



Brief for an experienced consultant with Project Management and training capabilities

Peer to Peer (Pilot) - Support programme

SUSU is the students' union at the University of Southampton (UoS). It is run by students to enrich the lives of everyone who studies at the University.

Each of the 23,000 students enrolled at the University of Southampton is a member of SUSU. SUSU represents their voice and interests on issues at local, national and international levels and supports them in taking action to realise their ambitions and improve their lives.

It provides necessary, affordable and high quality student focused facilities and services. These include free and confidential advice; support for a huge variety of student led campaigns, societies and sports clubs; academic and course representation; and a whole range of exciting opportunities to have fun and socialise.

Introduction

There can be no doubt that the demand for mental health peer support among the student population both in general and at the University of Southampton is growing. Nationally, this is shown in the Royal College of Psychiatrists' 2011 report, *Mental Health of Students in Higher Education*, which analyses the "epidemiology of mental disorders in students", identifying several factors which may have led to an increased need for support. The report's findings echo those described in *Responses and Prevention in Student Suicide*, Stanley, Mallon et al (2007), which states that, "Peer support was also identified as more accessible and acceptable to students than professionally staffed services..."

There is also an increasing number of online forums offering peer support (including a dedicated section of The Student Room, one of the most popular student forums).

A recent report by the UoS Counselling Service finds that there is one counsellor for every 5667 students, putting the UoS well below the Russell Group average. Within SUSU, there is also a growing number of student-led initiatives aimed at providing peer support; these often focus on specialist areas of mental health and are run without professional supervision.

Current position

There is concern at SUSU over the proliferation of unstructured peer to peer support networks amongst our membership: "These peer to peer groups cover areas such as mental health, disability and include long-standing groups such as Nightline. The growth here at

Southampton is also reflected nationally. Concern has arisen over the expertise and supervision of those giving support; often also the victims or sufferers, there is no consistent approach to the training, support and supervision given to these potentially vulnerable students, which exposes us to potentially high risks”.

Through extensive research we have established that the development of significant training and supervision for students involved in peer support activity is required.

Project Scope and Deliverables

SUSU is seeking a specialist freelance project manager/trainer to deliver the pilot phase of a new Peer to Peer project in Southampton. Project management has been developed for this programme of work and the intention is that the consultant will build on this to create the Pilot stage and deliver the training and supervision required.

The initial pilot stage for which this brief is intended will include:

- The creation of a pilot project
- The recruitment, training and supervision of one cohort of student volunteers
- The creation of a monitoring and evaluation process
- Research into other local existing initiatives
- A plan for rolling out a full scale sustainable project including branding and identity
- Investigating possible sources of funding
- Working closely with SUSU staff to ensure the sustainability of the project

Candidates will need to demonstrate experience of mental health support projects, including delivering training and conducting group supervision.

Schedule and Deadlines

The successful candidate will work across 4 months starting in September 2013 in order to establish the project, carry out the pilot, monitor and evaluate and plan for the roll out of the full sustainable project.

Submissions

Submissions of interest and requests for further information can be sent to Nickola Moore Head of Membership and Community Engagement, SUSU Email: n.j.moore@soton.ac.uk
Tel: 023 80597649

Submissions of interest should be received by Monday 2nd September 9am. The submission should include a brief outline of how the consultant will look to carry out the work.

Selection Criteria

A shortlist will be created of those who demonstrate excellent and relevant experience and knowledge and interviews will take place on Wednesday 4th September.

Fees

The fee for the work will be £150 per day incl. VAT With the intention that up to 15 days will be required