**About Lead Scotland’s Befriending Services**

Lead Scotland has over 40 years of experience delivering high quality person centred, non-formal and formal learning opportunities. As well as delivering educational opportunities our constitution includes serving people who are socially excluded, which is a key barrier preventing many people from accessing learning opportunities.

In 2015 we set up our first befriending service for disabled adults in Fife to reduce social isolation and loneliness using the same model as our learning services of involving volunteers to offer people one to one support and encouragement. The pilot was evaluated positively by people who used the service, positive gains included feeling more connected with family and community and some people became confident enough to access our Fife Learning Project.

Building upon this success in 2019 we set up our Fife Young Carers Project for children and young people aged 12 to 18 years to provide space away from their caring responsibilities, a project which has grown seeking to reach more young people.

During the pandemic we extended our befriending services across our Learning projects for people who were at risk of disengaging. Staff and volunteers supported people remotely by telephone, email, and online video platforms. This approach led to people staying engaged. 100% of those surveyed said they would like Lead Scotland to provide Befriending Services in parallel to Learning Services. Our ambition is therefore to extend befriending into other geographic areas where we have learning services.

**About the Befriending Services Manager role**

Within the scope of responsibilities for this role outlined within the job description we seek a postholder who can build upon our successful trials and track record described above to help us understand the market and support the advancement of our Befriending services. Applicants should note the following key dimensions of the role:

This is an exciting time to join Lead Scotland to drive our befriending services forward, not only as we deliver our new three-year strategic plan, but also as we are now growing our business and reaching more learners in our communities and in a national context, paving the way for befriending projects to complement these new services. The post involves managing people and projects, sustaining current contracts, and evolving our befriending services offer to meet the changing demand for services. We expect befriendees to be involved from an early stage in the design and development of new learning products and services, and the postholder will be actively involved in ensuring this is the case. This role involves supporting and providing guidance to staff and volunteers who are undertaking emotionally demanding roles.

This is a home-based role, remotely supporting befriending staff who in turn support teams of volunteers. It also involves some travel and work across Scotland to help us realise our ambition. The postholder reports to the Business Manager & Depute CEO and will work with colleagues across Scotland.

**About Lead Scotland**

Lead Scotland is a charity supporting disabled people and carers by providing personalised learning, befriending, advice, and information services. We have projects across Scotland and a national helpline and information service. Our local services are community and home based, one to one or in small groups so that people have the right support to learn and participate. We support people to build a bridge to reach their ambitions of personal development, learning, volunteering, and work. At a national level, we provide information and advice on the full range of post-school learning and training opportunities, as well as influencing and informing policy.

* **Our Vision** is of a fair society where disabled people and carers have an equal opportunity to learn, participate and achieve their potential.
* **Our Mission** is to influence change and provide personalised learning, befriending, advice, and information services.
* **Our Values**: Integrity, Openness, Mutual Respect, Kindness, Equality

**Strategic Goals for 2023 to 2026**

* Offer more local and remote learning opportunities, which improve access, offer accreditation, build confidence and skills, reducing educational exclusion.
* Extend our Befriending Services to reduce social isolation and create new pathways to learning.
* Extend our disabled student’s helpline and information services so that more students understand their rights, entitlements and make informed choices about their options.
* More disabled people have the opportunity to influence policy makers, breaking down systemic barriers to improve access for future learners.

# Working for Lead Scotland

Alongside the salary, pension, and annual leave summarised in the job description, Lead Scotland also offers employees the option of flexible working around agreed core hours. Flexible working arrangements can be revised as required, for example when caring responsibilities change.

We love learning and we encourage our team members to develop and learn through accredited learning and peer-supported informal learning, as well as undertaking CPD with partner organisations as opportunities arise. Being home-based offers staff an excellent opportunity to work with a degree of autonomy and responsibility, within the framework of regular support and supervision meetings with their line manager. Our staff team has a voice in setting business direction, establishing programmes to ensure contract delivery, and we have weekly team meetings online to bring people together for structured sessions as well as more free-ranging discussions to support our culture of mutual respect, kindness, and support.

**Closing Date: 9am Monday 29th January 2024. Shortlisted applicants can expect an online panel interview with questions based on the criteria for the post week beginning Monday 5th February 2024.**