



National Survivor
User Network

SYNERGI DIRECTOR (PROGRAMMES, GRANTS, TRANSFORMATION)

**CONTRACT: FIXED TERM UNTIL
MARCH 2025**

SALARY: £50,000

**HOURS: 5 DAYS PER WEEK (WILL
ALSO CONSIDER 4 DAYS PER WEEK)**

**LOCATION: WORK FROM HOME IN
THE UK**

DEADLINE: 23:59, 14TH MAY



A LETTER FROM AKIKO HART, NSUN'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Thank you so much for your interest in this role. I wanted to give you some background on this role, and the challenges and opportunities as I see them.

Synergi is an ambitious and complex programme of work which focuses on the intersection of racial justice and mental health. At its core, it is about shifting power and resource to grassroots groups and community organisers in this space. Synergi is for people doing this lived experience work on the ground, who are imagining and building alternatives. We want to connect, amplify, celebrate and resource this work.

Synergi as a programme of work is solely funded by Lankelly Chase. Their grant to NSUN was the largest grant they had ever awarded to a single organisation. It's a demonstration of the funder's and NSUN's commitment to this work, which has been historically underfunded.

There is a strategy in place, and two brilliant team members – Jess, the Project Manager, and aaks, the Grants Manager. Because Synergi sits within NSUN, there are many opportunities to work alongside and be supported by the wider team, who are all fantastic.

It's an exciting time to join in that we are starting to connect with groups doing this work in multiple ways, and it is a well-resourced programme of work with so many possibilities of effecting real change on the ground. The work is values-led, and there is scope to innovate and deliver.

In the short-term, the challenge is to build on the momentum of our first grants programme, which has just distributed 37 grants of £3000 to grassroots groups led by and for Black people and people of colour, working on racial justice and mental health. The funding for Synergi is secured for another 2 years, and while there is the possibility of future funding, there will also be

some catching up to do, particularly in the first 6 months. Other challenges include working out who Synergi is best placed to support, and how; and how to navigate this work in a shifting not-for-profit context where there is a lot of talk but not always action and change, and where the needs and voices of grassroots groups and marginalised communities are often erased. Another challenge is around positionality: NSUN is a charity and operates within those frameworks, and this work involves working with grassroots groups who might not be constituted or might work very differently. Reflecting deeply on some of these power imbalances, moving away from extractive working practices, and honouring the plurality of this work – these are all challenges inherent to this role.

From my perspective, I can see so many opportunities in this role. This work being embedded with NSUN and being fully supported by the funder means that there is scope to think more deeply about processes – how we do this work and why, to try new things, to make mistakes, and to learn. The annual grants programme will make a difference to grassroots groups in a tangible way, but there is also scope to expand it, and to open up dialogues with other funders so that this work is better resourced in the future. Fundamentally, this is a deeply collaborative programme of work, which will involve working in partnership in so many different ways with the groups and individuals who are themselves driving this change. It would be the perfect fit for someone who shares the values of the work, who has drive and vision, who gets the complexities of the work and can hold them, and who is confident delivering in a small team.

ABOUT SYNERGI

Synergi is a complex and ambitious programme of work within NSUN, the National Survivor User Network, which focuses on the intersection of racial justice and mental health.

In its first year, Synergi ran a small grants programme, which awarded 37 grants of £3000 to groups led by Black people and people of colour with lived experience of mental ill-health, distress or trauma, to take action on mental health and racial justice. Work funded included collective care, campaigning, and change-making.

Following on from this grants programme, the Synergi Director will deliver, alongside the Synergi team, the following workstreams:

Community Responses to Mental Health: working with grassroots groups to experiment with community-based mental health care

Supporting Movement Spaces: working with grassroots groups to support movement building work

Grants Programme: running an annual grants programme and influencing funders to fund differently

Festival: a creative culmination of all the workstreams

Funding for Synergi (including the post) has been secured until March 2025. However, there is also scope to grow Synergi by securing additional funding.

ABOUT NSUN (The National Survivor User Network)

As a UK mental health charity, we are a network of people and groups with lived experience of mental ill-health, distress and trauma. We work towards the distribution of power and resource in mental health. NSUN is a user-led organisation, and all staff and trustees have lived experience of mental ill-health, distress or trauma.

Over the past three years, NSUN has scaled and changed. This is an exciting time to join an organisation which is growing. Our Theory of Change is set out [here](#).

ABOUT THE ROLE

This is an exciting role in the charity sector, in that funding for the project has been secured until March 2025, thanks to a grant from Lankelly Chase. There is a vision and a framework for the work, but there also is a huge amount of possibility within it. The role is a delivery role, and requires strong delivery, programme management and relationship building and management skills.

Synergi is a programme of work hosted by NSUN. The Director of Synergi will report to the NSUN CEO, and line manage the Synergi Project Manager and the Synergi Grants Manager. The Synergi Governance Board will advise and support the work of Synergi and help fulfil the NSUN Board's responsibilities in relation to the work.

Reflective practice and training and development opportunities will be available.

We recognise this is a multifaceted role and are keen to attract candidates from a wide range of backgrounds. Accordingly, we have listed the essential elements of the role below, and a range of beneficial elements, recognising that one candidate may not bring everything.

We are looking for a dynamic, hands-on individual to join us as soon as possible. The deadline for applications is **23:59 on Sunday 14th May**.

For an informal conversation about the role, or if you have any questions about this recruitment pack or require it in a different format, please contact our recruitment partner Carroll Lloyd, Director, NFP Consulting on 07765 001 033 or email carroll.lloyd@nfpconsulting.co.uk.

MAIN TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- **Contract:** fixed term until March 2025
- **Salary:** £50,000, full time. We will also consider 4 days per week, salary pro-rated
- **Hours:** 5 days a week (although enquiries about flexible working are welcomed). Normal hours of work are 35 hours per week, worked between Monday to Friday between 9am and 6pm, with a minimum of 7 hours per day (not including an hour for lunch)
- **Reports to:** NSUN CEO
- **Reports:** Synergi Project Manager and Synergi Grants Manager
- **Location:** work from home in the UK (NSUN does not have a physical office). Some occasional travel for meetings (travel costs are reimbursed)
- **Holiday:** 25 days in total plus bank holidays, rising by 1 day after every year of service to a maximum of 33 days per year
- **Pension and benefits:** NSUN offer an automatic enrolment pension scheme, an individual health plan with HSF
- **Notice period:** 1 month during probation and 3 months following successful end of probationary period
- **Disclosure and Barring:** due to the nature of our work, you will be required to have a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for which NSUN will cover the cost.

JOB DESCRIPTION

The role will encompass all of the following, but the balance of duties and responsibilities will be determined in discussion with the Synergi Governance Board.

ESSENTIAL

- Leading and delivering an ambitious and complex programme of work in the area of racial justice/mental health
- Build relationships and networks with a wide variety of stakeholders, including grassroots activists, creatives, academics, mental health professionals and funders
- Act as an ambassador for Synergi and its ethos of collaborative leadership, by working alongside other actors in this space
- Nurture and amplify new and/or under-represented voices and perspectives in this space through partnership work, collaboration, and commissioning
- Champion lived experience work (across different thematic boundaries) through partnership work, collaboration, and commissioning
- Work alongside other stakeholders to co-create a governance system for Synergi
- Manage a small grants programme with support from the wider team
- Manage Synergi team
- Manage Synergi budget, re-prioritising spend with the agreement of Governance Board and funder(s) as plans for projects evolve
- Identify issues and risks impacting on the programme and devise and deliver mitigation strategies, escalating as appropriate to the Synergi Governance Board
- Work with the Synergi Learning Partner, Synergi Governance Board and NSUN to ensure workstreams have a clear evaluation strategy from the outset, with mechanisms to ensure stakeholders' feedback continually informs the ongoing delivery of the programme
- Work with the Synergi Project Manager and NSUN to deliver a communications strategy to maximise stakeholder engagement
- Lead activities to disseminate programme information, learning and impact internally and externally as appropriate

BENEFICIAL

- Lead and support the development of systems, tools and processes for demonstrating and reporting impact, as well as ensuring quality and compliance
- Financial reporting to the Synergi Governance Board and grant-making trusts
- Ensure that contracts are in place and monitor the delivery of contracts within the remit of the role

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential experience

- Lived experience of mental ill-health, distress or trauma, including racial trauma
- Demonstrable experience of delivering complex and multi-year projects within organisations as part of a team
- Experience of intersectional activism, connecting different struggles and issues that engage with the Synergi work
- Proven experience of working as part of a senior management team and/or in a leadership role in an organisation

Beneficial experience

- Experience of developing and delivering a communications strategy
- Experience running a small grants programme
- Experience of working with board members, wider staff teams and other volunteers

Essential skills/abilities

- Ability to deliver a strategy through an operational plan, achieving deadlines, monitoring milestones and deliverables.
- Strong interpersonal skills, and proven relationship management and building skills across different networks, in order to further strategic aims of project/organisations
- Strong representational skills (ability to represent a project, organisation or position to different stakeholders)
- An ability to hold the uncertainty of a developing project (its possibilities and many unknowns) while also taking a stewardship role in ensuring that the vision set out is held
- Ability to manage budgets
- Ability to work under pressure and prioritise to meet deadlines
- Excellent verbal, written, and presentation skills and ability to use Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook and PowerPoint
- Ability to work well in as a team (in a group of people) and independently (alone) in order to deliver operational objectives

Beneficial skills/abilities

- Ability to manage contracts/grants and report progress against them

Essential knowledge

- Excellent understanding of, and interest in, current work happening on the intersections of racial justice and mental health in the UK
- Deep and demonstrable understanding of lived experience work, which might cross thematic boundaries
- Understanding the many ways in which system change occurs including advocacy, campaigning, communication and shaping public opinion; this understanding might come from backgrounds in journalism, music or the arts, the VCSE or community activism, as well as the law and policy
- An excellent understanding of governance within the charity/not for profit sector, including its interaction with the operational work; an appreciation of the importance of infrastructure, accountability and transparency to allow work to flourish; and an interest in exploring new or different ways of doing governance in this space

Beneficial knowledge

- A good understanding of the mental health space at a grassroots, VCSE and/or statutory level
- Knowledge of the funding ecosystem including key changemakers and the levers of influence
- Good historical knowledge of work which has happened on the intersections of racial justice and mental health in the UK

APPLICATION AND INTERVIEWS

For an informal conversation about the role, please contact our recruitment partner, Carroll Lloyd, Director, NFP Consulting on 07765 001 033 or email carroll.lloyd@nfpconsulting.co.uk.

Apply online at: www.nfpconsulting.co.uk/NSUN/Synergi

Application is by way of CV with a Supporting Statement that should set out your motivations for applying and how your work experience to date meets the scope of the responsibilities and person specification. As a general guide, your Supporting Statement should be around two sides of A4. We ask that candidates address how your lived experience of mental ill-health, distress or trauma has informed your ways of working and your interest in this role. Please do not feel the need to disclose anything about your personal lived experience in any detail.

Please let us know if you require any adjustments to the interview process for you to participate and we will do our best to accommodate these.

Closing date: 23:59, Sunday 14th May

SELECTION PROCESS AND TIMESCALES

Stage 1: week commencing 22nd May

First round of screening interviews will be conducted by NFP Consulting, which will be conducted via Zoom.

Stage 2: 7th June

Second round interviews will be held via Zoom with NSUN.

We will send you the interview questions the day before and during the interview you will be asked to do a 10-minute presentation to the panel. The details of what's required in the presentation will be sent to you at the end of the preceding week.

Stage 3: week commencing 12th June

The shortlist of preferred candidate/s will be invited to an informal meeting with the Synergi staff team. The purpose of this interaction is so that you can ask questions about the organisation, their roles, and their engagement with Synergi as you wish.

All applicants who attend an interview will be offered feedback. It is not possible for us to give individual feedback if you have not been selected for an interview.

Thank you very much for your interest in this role. We look forward to hearing from you.



**National Survivor
User Network**

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