

Community Engagement Leader

Are you motivated by the human face of social challenges?

Does the fact that, at a time of economic growth and falling unemployment rates, over 5000 folks in Toronto sleep rough each year *compel* you to action? Are you a believer of that famous Margaret Mead quote, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has?” Do you have the vision, the entrepreneurial energy, the compassion, and the humility to lead a team and partner with street-involved adults to re-invigorate a large drop-in centre in downtown west Toronto?

We’re looking for a Community Engagement Leader who will bring staff, street-involved adults, and community stakeholders together to enable the drop-in to serve as a vibrant learning & healing platform. We see a platform as a safe and trusting space that (1) offers helpful help to address immediate needs; (2) hosts novel events, programs and micro-businesses; and (3) bridges people to opportunities & resources across the city.

You’ll be building on a rich history of local engagement and advocacy with street-involved people. West Neighbourhood House’s genesis is as a Settlement House, a ground breaking innovation of its time. Settlement Houses were welcoming spaces that paved the way for a dynamic civil society - expanding the restrictive boundaries of culture and class. Similarly, Drop-in centres were designed as welcoming spaces for people excluded from meaningful participation in society, and facing poverty, addiction, homelessness, and mental health challenges. Our Drop-in centre has had a particularly rich affiliation with urban indigenous communities.

We want to continue this tradition *and* keep innovating the model. We don’t think the status quo is good enough! You’re someone, then, who is all about growth and development. You’ve got an experimental mindset – and are able to inspire others to give new things a try. You get that for people to try new things they have to feel it’s OK to fail. You’re the kind of leader, then, that knows how to nurture people’s creativity, amplify their confidence, and help to bring to life their ideas.

Success for the Drop-in *isn’t* just about the number of people utilizing the space and accessing services, but it’s about *prompting* forward movement, even when hard circumstances set people two steps back. We seek to provide people with the tools, strategies, inspiration, formal resources, and informal supports that reinforce harm reduction, resilience, control, and purpose. At the same time, we seek to bust bureaucratic barriers and use our voices to promote broader systems change.

Your mission

To build a team and creative culture that can bring to life a next version Drop-in centre, enabling street-involved adults to feel safe, supported, and empowered to make & sustain small and big changes.

What you'll be doing

Leading & mentoring staff; Curating a culture of trust and collaboration

- You'll listen and empower a staff team that has experienced a lot of change.
- You'll work together to set & keep routines for staff debriefing, reflection, and self-care.
- You'll develop ongoing opportunities for staff learning and up-skilling.
- You'll conduct regular performance reviews, provide feedback, and offer critical support & challenge.
- You'll develop an induction experience for new staff, and ways of doing continual team building.

Process facilitation & Partnership building

- You'll spearhead a process to refresh the mission, vision, and outcomes of the Drop-in centre.
- You'll work with neighbouring organizations, other drop-in centres, housing, addictions, legal, and health care providers to enable a more coherent service journey and cut through senseless red tape.
- You'll run regular listening & brainstorming sessions with staff, members, and stakeholders to generate ideas for new programs, roles, physical spaces, and approaches.
- You'll set-up an ideas incubator that gives staff and members some resources & mentorship to make their ideas happen.
- You'll participate in West Neighbourhood House internal committees, and long-term planning initiatives.
- You'll bring the voices of street-involved adults to community events and networks.

Catalyzing meaningful opportunities

- You'll translate ideas from your listening & brainstorming sessions into an enriching program of adult learning, healing, and harm reduction opportunities.
- You'll create joint experiences with local businesses, arts organizations, libraries, museums, colleges, gardens, retired therapists, and other interesting people & places.
- You'll generate *new* resources for the centre – by harnessing people's time, skills, and passions. As much as you can, you'll try and get out of the traditional 'charity' mindset.

Creating structure, boundaries, and consistency

- You'll consistently ensure policies and procedures are implemented, and help to develop new policies and procedures as required.
- You'll put in place practices to better utilize the physical space of the Drop-in centre, creating an environment that is well organized, peaceful, and doesn't feel institutional.

Building and maintaining operations & systems

- You'll co-ordinate the year round operation and delivery of services and programs at the Drop-in. This means mastering scheduling and reporting.
- You'll design and put in place better systems for paperwork, looking at how simple technological tools might help to streamline workflow and improve intelligence.
- You'll prepare annual draft budgets for each funding source and keep track of annual spending. You'll also help to prepare funder reports and statistics, and liaise with funders.
- You won't just focus on external reporting, but on helpful internal reporting. You'll develop a way to track stories of change, celebrate big and small successes, and put examples of growth & development into every day practice. You believe positive reinforcement is key.

West Neighbourhood House is an equal opportunity employer.
We thank all applicants, but only those candidates to be interviewed will be contacted.

A United Way Member Agency

What background & characteristics you'll have

You're passionate about working directly with people who often come with system labels (e.g. mentally ill) and multiple exclusions. You've got at least 3 years experience operating in chaotic contexts where the unpredictable is the predictable.

You have a strong understanding of the social, cultural, psychological, and political factors affecting disadvantaged adults – including racism, discrimination, homelessness, unemployment, and social isolation. You appreciate how trauma, grief, and loss impact on people's sense of self. You view harm reduction as an empowering approach.

You have an eclectic background with some combination of education or training in addictions, psychology, social work, adult learning, life coaching, mindfulness, and wellness. You are familiar with a range of therapeutic techniques – such as indigenous healing circles, narrative storytelling, motivational interviewing, cognitive behavioural interventions, etc. Where you lack expertise, you know how to find and tap into existing resources and bodies of knowledge.

You are committed to transformational change, but can balance your optimism with pragmatism. You want to bring people along for the journey, and keep the focus on small wins with & for street-involved adults.

You subscribe to the adage, "If you want to go far, go together," and are skilled at mobilizing *other* organizations and services to play a part in change. You don't think one service can do it all, or be all things to all people.

You are a natural diplomat and negotiator, and are great at diffusing tense situations and thinking on your feet. Little fazes you, as you have real strength and grace under pressure.

You are a lifelong learner and reflective practitioner, who is always on the lookout for the latest ideas and practices, even if they are from outside the social sector. You are *not* wedded to one way of seeing things. You're able to look critically at your own practice, and make people feel comfortable enough to do the same about their practice.

You've got a track record of motivating teams to action, and drawing out *their* strengths. You're an open, responsive, and proactive communicator. You are able to craft a bigger narrative around the work that helps people to feel a sense of mission & purpose.

You're a uniting force, who listens to diverse stakeholders and tries to dissolve boundaries between 'management,' 'staff' and 'clients.' You have little patience for an 'us versus them' mentality. You see frustrations as creative fodder, and opportunities to problem-solve.

You're adept at time management, coordination, data management, and all the practical realities that underpin high functioning, accountable organizations. You have a 'systems brain' and like to create the right kind of structures and procedures. You get the importance of having strong backend systems, and using technology to create time for the important face-to-face work. Your computer skills are excellent.

External Job Posting

You like to measure the things that matter, and use data to help identify opportunities and gaps. As best you can, you try to challenge assumptions and make decisions grounded in research. You've got some background in basic research methods, and eliciting honest feedback.

It's a plus if you can speak a second language related to the community, and if you have a Driver's License and access to a vehicle.

How to apply

Interested in the position? Ready for a rewarding challenge?

To apply, you need to write us a letter sharing your motivations for taking on this position. What makes you tick? Why do you think you're a good fit?

In your letter, share with us 2 examples of work you've been a part of – (1) something you think is a GREAT example of change practice and (2) something you think is a POOR example of change practice. You're welcome to include pictures, drawings, or whatever you have to tell us about yourself.

Send your letter along with your resume.

Status:	Permanent Full Time (bargaining unit position)
Start Date:	ASAP
Hours:	35 per week (staggered shifts required, including every 4 th Saturday and Wednesday evenings)
Rate:	\$29.88 per hour (full benefits package after 3 months including 100% coverage for health and dental, no deductibles, \$750 annually for paramedicals, 4 weeks vacation, paid sick time, long term disability, floater days, Multi-Sector Pension Plan)
Unit:	Adult Community Programs
Immediate Supervisor:	Unit Director, Adult Community Programs
Posting Date:	August 15, 2016
Closing Date:	September 12, 2016
Note:	West Neighbourhood House provides accommodation during all parts of the hiring process, upon request, to applicants with disabilities. Applicants should make their needs known in advance.

Please send resumes by 5:00 pm on the closing date to:

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Toronto, ON
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