awarded the Investors in Volunteers standard in recognition of the quality of our volunteer support.
- We've improved the digital support we offer volunteers with the soft launch of a new online community hub which includes a library of over 1000 reading resources and new training videos.



Our Values

*"People are dying – it is no metaphor –
for lack of something real to carry
home when day is done."
Saul Bellow, Herzog*

Our values reflect and shape our behaviour, and guide our volunteers, staff, trustees and supporters as we work together to bring about a Reading Revolution.



We read to lead

Great literature is in our DNA, developing imagination, deepening understanding and expanding experience. Reading is also about the kind of attention and understanding we give to our actions, other people and the wider world.

We are kind but bold

Through kindness we inspire ourselves, and others, to do more than we might have thought possible, always aiming for encouragement and trust. But we are bold, too, in saying what we mean as clearly as we can.

We make our own pattern in the world

We don't simply do as others do, we try to work out what is good and right, and do that. We value innovation, foresight and bold ideas in every part of our organisation.

We learn from experience and we learn through our mistakes

We're not afraid of owning our mistakes: understanding them helps us grow. We try to be creative in difficult situations, lively-minded and willing to learn.

We love The Reader and take responsibility for it

Everyone at The Reader is The Reader. We each take responsibility for making The Reader as good as it can be: we pick up the rubbish, speak up when we've made a mistake, notice and try to fix the glitches.

*visioning a world
where none is lonely, none hunted, alien,
this man, superb in love and logic, this man
shall be remembered.*

From *Frederick Douglass*
by Robert Hayden

Belonging at The Reader

Our diversity, equality and inclusion statement



In a nearly twenty-year history of developing Shared Reading groups, The Reader has created thousands of warm and welcoming spaces where all comers are seen and, when they choose to speak, heard.

We consciously work to build the same warm and welcoming feeling, the feeling of belonging, in our workplace. Kindness is one of our values and it helps us care about how we treat each other, always aiming for encouragement, openness and trust.

We use our values to try to ensure The Reader is a thoughtful environment, and we ask all colleagues to be bold, building an environment where all needs and concerns can be raised, listened to, and when possible acted upon. So we'll ask you to tell us if you have any specific needs or if there are things we can do to make you feel more at ease.

One of our values is 'we make our own pattern in the world' and we do that by appointing the best candidate to the role. Current employees and applicants for jobs will always be considered on their abilities and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of age, caring responsibilities, colour, disability, employment status, gender, gender identity, marital status, nationality, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation or socio-economic status.

In our commitment to build diversity into our teams and programmes, we are particularly keen to receive applications from people from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds; LGBTQ+; those with disabilities, those with unconventional life experience or educational background.

If you require any reasonable adjustments during our recruitment processes, including assistance with reading this page or documents linked to below, please contact jobs@thereader.org.uk



Group Lead – Criminal Justice

Hours/FTE	8.75 / 0.25 FTE
Reports to	Criminal Justice People and Projects Manager
Based	Lichfield
Contract	Fixed Term (ending 31 st March 2022)
Salary	£17,340-22,440
Closing date	Monday 21 st June, 9am

Key Responsibilities

Taking up the advertised role would require you to:

- Lead weekly Shared Reading groups in criminal justice settings: to aid the people in those environments with their personal growth, as well as, more generally, fostering reading for pleasure, wellbeing and good mental health
- Work closely with host organisation staff to plan delivery of Shared Reading groups, engaging with setting staff at all levels to build relationships with them, and together embed Shared Reading within the environment's culture and routine
- Build and maintain good relationships with prison and approved premises residents; the ability to meaningfully connect with people from all backgrounds will be needed
- Select and work with a wide range of reading material, including poetry, in order to stimulate deep reflection and free-flowing conversation, striking a balance between accessibility, complexity, and appropriateness along with sensitivity to group members
- Demonstrate the impact of Shared Reading to setting staff, including security personnel, administrators, and clinicians
- Record details of your groups and take an active role in our annual organisation-wide evaluation process will also be involved
- Feedback to key staff within the host setting and your line manager at The Reader.

- Provide on-going mentoring for Reader-trained staff in settings, including: the selection, planning and preparation of texts; observation of delivery; and feedback
- Contribute to monthly newsletters to support skills development amongst trained partner organisation staff
- Maintain a commitment to and awareness of both The Reader's policies and safeguarding requirements and those of our commissioners and funders.
- Hold responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of the children, young people and vulnerable adults you come into contact with
- Attend and contribute to staff meetings, feeding back useful information from your setting
- Work as an effective team member, participating in personal and professional development, wider organisational meetings and, as required, make written contributions for newsletters, reports, our website, and wider publications
- Take an active role and interest in the core business of The Reader which includes training others in Shared Reading techniques, communicating the work of The Reader effectively
- Fundraising activities if and as required
- Represent The Reader in public, maintaining relationships with partner agencies and ensuring positive impacts are recorded

Person Specification

Essential Criteria:

- Able to facilitate effective group work and deal with potentially distressing situations in a careful and considered manner.
- The ability to demonstrate wide range of personal reading, including poetry, demonstrate its importance and the ability to talk about it in an engaging manner, and/or a degree in English Literature.
- Comfortable with reading aloud
- Excellent IT skills – familiar with Microsoft Office Suite
- A good communicator with great speaking, listening, relationship building and writing skills
- Able to work in a peripatetic style
- Committed to The Reader's beliefs and values
- Self-motivated and able to work unsupervised
- For those settings which are not easily accessible by public transport, a current driving licence and own transport
- Prison security clearance and/or fully enhanced DBS check

Desirable Criteria:

- Understanding of the problems of engaging people who think books are not for them.
- Experience in comparable environments
- Ability to engage with reflective practice concerning your own and others' emotional lives, including the provision of focused feedback and/or delivering training packages

Training in Shared Reading and Safeguarding practice will be provided.

****You must be willing to undergo a fully enhanced DBS check (and obtain full prison clearance, where settings require). If you do not have this at the point of application, this can be arranged. All job offers will be subject to obtaining this clearance.**

Employee Benefits

- 30 days leave allowance a year plus bank holidays (pro rata dependent on FTE)
- Employer Pension Scheme – Auto enrollment begins three months after start date. Payments are matched 4% on auto enrollment scheme and 6% on standard scheme by The Reader.
- Flexible working policy (44% of staff work flexibly, *January 2021*)
- Opportunities for personal development, including external training
- Head Office based within Calderstones Park
- All employees have access to an Employee Assistance Programme with Health Assured
- Four employees are Mental Health First Aid Champions being able to provide advice to staff

Pre-Employment Checks

- All employment offers are conditional upon receipt of two satisfactory professional references. Referees will be sought from an applicant once an offer of employment is made and referees will not be approached without the applicant's permission.
- All contract types are subject to a probationary period of 6 months.
- Where necessary and appropriate for the role, a relevant DBS check will be undertaken as part of the onboarding process.

How to apply

Visit www.thereader.org.uk and select the 'Get Involved Section' where you will be able to view and download an application form. Please complete the application form and submit to aurakershaw@thereader.org.uk

Equal Opportunities

We are committed to attracting diverse candidates. Applicants who meet our minimum (essential) criteria and identify as one of the following will be guaranteed an interview.

- Black and Minority Ethnic
- Disabled

Deadline for applications: 9am, Monday 21st June 2021

- NB: applications arriving after 9am will not be considered
- A high volume of applications may make replies to everyone impossible.

Selection Process

If successful at shortlisting, you will be invited to attend a panel interview. You may be required to complete a selection task at the interview if this is the case you will be informed of this prior to the interview date.

Attending the Interview

We will cover travel expenses for anyone who is not currently in a position to do so.

If you need any more information on the format of the interview, who will be interviewing, and what to expect on the day, please contact laurakershaw@thereader.org.uk.

If you have any special requirements, please let us know in advance and we will be happy to make any adjustments needed.



The Reader is supported by:



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ENGLAND**



Steve Morgan
FOUNDATION