



## **OBS Recruitment Policy**

### **Purpose**

Oxfordshire Breastfeeding Support values our contractors, employees and volunteers as crucial to the success of the organisation and quality of services delivered to service users. Our aim is to establish an effective team to deliver services, instilling a passion for our values, a desire for excellence, a willingness to take on individual responsibility, to be flexible, and an acceptance of the importance of team cooperation.

We want all our volunteers, employees and contractors to reach their potential insofar as this is possible within OBS objectives and to the mutual benefit of the individual and OBS. In order to achieve this, we will identify clearly the role and responsibilities of each position and its contribution to the organisation as a whole.

Through robust recruitment practices, we aim to attract and appoint candidates who are suitable to support service users, who are representative of the local community and the people who use the service.

### **Scope**

To ensure that the organisation continues to attract and appoint candidates of the highest calibre, it is essential that this policy is followed by all those who have involvement in the recruitment and selection process.

The policy and procedure apply in relation to the recruitment and selection for all posts at OBS, regardless of the type or duration of contract. The principles should also be considered when recruiting volunteers.

### **Principles**

We will seek to implement this policy and procedures in order to effectively resource and staff the provision of a high quality service to OBS service users.

We will be flexible where possible in our working practices in order to attract and retain a high calibre of contractors, employees and volunteers.

Our recruitment practices will be fair, professional and transparent both internally and to potential contractors, employees and volunteers.

We will ensure that the remuneration for a given position is sufficient to recruit and retain the appropriate calibre of applicant.

All external advertising will be of high quality and portray the desired image of the organisation.

Applicants will be selected and recruited on the basis of their skills, experience, qualifications and competence to do the work, without discrimination based on any protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics as defined under the 2010 Act are as follows: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; or sexual orientation. In view of this, we will ensure that everyone adheres to equal opportunities.

We recognise and acknowledge the need for a diverse team from all backgrounds, and all abilities. Consideration will be given to ways in which groups that are under-represented might be reached and encouraged to apply. We will aim to recruit based on potential, taking into consideration applicants' background, history and personal experiences. At the point of selection OBS will not discriminate on any protected special characteristics. If two candidates are equally suitable for the role after the interview, we may apply the principle of positive action to select the candidate from an under-represented background.

We will undertake appropriate Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and clearances to ensure that we minimise the risk of appointing a candidate who is unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults.

In line with GDPR recommendations and with the applicant's permission, we will store application forms of unsuccessful candidates for a maximum period of one year. All relevant documentation will then be destroyed by the recruitment committee who shortlisted candidates. Successful job applicants' documents will be kept for the duration of their time working with OBS.

We will ensure that each new contractor, employee or volunteer will undergo induction training in order to maximise the rate of individual and organisational learning.

We will review the success of our recruitment process every two years and after every round of recruitment, in order to continue to improve upon it.

## **Recruitment & Selection Procedure**

The recruitment procedures have been prepared in-line with guidance provided by Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and NHS Practitioners Guide "If your Face Fits". They are underpinned by the principle of equal opportunities.

The procedures have been designed to guide the recruiter through the recruitment process, ensuring an effective and equitable process.

The aim is to ensure that OBS is able to contract people who have the qualities, qualifications, experience and knowledge required to meet the needs of the service users. The procedures are designed to assist OBS to ensure that recruitment is undertaken in a professional and systematic manner.

In this way, OBS will have greater potential to achieve its objectives, recruit and retain effective performers and also that OBS complies with legislative requirements, including but not limited to safeguarding children.

There are a number of stages to the recruitment and selection process.

### **Identifying a Vacancy**

In most instances vacancies will be identified by the Charity Director. For new positions in the organisation, this will need to be approved by the Board of Trustees.

### **Job Description & Person Specification**

Each vacancy within the organisation should have a job description and person specification that details the purpose and tasks of the role, the skills and knowledge required in order to fulfil the requirements of the role.

Each contractor or employee will be provided with a copy of their Job Description and Code of Conduct before the commencement of their contract. Volunteers are provided with a Volunteer Agreement.

The person specification criteria is used as part of the shortlisting process when assessing applicants.

### **Advertising**

In order to attract candidates OBS uses a variety of methods to advertise its roles. Where the role is advertised should be carefully considered, in order to expand the reach of the advert and be inclusive to people from a range of backgrounds. Advertising platforms can include but are not limited to;

- Online job sites
- Social Media including Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn
- OBS's own website and social media channels
- External recruitment websites
- Local and national newspapers
- Specialist and professional journals
- Colleges & universities
- Local and national organisations with connections to under-represented demographics

The advertisement will include as a minimum the rate of pay for the role and a brief description of the core responsibilities. Adverts should include a statement of inclusivity, to encourage applicants from all backgrounds.

## **Application Form**

We ask applicants to apply using a cover letter of no more than three pages of A4, summarising their highest qualification, previous work history, dates of any employment in the last five years and how they meet the first eight bullet points in the list of essential skills and experience detailed. We ask them to use initials rather than their full name in order to anonymise their application.

We also ask them to fill in an anonymous equal opportunities monitoring form that is not linked to their application.

Application forms are stored with consideration to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

The application process does not ask any health related questions other than to ask whether any accessibility or reasonable adjustments are required for the interview process or on appointment to the role.

## **Selection Process - Shortlisting**

Applicants will be shortlisted and scored based on if the information received on the application form meets the person specification essential and desirable criteria. Shortlisting should be carried out by two members of the recruitment committee, to prevent biases. Each member should independently score against the criteria, and avoid making assumptions about the candidate, and their experience or qualifications.

Ideally panels should have had interview training, bias training, and be aware of and willing to challenge their own biases.

Any applicant who meets the essential criteria and has a disability will be offered an interview. This information needs to be given to us separately to applications.

The applicants shortlisted will be invited to interview via email and text alert or a telephone call that identifies the date, time and venue of the interview.

## **Interviews**

All interviews are conducted by a panel of at least two OBS representatives, most often the Charity Director and a member of staff. Where possible there should be a diverse interview panel. If it is not possible to organise a diverse panel, a written justification should be given for the panel demographics alongside an explanation of the work carried out in order to attempt to create more diversity. The panel must ensure they have adequately prepared for the interview and have a good understanding of the criteria.

OBS recognises that applicants may have multiple responsibilities and will endeavour to be flexible in the timing and format of interviews, in order to offer all applicants a fair opportunity at a focused interview. Interviews may be conducted in person, online or via telephone, where possible applicants will be given a choice of interview format.

Interviews will be based on a structured interview format that is consistent across the organisation. A series of identical questions will be asked to all those applying for the same role that aim to identify the skills and abilities of the candidates. This enables an equitable

comparison process. Interviewers may prompt, encourage, rephrase or ask supplementary questions to enable the candidate to understand the question and to answer it fully, in order to solicit the best answers from candidates.

In addition to an interview, further skills based assessments specific to the role may be required. They could include:

- Written exercise to enable assessment of written skills, ability to comply with recording and reporting requirements
- Observation exercise; provides an opportunity for applicants to be observed and assessed on their ability to communicate effectively
- Prioritisation exercise to assess the ability to make sound management decisions and manage multiple demands
- Scenario exercise to identify appropriate response in complex situations

Where possible service users and/or volunteers will be part of the interview panel. This will demonstrate that OBS values service user views, and is committed to co-production of services.

Each member of the panel will independently take notes during the interview, and score against previously set criteria. The scores from each part of the selection process are reviewed, discussed by the panel and used in the decision making process. The format in use ensures that applicants are assessed fairly and without prejudice or discrimination.

In line with GDPR applicants have the right to ask to see interview notes and to ask for reasoning for non-appointment to a post. Panels should give feedback on the shortlisting process and appointment decisions.

## **Post Selection Process**

Once a decision has been made a verbal offer may be given. This will be followed with a formal contract for their services, stating the particulars and details of their contractual obligations, responsibilities and rates of pay, before the commencement of the appointment. The offer is dependent on the organisation receiving satisfactory references and disclosure and barring check.

## **References and Checks**

OBS requires each volunteer, employee or contractor to provide details for two written references, one of which must be the last employer, proof of identity and proof of eligibility to work in the UK if appropriate.

Volunteers, trustees, employees and contractors must have an enhanced status check with the Disclosure and Barring Service. A DBS status check will be undertaken, in line with Safeguarding policy and procedures. New volunteers, employees or contractors should not commence working for OBS prior to all the checks being completed. Any exceptions to this must be agreed with the Charity Director and Chair of Trustees.

## **Induction and On-boarding**

Each new volunteer, trustee, employee or contractor shall be inducted into the teams that they are going to work in. The new member of the team should be allocated a mentor, who will be a point of contact for questions and informal support. Care should be taken to understand if there are any barriers that might inhibit individuals from working effectively.

The manager and/or mentor should make routine and regular checks on new team members especially in the first 6 months of joining.

**Oxfordshire Breastfeeding Support**

**Date of Policy: February 2023**

**Date of Review: March 2024**