

JOIN THE READER TEAM



WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in working with us. We hope that in return we can offer you an exciting and varied job, a career filled with purpose, development opportunities and many additional benefits.

The Reader is a national charity that uses the power of literature and reading aloud to transform lives. Everyone who works with us, regardless of their job title, plays a part in contributing to this. Our Shared Reading model brings people together to read great stories and poems - creating powerful moments of connection. In a world that feels increasingly divided, and with increased pressures on our mental health, Shared Reading offers us time and space to share what matters to us.

“Shared Reading gave me the confidence to believe in myself. I’d never experienced anything like it; just talking about what came up in our minds as we read the text. It was a small group, and nobody was trying to show off in a way that sometimes happens in academia.

It was gentle, and kind, and lovely. I thought it was amazing. I realised I didn’t need any literary experience. In fact, I didn’t need anything besides the openness to engage, connect and be present.”

Mariana
Storybarn Coordinator



We are very proud that wellbeing has been and always will be a priority here, and many of our staff stay with us for a long time because of this.

We are committed to benchmarking our salaries regularly to ensure we provide good pay in a competitive sector, offering opportunities for personal development and career progression and enabling staff to experience the life-changing benefits of Shared Reading.

We are based at the beautiful Mansion House in Calderstones Park in South Liverpool, and a nationwide charity whose values and ethos span our remote team and the communities we support. The Reader is 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. Our work is supported by a collective of commissioners, grant funders, corporate partners and individuals.

Jemma Guerrier
Managing Director



"At The Reader you are a person, you're thought of as a complete individual and your needs are taken into account. It's allowed me to 100% be myself at work."



WHAT SHARED READING DOES

"It's about feelings. It's about reading something and saying 'that's just made me feel this' - it's about connection. That's what happens in the room in between the story."

If you're new to literature or not, the impact of getting together and connecting through reading aloud, whether a book or poem, is at the heart of everything we do. In contrast to traditional reading groups, in our Shared Reading sessions the reading takes place within the groups themselves, rather than in advance. The liveness of the reading opens up space for new thoughts to emerge and new connections to be forged. We read 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.

We know that our work is helping to improve wellbeing, reduce isolation and build stronger communities. We offer the opportunity for all our staff members to experience and benefit from shared reading. It is open to all and you don't need to be academic or have previous experience with literature. You might be surprised at what shared reading can do for you too.

Katie Clark
Director of Literature



85%

say Shared Reading helps them to understand other people better

95%

say Shared Reading makes me feel better

95%

look forward to their group as an important part of their week



STAFF BENEFITS

- **Generous holiday entitlement.**
- **Holiday exchange scheme.**
- **Flexible working options including home, hybrid and remote options.**
- **A chance to experience the benefits of Shared Reading.**
- **Employee Assistance Programme.**
- **Hardship Fund.**
- **Enhancements to statutory provision for maternity / paternity and sickness absence.**
- **Beautiful head office location.**
- **Free onsite parking.**
- **Regular opportunities to visit for remote staff.**



Hear from our people in their own words about why they love working at The Reader:

"If you're looking for an employer who cares about you and your wellbeing then it's the right place."

We are extremely invested in the wellbeing of our people, particularly when it comes to mental health and vulnerability.

"There is always a very open dialogue with regards to new roles. I was encouraged to go for another role if it was out there. I was allowed to develop as I could and make my own decisions."

We are hugely supportive of career development and proactively provide opportunities for our people to develop and grow. We offer lots of different progression paths, including into other roles and departments.

"When I'm having a bad day I tell myself that I'm helping support the people who deliver those Shared Reading groups."

We are mission driven and values led. We offer company wide annual 'Think Days' where we all get together to enjoy Shared Reading.

OUR VALUES

Our values reflect and shape our behaviour and guide our volunteers, staff, trustees and supporters as we work together to bring people together and books to life.



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.



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, sex, 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

APPLICATION PROCESS

"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."



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. Where necessary and appropriate for the role, a relevant DBS check will be undertaken as part of the onboarding process.

How to apply

Visit thereader.org.uk/jobs to download an application form. Once completed, please send to laurakershaw@thereader.org.uk. Unfortunately, if we receive a high volume of applications, we may not be able to reply to everyone individually.

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, Asian and Minority Ethnic, LGBTQ+, those with disabilities, those with unconventional life experience or educational background.

Selection process

If successful at shortlisting, you will be invited to interview. There may be an informal stage for some roles, for other roles we may also ask you to complete a task ahead of or at the interview, and for some roles we will hold a second stage interview. We will keep you informed of our expectations during the process. We will provide all interview questions in advance.

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.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

HOURS/FTE: 35 hours per week / 1 FTE (Happy to discuss flexible working)

REPORTS TO: Director of Development and Communications
BASED: Calderstones Park, Liverpool, L18 3JB (Remote/hybrid working will also be considered)
CONTRACT: Permanent
SALARY: £29,870 per annum
CLOSING DATE: 9am, Monday 22nd April

About the Role and Key Responsibilities

The Business Development Manager sits in the Development Team, which is responsible for delivering income to sustain and grow The Reader's work and developing relationships that can help make that work happen. The Business Development Manager will be responsible for all commissioned income secured from NHS bodies, the criminal justice sector and from Local Authorities. These commissions may be to deliver Shared Reading in mental health settings or services, to read with those living in prison or probation settings or to deliver our Reading Heroes programme enabling us to read 1-2-1 with care experienced children.

The post holder will hold a strategic overview within this area, ensuring a coherent and joined up approach to fundraising from within the public sector. Partnership working will be instrumental in the role, progressing key relationships, seeking potential new fruitful partnership opportunities, and working collaboratively across teams.

What else can we offer you?

- Flexible Working Options including home working.
- A chance to personally experience the wellbeing benefits of Shared Reading – we do lots of reading in the workplace and you'll have the opportunity to visit our community groups and train in Shared Reading if you'd like to lead one yourself
- Generous holiday entitlement.
- Beautiful Head Office location at Calderstones Mansion House, in the middle of Calderstones Park. Here you can benefit from walking meetings in one of Liverpool's largest parks and staff discounts in our café and ice cream parlour.
- Great colleagues – you'll be working with a whole range of supportive, creative colleagues who bring insight into our digital products and their users.

Key Responsibilities

Knowledge and Skills

- To maintain a dynamic understanding of the public sector funding environment, identifying and keeping up to date with sector and market trends and new developments.
- To work collaboratively with the Partnerships team to research and identify new business opportunities – keeping abreast of commissioning growth areas and priorities, potential partnerships, products and services.
- To advise how key contacts could be reached and together with the Partnerships team, to devise, lead and manage a subsequent engagement approach.
- To shape, design and write high quality and compelling bids and well-informed funder reports or updates, using information drawn from across the organisation, including both qualitative and quantitative data.
- To put together draft product or project-specific budgets for sign off where appropriate or required, working together with our Finance team.

Project Management and Leadership

- To proactively engage and manage the senior leadership team and board of trustees in building relationships across the sector.

Communication

- To proactively map out and engage contacts from across the public sector working collaboratively with the Associate Director of Programme Delivery and the Associate Director of Communications and Marketing.
- To approach and meet new leads or prospective commissioners, providing accurate representation of The Reader's work and offer in a compelling way, whilst reflecting The Reader's ethos and values .
- To conduct meetings with funders, commissioners or partners, pitch new ideas, respond to queries or requests, and clarify needs or requirements or terms of agreement where changes may occur.
- To maintain and develop strong relationships with partners and commissioners through excellent stewardship. This includes timely updates, maintaining ongoing communication tailored to their preferences and seeking opportunities for relationship building and providing insight into the funded work.
- To maintain excellent working relationships across teams to ensure cases of funding support accurately reflect activity and to ensure all funder reporting requirements are met, regularly liaising with relevant departments to ensure key outcomes and objectives remain front of mind during the delivery of funded areas of activity.
- To work closely with the PR Manager to identify and shape promotional opportunities related to funded areas of activity, briefing them based on market insights and where relevant, liaising with funding partners to ensure all permissions are secured.

Liaison and Networking

- To proactively identify and cultivate prospective commissioners and public sector partners and networks relevant to income priorities and to build strong relationships with stakeholders to sustain long term engagement and collaboration founded on mutual benefit.
- To attend relevant events, conferences and networking activities to build awareness of The Reader's offer.

Decision Making and Freedom to Act

- To lead the strategic plan for raising funds through commissioned income, taking responsibility for meeting all income targets and for reporting against them regularly for internal and external purposes.

Planning and Organising

- To develop and deliver the long term strategy for fundraising from NHS commissioning bodies, the criminal justice sector and Local Authorities.
- Together with the Director of Development and Communications and the Associate Director of Programme Delivery, to set the annual target for public sector fundraising based on an accurate and informed income pipeline, ensuring these targets have been developed in consultation with and informed by the Director of Literature and the Head of Shared Reading Practice.
- To input into the wider development of the fundraising strategy, feeding in pipeline opportunities and projections and identifying sector trends and their potential impact on the achievement of fundraising targets.
- To develop and maintain a strong pipeline of prospective commissioners and public sector partners.
- To support the delivery of engagement and cultivation events for current and prospective funders and funding partners. This may include being an ambassador for the organisation at both internal, or external networking and engagement events.
- To ensure all activity and information is recorded on the organisation's income tracking systems and CRM, in an accurate and timely manner.
- To relay progress against projected income within trustee board reports.

Initiative and Problem Solving

- To work with all teams across the organisation to identify, develop or build new products or funding opportunities, playing a role in the development of potentially commissionable projects or areas of activity.
- To work with wider teams to refine processes and mechanisms for effective cross-organisational working where required.

Collaboration and Team Working

- To work with the Head of Evaluation to use external or internal insights, to highlight areas for attention or development, offering recommendations and potential ways forward.

- To maintain ongoing contact and liaise with teams to ensure proposed work is deliverable, within capacity and contract information is shared.
- To agree promotional strategy and activities with the Communications and Marketing department and work collaboratively alongside them on an ongoing basis.
- To identify needs of commissioning and public sector partners to ensure these are reflected in future planning and approach.
- To actively work with the rest of the Development team to share information and to develop asks or bids.
- To work with all teams across the organisation to obtain the necessary information for bids or proposals, coordinating the process

Person Specification

- Experience working in either a business development or marketing/sales role, fundraising or account management
- Excellent verbal, presentation and written communication skills with the ability to understand, interpret, and present complex information in a persuasive and accurate way for a range of audiences both internally and external
- Excellent interpersonal skills in order to understand needs of partners and build relationships.
- A proven track record of delivering to income targets with the ability to work under pressure and manage conflicting priorities.
- The ability to identify trends, think and plan strategically, shape projects or products and deliver to agreed timelines.
- An effective influencer and negotiator with a demonstrable ability to sell concepts in a clear and engaging way.
- A self-motivated, proactive and collaborative individual with a proven ability of networking, using initiative and developing new partnerships from scratch
- A team player with a positive and flexible attitude with a willingness and ability to work collaboratively with colleagues.
- Confident in dealing with budgets and costings in order to be able to present them accurately within proposals and negotiate where required.
- Familiarity with IT programmes including Word, Excel, PowerPoint
- Be able to demonstrate an understanding of, and passion for, the mission and work of The Reader and its values.

Find Out More

Visit our website

For the latest opportunities and news, along with ways you can get support the Reading Revolution and details of where to find a Shared Reading group, visit thereader.org.uk

Follow us on social media

Follow @thereaderorg on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for all the latest updates.

Drop into a group

Experience the joy of reading aloud together in a Shared Reading group - for free and for everyone. Visit the website or call 0151 729 2200 to find a group near you.

Tune into The Reader podcast

Discover what our Reading Revolution is all about and help spread the word. Listen on Spotify or Apple.



Find us @thereaderorg



The Reader is supported by:



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