



Digital Projects Assistant

Contract	35 hours per week, flexible working, initially for 1 year
Salary	£ 22,462 (NJC pay scale 14) + £3,405 Inner London Weighting + 7% non-contribution pension (employee pays 1%)
Location	Home based
Reports to	Digital Development Lead
Functional links	Digital Officer, Learning & Transformation Lead
Start	As soon as possible

ROLE PURPOSE

There are 40 Law Centres across England and Wales providing free legal advice and representation to thousands of people who would otherwise have no access to legal services. Law Centres champion human rights and equality and challenge exclusion, discrimination and inequality, using the law to achieve social change. The Law Centres Network (LCN) is the national voice of Law Centres.

To that end, LCN requires a Digital Projects Assistant who will work with the Digital Development Lead and Digital Officer to assist with the individual IT upgrade and digital transformation of over 40 Law Centres.

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Working with the Digital Development Lead and the Digital Officer, this post will support the delivery of the National IT Upgrade Project and the Digital Transformation Programme, which seeks to ensure that all Law Centres are equipped to meet the needs of the current context and the future digital initiatives of Government, and in general, to use digital tools to extend the impact of their work and improve efficiency.

Research and Design

- Conducting and analysing qualitative and quantitative research to develop digital, service and product strategies (including both primary and secondary research),
- Collecting insights from research activities and reliably translate what you hear and see into actionable user needs, i.e. interrogating behavioural data and user feedback to identify real needs such as, “users need to reliably archive case files so that reporting is simple” and not “everyone says they want a print button”,
- Be an advocate for user research and user experience design across the organisation,
- Work with developers/designers and other members of the LCN Digital team to ensure user needs are met,
- Maintain systems for gathering and analysing feedback to iterate and continuously improve content and services,
- Engage with Law Centre staff, end users and other relevant stakeholders,
- Keep up to date with best practice systems and processes in user research and service design,

National IT Upgrade

- To provide administrative assistance to the Digital Officer in implementing and managing the National Infrastructure upgrade project.

Digital Transformation

- Engage with Law Centre staff, end users and other relevant stakeholders,
- Be an active member of the LCN Digital team and the wider LCN team,
- Proactively identify areas of improvement and raise this with the LCN Digital team,
- Keep up to date with best practice systems and processes in user research, service design and cyber security; and
- Undertake any other duties as may be reasonably required within the scope of the role.

Other

- To attend out of hours meetings where necessary
- To undertake other tasks as directed appropriate to the post and to assist LCN in achieving its objectives
- To carry out the functions of the post with proper regard for LCN’s Equal Opportunities Policy
- To always act in an ethical manner that upholds the good reputation of LCN and its member Law Centres

THE PERSON

Experience and Knowledge

At least 1-2 years' experience in user research and user-centred design practices, and passion for using research insights to shape digital and non-digital services.

Experience understanding and designing user journeys and multiple user groups.

Experience designing and participating in workshops to prioritise user needs and research activities

Experience of a range of user and design research methods, including interviews and ethnography, developing and using personas to communicate user needs, and conducting quantitative analysis

Experience working in an agile, multi-disciplinary team, and commitment to working within an inventive, responsible and generous workplace environment.

Familiarity with the Microsoft 365 platform and tools to support remote working.

Understanding of the current climate in the legal advice sector

Understanding of the role legal assistance can play in addressing disadvantage and advancing social justice

Experience of working in partnership with other individuals or agencies

Skills and Abilities

Excellent written and oral communication and influencing skills, including the ability to communicate research findings to diverse audiences

Ability to present complex information so it is easy to understand and to produce information in an attractive format

Excellent interpersonal skills, awareness of group dynamics and the ability to work effectively with individuals and groups

Good organisational skills, including the ability to manage a busy and complex workload with a national scope

The ability to think on your feet and stay calm under pressure

Personal Qualities

Motivated by the mission of LCN and Law Centres

A team player who will contribute to the overall success of LCN and Law Centres

Willing to travel to Law Centres / other locations across the UK as required

Commitment to equal opportunities and social inclusion

BACKGROUND

The Law Centres Network (LCN) was established in 1978 as a national collaboration by Law Centres to co-ordinate activity and to be the voice of Law Centres. Over 40 years on, LCN continues to pursue its original purpose and as such, it strives for a just and equal society where everyone's rights are defended. We do this by supporting Law Centres across the UK to use their legal skills as a tool for social change. We aim to support and sustain Law Centres, to support the continued growth of the network of Law Centres, and we campaign for social justice on behalf of Law Centres and their clients. We do this by:

- Supporting our 40 member Law Centres with a range of activities: our role is to plug the gap and help Law Centres stay ahead. These services include training; helping Law Centres develop user-led service design approaches; fundraising assistance and consultancy; compliance and development consultancy; crisis support and assistance; and bringing Law Centres together to share learning, collaborate and support one another
- Growing the network: although Law Centres assist over 200,000 people each year, there are many thousands of people in need of legal assistance who do not have access to a Law Centre. We identify areas where Law Centres could be established, supporting groups to establish them or existing organisations to become Law Centres; and initiating new Law Centre services for particularly vulnerable groups
- Advocating for social justice: we work closely with Law Centres to use our shared experience to advocate for the expansion of access to justice, challenge adverse public policy decisions, influence legal aid and other relevant policies, and represent Law Centres at all levels of Government.

Our work contributes directly to that of Law Centres. Without Law Centres, hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people a year would have no meaningful access to justice, would be unable to resolve their problems and so would be held back in their lives from taking up opportunities and realising their potential.

Without LCN, each Law Centre would be trying to meet these demands alone, rather than pooling resources to find better ways of maintaining and developing services. Law Centres are uniquely positioned as the only not-for-profit specialist advice organisations giving lawyer-led advice and representation on a variety of social welfare law issues. As their umbrella body, LCN is the only organisation that supports them in this. Our communications work keeps our clients and communities and their interests at the heart of our external messaging.

About the need for the work

It is important that we communicate the value of the work that Law Centres do. Firstly, people in need of their assistance need to know that it is there for them. As only 1 in 6 people thinks of legal problems they encounter as such, this means our communications need to be as clear about legal problems as we are about the solutions that Law Centres provide. Doing this well can reduce the amount of people misdirected, shorten their path

to assistance, and reduce the burden of wrong referrals on Law Centres, meaning that they can focus on helping the people they can help.

The need for Law Centres' work is certainly there. Even before the pandemic, the UK had over 14 million people living in poverty, of which over 4 million children and some 1.5 million who are destitute. A decade of austerity policies has increased demand for our assistance (by 400% in welfare rights alone), as both entitlements and routes to redress were hit. For the time being, Brexit and Covid-19 are two major and unprecedented factors are expected only to widen hardship. Already the digitalisation of the justice system, now accelerated by social distancing, is leaving many people excluded.

Over the same period, Law Centres have been challenged by a 40% drop in funding, and since 2013 legal aid no longer covers many problems that are key to our work: welfare and employment rights, housing disrepair, school exclusions and immigration, among others. Hundreds of thousands of cases every year are no longer being helped by legal aid to challenge wrong decisions or denial of services or entitlements. We think this is the wrong choice for government to make. To us, access to justice for all, regardless of the ability to pay, is as fundamental as universal healthcare and social security.

To push back against this, we are building a movement for social change, to make the UK a more equal society, founded on social justice and the rule of law. To many these are abstract concepts: our challenge is to make them concrete if we are to gain their support. This means communicating the everyday work of Law Centres to show its practical benefit to people – just how it helps protect homes, lives and livelihoods. It means analysing and explaining the wider impact that resolved legal issues have for life chances, for health and for the resilience of local communities. Justice and access to it may not be the only component helping people thrive, but they are an essential part of the mix. With a unique role to play in this, Law Centres are needed now more than ever.
