



**North Tyneside Voluntary Organisations Development Agency**  
**An independent charity supporting volunteers and the Voluntary & Community Sector**

*Application information for the post of*

**Best Start Project Worker**

**Salary £27068 per annum**

**22.5 hours/week**

**This post is funded until December 2025**

**Available for immediate start**

**Additional benefits:**

Flexible working arrangements, contributory BUPA and pension scheme and generous car and cycle mileage allowance.

**Key dates:**

Closing date for completed applications: **Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March** at noon.

Interview date: **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April.**

**Interview location:**

Spirit of North Tyneside Community Hub, Second Floor, Wallsend Customer First Centre, the Forum, Wallsend, NE28 8JR

**Instructions:**

1. Please read the information in this pack carefully before completing the application form.
2. Do not include a CV, photograph, open reference, cover letter, or proof of qualifications at this stage.
3. We undertake blind shortlisting. Apart from Section One please do not include your name in any other section.
4. Please return the completed application form and optional Equality and Diversity form to [suzy.forbes@voda.org.uk](mailto:suzy.forbes@voda.org.uk)
5. If you do not hear from us within 7 days of the closing date, you should assume that your application has been unsuccessful. Please note that we do not give feedback on shortlisting.
6. Your application may be unsuccessful if you fail to answer all of the questions, if there are unexplained gaps in your work history or if you provide details of the wrong referee.
7. VODA undertakes appropriate vetting of applicants, which may include, in addition to employment references, confirmation of educational attainment and criminal record checks.

## Job Description

**Job title:** Best Start Project Worker

**Hours:** 22.5 hours per week

**Salary:** £27068

**Responsible to:** Projects and Partnerships Manager

**Job Purpose:** To deliver a project which focuses on the recruitment and co-ordination of infant feeding peer supporter volunteers in a group setting to protect, promote, normalise and support breastfeeding and promote a positive breastfeeding friendly culture in North Tyneside. This support will also focus on safe sleep, feeding, normal infant behaviour and responsive parenting. The Best Start project also aims to support more parents to initiate and sustain breastfeeding, particularly in deprived localities. In collaboration with North Tyneside Council's 0-19 Infant Feeding Team, it also aims to identify locality areas with low breastfeeding uptake and target services accordingly. The project also aims to support parents to develop close and loving relationships with their baby and support parents to develop their parenting skills and social networks.

### **Main Duties:**

#### **Volunteer Recruitment and Support**

1. To recruit, vet and induct a team of Best Start Volunteers, including creating and advertising volunteer role descriptions, meeting with potential volunteers, and carrying out and monitoring relevant background checks.
2. To support Best Start Volunteers to complete a comprehensive programme of training provided by North Tyneside Council's 0-19 Infant Feeding Team.
3. To provide ongoing support and supervision to Best Start Volunteers to support them with their own mental health or wellbeing.
4. To regularly celebrate and recognise the contribution of Best Start Volunteers.
5. Support those volunteering to be able to signpost or refer to key infant feeding resources and information as well as staff within the 0-19 Infant Feeding Team where appropriate for additional support.
6. Maintain appropriate records of volunteers in line with GDPR procedures.

#### **Programme Design and Delivery**

7. To consult with members of the local community, as well as relevant professionals, to co-design the Best Start offer, in order that it meets the needs of potential participants and does not duplicate existing services.

8. To establish and promote a programme of Best Start groups across the borough where Best Start Volunteers can use their own life experiences to help other parents. A minimum of four in person groups to be set up and one evening online group in suitable locations across North Tyneside.
9. To ensure that Best Start sessions are experienced by all participants as safe and nurturing spaces that have relationship building at the centre, whilst also ensuring appropriate risk assessments and safeguarding measures are in place by attending sessions weekly.
10. Develop a regular programme of special events, activities and information sessions specifically aimed at promoting the parent-infant relationship support. These sessions will link in with North Tyneside Council's public health programme and will include sessions such as sun safety, dental hygiene, return to work and messy play.
11. Develop a bank of resources to promote, normalise and support breastfeeding to provide a legacy for the project in the longer term. This resource would include the development of physical "breastfeeding starter packs" for those parents experiencing financial hardship, a blog of parent experiences of breastfeeding, or a web link or leaflet/brochure of useful services for signposting.

### **Accessibility**

12. To take proactive steps to increase accessibility for participants on the project aiming to support taking into consideration the various potential barriers. To identify and overcome potential barriers to involvement, including working alongside VODA's Minority Ethnic Health Development Worker to engage with communities that are the most likely to suffer from poor health.

### **Partnership Working**

13. To work in close partnership with North Tyneside Public Health's 0-19 Infant Feeding team, GP practices, health visitors, hospitals and other VCSE organisations to help us promote peer support volunteering opportunities as well as the drop in sessions to North Tyneside parents.
14. Support the UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative standards, recognising the importance of infant feeding and supporting parents to build close and loving relationships with their infant to ensure the best start in life.
15. To support Best Start Volunteers to develop positive relationships with relevant professionals to enable effective signposting and advice.
16. Participate in action learning sessions to be facilitated by North Tyneside Council.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

17. To monitor and evaluate the impact of this work in line with the requirements set out by our commission for this project, North Tyneside Council, including the creation of an outcomes measurement tool, regular feedback forms, a diverse range of case studies, attendance records, documentary photographs and lessons learned log in order to learn from what works.

18. To provide regular updates on this work to the 0-19 Infant Feeding Team at North Tyneside Council, local network meetings, strategic boards and other stakeholders in order to share learning and explore further partnership working opportunities.
19. Work with the Projects and Partnerships Manager in the collation of the monthly monitoring reports to our commissions, North Tyneside Council.

### **Marketing and Communications**

20. Develop a marketing strategy for the project to include the recruiting of volunteers and to promote sessions to participants through social media and within the wider North Tyneside community.
21. Monitor and manage the project Facebook page and WhatsApp group (and any other social media created) as well as establish a closed Facebook group for volunteers and participants to share information and support.
22. Work collaboratively with the 0-19 Infant Feeding Team and GPs and Health Visitors to promote groups within GP surgeries.
23. Look for appropriate calls for papers, networking events and conferences to share the learning from the project.

## **Person Specification**

### **Knowledge and Experience**

#### **Essential**

- Experience of recruiting and matching volunteers
- Experience of supporting volunteer activity
- Experience of working successfully with a range of partners
- Experience of developing services that are accessible and equitable
- Experience of coordinating peer support activity

#### **Desirable**

- Experience of co-designing services with others.
- Understanding of issues impacting on the health of vulnerable babies, children and families in North Tyneside.
- Understanding and knowledge of UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative standards.
- Experience of monitoring and evaluation.

### **Skills**

#### **Essential**

- Excellent communication skills.
- Good organisational skills.
- Ability to work with other organisations.
- Good computer literacy.
- Ability to listen to and communicate effectively with others
- Ability to supervise the work of others

- Ability to facilitate group activity

### **Desirable**

- Ability to identify and resolve conflict constructively
- Ability to write reports and produce other management information

### **Attitude**

The successful candidate will have:

- A commitment to the principles and practice of equality and diversity.
- A commitment to the work of voluntary and community organisations.
- A commitment to supporting volunteers to bring about positive change in their communities
- A commitment to co-production
- A commitment to the principles and practice of equality and diversity.
- A commitment to the work of voluntary and community organisations.
- A commitment to normalise breastfeeding and promote a positive breastfeeding friendly culture.
- A commitment to supporting parents to develop close and loving relationships with their baby.

## **Conditions of Employment**

- 1. Location:** North Tyneside
- 2. Salary:** £27068 for 22.5 hours/week (0.60 FTE).
- 3. Contract:** This post is funded until December 2025.
- 4. Pension:** If eligible, you will be auto enrolled into the VODA Pension Scheme.
- 5. Hours:** The post is funded for 22.5 hours per week. Office hours are 9:00 am - 5.00 pm Monday to Thursday and until 4.30 pm on Friday with a compulsory ½ hour for lunch. Your working hours will be by arrangement with your Line Manager and are likely to involve some evening and weekend working.
- 6. Holidays:** The holiday entitlement is 28 days per year increasing by one day per completed year rising to a maximum of 33 days. All holidays are pro rata for part time staff.
- 7. Maternity/Paternity:** Details of maternity/paternity leave are available.
- 8. Sick Pay:** Details of sick pay arrangements are available.
- 9. Health Scheme:** Employees are entitled to join VODA's health scheme, which is operated through BUPA.
- 10. Expenses:** Travel expenses are paid for necessary work-related journeys.
- 11. Notice:** Statutory notice periods apply.

## Background on VODA

VODA is North Tyneside Voluntary Organisations Development Agency. We value, promote and support the development of the voluntary and community sector by providing an independent, sensitive, responsive and inclusive service to achieve an active and lively community, which is rich in volunteers.

VODA has been in existence since 1993.

VODA is overseen by a Board of up to 18 Directors, who are elected by VODA members at our Annual General Meeting.

Below are VODA's main areas of work:

- Advice and support for voluntary or community organisations based in or operating in North Tyneside on a range of topics including developing a new group, fundraising, financial management, and governance.
- Information production: We keep the local voluntary sector informed about issues affecting it, producing a fortnightly ebulletin, which has around 1000 subscribers, and a quarterly newsletter, which is read by over 2000 people. We also produce information sheets and guidance for the sector.
- VODA runs the accredited Volunteer Centre for North Tyneside, raising awareness of the benefits of volunteering, recruiting, and placing volunteers with a range of voluntary, community and statutory organisations. We deliver volunteering projects including a supported volunteering project for people with enduring mental health issues and other long-term conditions.
- Training: VODA provides low cost training to meet the needs of the local voluntary and community sector.
- Networking and developing partnerships with local, regional and national organisations.
- VODA facilitates local networks including the Volunteer Network and North Tyneside VCS Chief Officers group. VODA works strategically with a range of voluntary and public sector organisations including North Tyneside Strategic Partnership.
- Representation: VODA provides a voluntary sector viewpoint and facilitates representation within the sector in North Tyneside on a broad range of issues.
- VODA manages a range of contracts and other projects as appropriate to the needs of the local community, and where they fit with our strategic objectives.

You can learn more about our values by following this link:

<https://voda.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/VODA-Values-Digital.pdf>

## Rehabilitation of Offenders

VODA does not discriminate against ex-offenders and all appointments are made based on skills and abilities. However, for some posts, because of the nature of the work, you will be required to disclose details of convictions, cautions etc.

## Vetting of Applicants

Some posts may require a criminal records check and may be subject to further vetting. References are required that are satisfactory to us.

## Eligibility to work in the UK

To apply for this post you must be eligible to work in the UK. You can check your right to work in the UK by visiting: <https://www.gov.uk/legal-right-work-uk>

## Our commitment to equality and diversity

VODA recognises that everyone has a contribution to make to our society and a right to equal treatment.

VODA is fully committed to providing an environment which eliminates discrimination and which actively promotes diversity and values difference based on the unique contributions of individuals.

We are part of the Disability Confident Employer scheme. If you are disabled and meet the minimum criteria, you are guaranteed an interview.



## Privacy Statement

North Tyneside VODA collects, processes and stores data, which relates to its staff (current and former) as well as individuals applying for employment at VODA. This often includes some types of personal data, which are classed as "sensitive personal data". This data may relate to issues such as age, gender identity, racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, trade union membership, physical or mental health or condition, sexual life and any

alleged offences and/or criminal convictions. Some of this information is collected at the recruitment stage, separated and anonymized.

“Data Subjects” i.e. staff and individuals applying for employment at VODA will be asked to provide/confirm their personal and/or sensitive personal data as required. By providing this information, the Data Subject consents to VODA collecting, processing and storing this information.

Appropriate security measures are or will be in place to ensure that all personal and sensitive personal data are held and processed confidentially.

Personal data relating to staff and potential staff are processed (both manually and electronically) for various administrative, management and health and safety reasons, including but not limited to:

- Provision of payroll and pension administration.
- Occupational health.
- Personnel records including performance and absence reporting including medical information (where appropriate).
- Diversity monitoring.

VODA may also, where required, use copies of the data you provide (including sensitive personal data) in order to test our IT systems. If your data is used for system testing, it will be copied to a test environment, where it will be used along with data provided by other staff to test IT systems in a realistic way. This is done to ensure that changes will be effective and will not cause loss or damage to data in the ‘live’ environment. The data about you, which we hold in our ‘live’ systems, will not be affected in any way. Data will not be kept in the test environment for longer than is necessary for testing purposes, and data in that environment will not be used for any purpose other than testing. Appropriate security precautions and permissions will be applied to the data and any copy used for testing will be deleted as soon as the testing has been completed.

VODA handles personal data in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation and recognises the importance of correct and lawful processing. VODA is registered with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO).

The personal data you provide will only be used for official VODA business. In some cases, it may be necessary to transfer your personal data outside the UK; if this occurs VODA will ensure that adequate safeguards are in place.

VODA discloses staff information to a variety of third parties; these include but are not limited to:

- Employees of VODA (on a ‘need-to-know’ basis in relation to job function).
- VODA Directors (on a ‘need-to-know’ basis in relation to their function as Trustees of the charity).
- Agents of VODA e.g. pensions administrator.
- Relevant UK government departments, e.g. HM Revenue and Customs.



- Law enforcement agencies.
- Relevant authorities dealing with emergency situations at VODA.
- Any other authorised third party to whom VODA has a legal/contractual obligation to share data with.

Disclosure of certain personal data may also be made to other entities not listed above. This will only ever be done in accordance with the Act. Your consent will be sought where necessary.

VODA will retain your personal data as long as necessary for the purposes described above. After termination of your employment, VODA may still be required to hold your personal data for a period of time to satisfy statutory and legal obligations or for administrative purposes.

Unsuccessful candidates' data will be held for a minimum of 6 months following the date of the interview.

### **Your Rights under the Data Protection Act 2018**

As a 'Data Subject', you have a number of rights under the Act. This includes the right to:

- Access the personal data VODA holds about you.
- Have inaccurate data corrected.
- Prevent the processing of information, which may cause you harm or distress.
- Prevent unsolicited marketing.
- Prevent automated decision-making.

For more information on your rights, please visit the Information Commissioner's website: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

### **Right to Access Personal Data**

As a Data Subject, you have a right to request a copy of the information VODA holds about you. This is known as a 'Subject Access Request' (SAR). SARs should be made in writing, if possible, to the Chief Executive, VODA, Spirit of North Tyneside Wing, 2nd Floor, Wallsend Customer First Centre, 16 The Forum, Wallsend, NE28 8JR. There is usually no charge for this information. However, VODA reserves the right to charge in accordance with the Act a reasonable fee to cover administration costs where the request is manifestly unfounded or excessive, particularly if it is repetitive.

## **Working for VODA - What we can offer you**

At VODA we try to create an atmosphere of trust, respect where people feel valued and engaged, and where everyone is treated equally. We strive to be a good employer, service provider and neighbour. Among the benefits of working for VODA are...

- **Flexibility:** We are not a 9-to-5 organisation but strongly believe in arranging work patterns around other commitments such as family life.

- **Pay:** We pay our staff at very competitive rates.
- **Pension:** Planning for your long-term future is important, and that includes pension provision. Providing you are eligible, VODA contributes a monthly amount into the designated pension scheme.
- **Mileage allowance:** We pay a generous mileage allowance for work-related journeys to help cover the cost of fuel, wear and tear and increased insurance.
- **Holidays:** Full time staff currently get a minimum of 28 days holiday a year, rising by 1 day per year up to a maximum of 33 days. In addition, you get all Bank Holidays. Part time staff receive holidays pro rata. These holidays will increase in line with recent changes in legislation.
- **Focus on Employee Development:** We believe that as staff develop so too does VODA. To encourage this we provide a *Personal Training Budget*, currently £400 per annum, regular *Support and Supervision Sessions* – with the emphasis very much on support - to help staff review their projects and their own needs. At the end of the year, we pull everything together in a more formal *Personal Review & Development Session* to help you take stock of what has happened during the previous 12 months, and what you need to do to meet the challenges that lie ahead.
- **Sick Pay Scheme:** We operate a contractual sick pay scheme to help you when you are unwell. It is paid in addition to any Statutory Sick Pay you may be entitled to. The amount of contractual sick pay depends on how long you have worked for us.
- **Health Care Scheme:** Staff are entitled to join our health care scheme operated by BUPA.
- **In-house expertise:** VODA has been around for more than two decades and during that time, we have built up expertise in several key areas. The way we work allows you to draw on that expertise, and add your own to it.
- **Unrivalled experience:** VODA is a key player in North Tyneside's voluntary and community sector. You will gain invaluable experience that you can use to further develop your career.
- **Cross-team working:** No one works in isolation at VODA. In addition to being an integral part of your own team, you will have the opportunity to work with other teams on common themes, to join task groups, and to have your say on a wide range of issues.
- **Conferences:** We encourage staff to attend conferences that will benefit them, VODA and the community.
- **Policies and procedures:** We have well developed policies and procedures to ensure everyone is treated fairly and problems are handled efficiently and effectively.

**In a Staff Attitude Survey, we asked: "Which one aspect of VODA would you definitely not change and why?" Our staff said...**

- Job Freedom. It adds to a relaxed, friendly, supportive working environment
- The trust placed in employees by management. Being trusted and valued increases my motivation to work hard.
- Ethos towards its staff and their well-being. I feel this is excellent.
- Openness of the organisation.
- Relationships and respect between staff.
- The people who are diverse, free spirited, committed to their jobs and have fun along the way makes for an excellent work atmosphere.