



**FOUNDATION  
OF LIGHT**

THE WORLD AT YOUR FEET

# RECRUITMENT PACK







# WELCOME



## WE MAKE LIFE BETTER FOR PEOPLE IN THE NORTH EAST

We are delighted that you are expressing an interest in joining our pioneering charity at such an exciting time. We are proud of our history and culture, our innovative and proactive solutions to community problems, and our people.

We are looking to add diversity and new skills to our passionate and enthusiastic team.

We are the official charity of Sunderland AFC, established in 2001 by former club Chairman Sir Bob Murray CBE with a simple mission:





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## OUR VISION

Better opportunities, better lives.

## OUR MISSION

We are here to use the power of football to invest in the communities we serve and to improve the Education, Health, Wellbeing and happiness of people, no matter who they are.

## ABOUT US

Set up in 2001, the Foundation of Light is the registered charity of Sunderland Football Club; we use the power of football to engage individuals and communities, increasing life opportunities.

Situated in the Northeast of England, we are based at the award-winning community hub, the Beacon of Light, but also have outreach centres in Sunderland, South Tyneside and County Durham.

We use our position as an unparalleled route into traditionally 'hard to reach' communities – involving, educating and inspiring. We work across four industries – education and skills, sport and play, health and wellbeing and youth and community learning.





# OUR VALUES

## Collaborative

We work together, encourage diversity and build strong relationships in our community.



## Integrity

We are honest, respectful and inclusive. We care about our colleagues and our community.



## Innovative

We are creative in solving problems and bold in trying out new ideas.



## Agile

We adapt to all situations with flexibility and positivity. We are resilient in times of challenge.



## Excellence

We are professional, accountable for our actions and contribute to a high performing team.



## Passionate

We are proud of what we do and committed to making a difference.







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# SAFE, WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE IS AT THE HEART OF WHO WE ARE

We recognise, respect and value difference; all individuals will be treated equally and fairly.

We expect all staff, volunteers and partners to share our commitment to maintaining a culture of vigilance and encourage the reporting of any concerns about the welfare of any child, young person or adult at risk.



*James and Daniel really enjoyed the session today.  
They said it felt like they were learning but in a fun way  
- and they love anything to do with football!*

**Kelly Woods, Parent**







# WHAT WE DO

We work with partners and key stakeholders such as local councils, colleges, universities and housing associations to deliver more than 40 programmes a year across the North East. In doing so, we support almost 20,000 people from all walks of life.

Our **sport and play** programmes cater for young children aged from 18 months (Little Dribblers) to adults aged over 55 (our Extra Time Hubs). We encourage people of all ages to keep active, develop skills and live more fulfilling lives.

Meanwhile, our wide range of disability programmes ensure young people and adults can enjoy sport and build friendships. Our disability coaching team delivers fun, exciting, and challenging sessions which help develop motor skills, balance, and co-ordination, as well as encouraging teamwork and improving communication and confidence.



*Jacob has really enjoyed the holiday courses - the staff have been fantastic! It's helped massively with childcare over the holidays; I can crack on knowing he is happy and in safe hands.*



**Helen Wall, Parent**



We're passionate about inspiring **young people** to be the best they can be, so we also provide a range of free programmes to develop children and young people wherever their interests lie. From sports through to social action projects, residential trips, mentoring, youth clubs and forums, we make sure their voice is heard and their dreams encouraged.

To help raise the educational attainment across the region, we partner with education providers to close the gap between those from disadvantaged backgrounds and others.

We deliver a wide range of sports and education programmes for schools and academies across the North east.





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Hundreds of young people have benefitted from our Holiday Hunger programmes, enjoying free activities and a daily meal during the school holidays.

We work with those aged **16+** to improve their **employability skills** and help them find full time work, we also help parents, grandparents and carers support their child's development through a range of courses; encouraging families to learn and play together and gain new skills and experiences.

We offer adults the opportunity to reskill or upskill and gain qualifications and participate in courses they may previously not have had access to.

Of course, another priority is **health** inequality, and working with partners across Sunderland, South Tyneside and County Durham we deliver a wide range of programmes aimed at tackling poor physical health.



Over **16,000** young people making safer and healthier choices from our programmes

We've upskilled nearly **1,500** young people and adults, supported over **600** participants in their employment journey and helped secure nearly 100 jobs

Over **20,000** people who we have worked with have improved their physical health with 14,000 also improving their mental wellbeing

Over **10,000** volunteering hours

Over **250** aged over-55 access our five day a week programme of activities



# OUR HISTORY







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“

*I love been able to go out into the community meet different people and organisations.*

**Susan Kane,  
Foundation of Light  
staff**

”





# OUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE ○○○

## 1 Aim

**...every contact will count with three million hours of meaningful engagement over five years.**

Our work continues to focus on young people; inequality including social mobility, gender and race, and health including obesity, suicide prevention, depression and loneliness. We continue to inspire others by telling more of our life-changing stories, aiming to create:



### **Better life chances:**

- ▶ Helping more people into work
- ▶ Increasing ambition and aspiration
- ▶ Increasing the number of people with qualifications and skills

### **Better lifestyles:**

- ▶ Improving physical health
- ▶ Improving mental health

### **Better balance:**

- ▶ Reducing divisions in society
- ▶ Improving social mobility
- ▶ Strengthening communities





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### **Better Investment:**

- ▶ Growing our unrestricted revenue
- ▶ Reducing our overheads to delivery costs
- ▶ Growing our environmental sustainability

### **Better access for all:**

- ▶ Making more data-informed decisions
- ▶ Improving our user experience



# Aim

# 2

### **...to continue to create a vibrant and sustainable Beacon of Light.**

Thankfully, visitors have returned to the Beacon of Light post Covid. Prior to the lockdowns, the Beacon was a ever-growing community hub and event space attracting more than 7,000 visitors a week. Parents brought their children to football only to find themselves signing up for a maths or language class. We'd created a place which has something to interest and benefit everyone.

Our ambitious aim is to exceed pre-pandemic levels of participation. This is important to us as the Beacon is our engine – it brings in much-needed unrestricted income that we plough straight back into our programmes. We are determined to grow this sort of income as it gives us more freedom to deliver more meaningful engagement in our communities.





# OUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE ○○○

## Aim

# 3

### ...to be the best in our field.

The Foundation has long been one of the largest football charities in the UK and if we can achieve our aims of delivering three million contact hours, exceeding our pre-Covid levels of engagement and continuing to deliver quality work we'll be on our way to accomplishing our aim of being one of the best football foundations in our field.

To do so, we know we'll have to continue our high levels of good governance while still delivering excellent levels of employee and customer satisfaction, and raising sufficient funds to ensure our destiny remains in our own hands.



### Best standards and governance:

- ▶ Be financially robust
- ▶ Meet industry standards
- ▶ Invest in our workforce

### Best innovation and learning:

- ▶ Growth in ICT and digital innovation
- ▶ Continue to build strong collaborations and partnerships

### Better access for all:

- ▶ Ensure people are at the heart of our decisions
- ▶ Maintain robust and consistent monitoring and evaluation



# HOW WE MEASURE WHAT WE DO



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## Issues /Challenges

These are the issues that concern us, they identify who we are drawn to and why it is important to us to reach them.

## Programmes

The many interventions through which we respond to the issues are managed in these 5 delivery areas.

## Impact Themes

The many interventions through which we respond to the issues are managed in these 5 delivery areas.

**Societal factors /  
Community Issues**

**Health Factors**

**Personal Development  
Factors**

**Issues Specific to Young  
People**

**Family Issues**

**Sport-Specific Issues**

**Disability-Specific  
Issues**

**Educational Factors**

**Employability Issues**

**Skills**

**Education**

**Informal and  
Community  
Education**

**Health and Wellbeing**

**Football and Sport**

**Being the best me**

**Being well connected**

**Having lots to offer**

**Having a role in life**

**Looking after my body**

**Looking after my mind**



# WHAT OUR STAFF SAY...

“

*Loved being part of Foundation Matchday - it's the chance for everyone to get involved and showcase the great work we do. There's no better feeling than seeing it all come together in front of a packed out Stadium of Light.*

”

**Kate Smith,**  
**Foundation of Light staff**



“

*Wearing the Sunderland badge every day isn't just part of the job - it's a privilege. Being part of an organisation that helps support the local community, with the club at its heart, feels like the perfect way to give back to the place that has given me so much.*

”

**Anth Parkinson**  
**Foundation of Light staff**

“

*I've spent the last two and a bit years as a student here doing placement anyway. To be able to do this full-time is just a dream.*

”

**Jake Lumsdon,**  
**Foundation of Light staff**



“

*Best place in the world to work*

**Jack Gray,**  
**Foundation of Light staff**

”



# OUR STRATEGIC ASSETS



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- ▶ **SAFC BRAND AND LINK TO FOOTBALL**
- ▶ **BEACON OF LIGHT**
- ▶ **OUR BESPOKE CUSTOMER SERVICE**
- ▶ **OUR HISTORY, CULTURE AND TRACK RECORD**
- ▶ **OUR PEOPLE, STAFF, AMBASSADORS AND NETWORKS**
- ▶ **THE INNOVATIVE AND RESPONSIVE SOLUTIONS TO COMMUNITY PROBLEMS**
- ▶ **OUR COLLABORATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS AND RELATIONSHIPS**



# THE ROLE



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## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Job Title</b>	Head of Innovation
<b>Job Holder</b>	TBC
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Chief Operating Officer/Deputy CEO
<b>Responsible for:</b>	TBC
<b>Hours:</b>	35 hour per week
<b>Salary Band:</b>	£34,000 - £46,500

<b>Main Duties:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Lead Innovation within the Foundation of Light.</li><li>2. Translate Strategy into Operational Delivery.</li><li>3. Manage Service-Level Budgets and Outcomes</li><li>4. Ensure Compliance within the Function.</li></ol>
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### 1. Lead Innovation within the Foundation of Light

Drive a culture of innovation and continuous improvement across all departments to ensure the Foundation remains forward-thinking and impactful. Identify opportunities for new initiatives, partnerships, and methods that strengthen outcomes for the people we support.

Key Responsibilities include:

- Act as the internal adviser to the CEO and Exec team on innovation.
- Translate the Foundation's strategic objectives into a robust framework with aligned KPIs, outcome measures, and evaluation tools.
- Use analytics and data to inform strategic planning, monitor trends, and support evidence-based decision making
- Work with the Heads of Marcoms and Impact and Insights to lead the evolution of digital and systems to streamline processes and improve staff experience.
- Champion and embed innovation across all areas of the Foundation's work, fostering a culture of experimentation.
- Initiate and lead the development of pilot/incubator projects, prototypes, and test-and-learn approaches.
- Collaborate with staff, partners, and beneficiaries to co-design innovative solutions.
- Establish internal systems to capture and share new ideas across teams.
- Establish a shared culture of evidence-based practice and continuous learning across the organisation.
- Represent the Foundation externally on matters related to innovation, including liaising with funders, academic institutions, and partners.
- Monitor external trends, technologies, and practices to identify opportunities for adoption or adaptation.
- Explore the development of a digital Beacon with our professional volunteers.





## 2. Translate Strategy into Operational Delivery

Ensure that innovative ideas are strategically aligned and translated into practical, sustainable solutions. Bridge the gap between long-term goals and day-to-day implementation, fostering collaboration across teams.

Key Responsibilities include:

- Translate the Foundation's strategic priorities into clear innovation workstreams and delivery plans.
- Work with programme leads to integrate innovation activity into their operational planning including AI.
- Work with colleagues to identify and digitalise service delivery (learning, apps, engagement platforms)
- Develop tools, processes, and frameworks to guide consistent delivery of innovation projects.
- Identify dependencies, risks, and resource needs to support smooth delivery.
- Facilitate cross-team collaboration to ensure integrated and aligned execution.
- Identify PR opportunities and case studies relating to the FOL's innovation
- Undertake market research and customer/participant surveys
- Identify opportunities for innovation, growth and continuous improvement across departments.
- Working with the Head of Impact and Insights use community insights, feedback, and data to inform programme development and continuous improvement.
- Help train staff in new approaches.

## 3. Manage Budgets and Outcomes

Oversee innovation budgets and ensure resources are allocated effectively to deliver measurable outcomes.

Key Responsibilities include:

- Manage the budget, ensuring resources are allocated efficiently to meet organisational needs.
- Ensure timely, and accurate reporting to funders, trustees, and other agencies.
- Track and report on organisational KPIs, strategic outcomes, and social return on investment (SROI).
- Access income generation by providing innovative ideas and compelling business cases for funding bids and tenders.
- Ensure databases are updated on a regular basis with correct information

## 4. Ensure Compliance within the Function

Maintain robust processes to ensure all innovation activity is compliant with internal policies and external regulations. Protect the integrity of the Foundation's work while encouraging calculated risk-taking and learning.

Key Responsibilities include:

- Ensure monitoring and evaluation systems such as scorecards and traffic lights are up to date.
- Update the Data Protection and ICT Manual.
- Ensure all departmental activity complies with Foundation policies and relevant legislation, including safeguarding, GDPR, health and safety, and equality and diversity.
- Ensure employees have completed mandatory training and records are uploaded to PeopleHR
- Maintain accurate records and support reporting to regulators, funders, and Trustees as required.
- Support internal audits, evaluations and inspections, responding promptly and effectively to recommendations.



**Other Duties:**

You will be required to undertake other duties from time to time as required.

Any potential permanent changes to your role will be discussed, and agreement reached prior to being undertaken. You will be notified of any permanent change in writing. In addition to your normal duties, you may be required to undertake additional or other duties as necessary to meet the needs of the Foundation of Light.

Staff are required to work with volunteers in a way of mutual respect and commitment to organisational goals and objectives. This includes staff who do not directly supervise volunteers but may engage with them within the organisation.

**Behaviour and Professional Expectations:**

- Contribute actively as a member of the Senior Leadership Team, supporting cross-organisational collaboration and cultural leadership
  - Keep up to date with relevant and changes in government policies and strategies
  - Maintain working practices in line with Foundation of Light Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety and Safeguarding policies; self-awareness of own responsibility in these areas
  - Embed EDI and safeguarding in all aspects of work
  - Assist in data collection and analysis providing accurate management information systems for data led decisions
  - Ensure regulatory and legislative requirements are met at all times
  - Conduct should reflect the Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct); uphold Foundation core values (as shown below) at all times
  - Maintain the highest level of professionalism and confidentiality.
  - Attend working groups and CPD session as required
  - Build strong internal relationships and work in collaboration with colleagues to achieve the end goal
  - Ensure positive organisational messages and culture are maintained
  - Contribute to good housekeeping across all Foundation sites and equipment
  - Follow the laid down policies and procedures at all times
- Work within the established administrative and financial systems to ensure smooth running and quality of projects

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement:**

All individuals will be treated equally and fairly in the application of this procedure. All reasonable requests to accommodate requirements in terms of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation will be made.

**Safeguarding Statement**

We expect all staff, volunteers and partners to share our commitment to maintaining a culture of vigilance, and believe that all staff, volunteers and partners have a responsibility to report any concerns about the welfare of any child, young person or adult at risk.

**Foundation of Light Values:**

Innovative, Passionate, Excellence, Collaborative, Integrity, Agile.





## PERSONAL SPECIFICATION

Requirement	Essential (E) or Desirable (D)	How Assessed (CV, Interview, Observation)
<b>Skills and Abilities:</b>		
Strong strategic and creative thinking skills with the ability to identify, develop, and scale new ideas.	E	CV/APPLICATION
Excellent problem-solving and design-thinking skills, with a focus on user-led innovation.	E	CV/APPLICATION
Ability to lead cross-functional teams through ideation, prototyping, and implementation.	E	CV/APPLICATION
Skilled in identifying trends, funding opportunities, and sector developments to inform innovation.	E	CV/APPLICATION
Capable of managing change and embedding a culture of continuous improvement.	E	CV/APPLICATION
Excellent communication and stakeholder engagement skills, including influencing and presenting ideas at all levels.	E	I
Strong planning, research, and evaluation skills to support agile development and impact measurement.	E	CV/APPLICATION
<b>Personal Attributes:</b>		
Curious, creative, and forward-thinking with a passion for social change.	E	I
Resilient and adaptable in the face of ambiguity or complexity.	E	I
Empathetic and open-minded, with a strong commitment to co-creation and inclusion.	E	I
Entrepreneurial and proactive, with the ability to take initiative and build momentum.	E	CV/APPLICATION
Collaborative and team-oriented with excellent relationship-building skills.	E	CV/APPLICATION
Reflective and improvement-driven, with a commitment to learning and development	E	I
<b>Knowledge and Understanding:</b>		
Understanding of innovation frameworks such as design thinking, systems thinking or lean start-up.	E	I
Awareness of social challenges in education, health, sport, and community development, and how innovation can respond to them.	D	I
Knowledge of impact measurement and theory of change models.	D	I
Familiarity with innovation ecosystems including funders, accelerators, and collaborative networks.	D	I
Understanding of change management principles and how to embed innovation within organisational culture.	E	I
Awareness of relevant legislation and ethical considerations around data, safeguarding, and community engagement.	E	CV/APPLICATION





<b>Experience:</b>		
Demonstrable experience in leading innovation, service design, or transformation projects within the charity, public, education or social enterprise sectors.	E	CV/APPLICATION
Proven track record of designing and implementing new initiatives, partnerships or products that deliver measurable social impact.	E	CV/APPLICATION
Experience in user-centred design or co-production with service users, communities or young people.	E	CV/APPLICATION
Experience managing pilot programmes and learning loops (test–learn–refine–scale).	D	CV/APPLICATION
Experience in securing or contributing to funding bids, including innovation funds and strategic partnerships.	E	CV/APPLICATION
Experience in developing or utilising digital tools, systems, or platforms to support innovation.	E	CV/APPLICATION
<b>Qualifications (or equivalent):</b>		
Degree-level education or equivalent experience in innovation, agile project management, service design, social impact, or related fields	E	CV/APPLICATION
Enhanced DBS check (or willingness to obtain)	E	CV/APPLICATION
Evidence of continuing professional development	E	CV/APPLICATION





# OUR EMPLOYEE BENEFITS



YEARLY  
EYE TESTS



HOLIDAY  
PURCHASE  
SCHEME



CHRISTMAS  
SHOPPING DAY



STAFF  
PENSION

ACCESS TO HEALTH  
ASSURED HEALTH  
CARE SERVICE



CYCLE2WORK  
/TEXT SCHEME

10%  
DISCOUNT



EMPLOYEE  
SHOPPING  
DISCOUNT  
PORTAL



FLEXIBLE  
WORKING



ACCESS TO HR/  
CONSULTANTS  
OCULUS MENTAL  
HEALTH WELLBEING



BETTER  
HEALTH  
AT WORK  
SCHEME



X2 SAFC  
TICKETS



20% SHOP  
DISCOUNT



STAR  
PLAYER

Out of Office STAFF  
AWAY  
DAYS



ACCESS TO  
CHAPLAIN

DEATH IN  
SERVICE POLICY



STAFF  
SAFC  
KIT



CHRISTMAS  
PARTY



FUNDED  
TRAINING

PRIORITY ACCESS  
TO SAFC TICKETS  
AND EVENTS



# NEXT STEPS



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Interested applicants should request an application pack or send a CV to -

✉ [gemma.snaith@foundationoflight.co.uk](mailto:gemma.snaith@foundationoflight.co.uk)

or download packs from

🌐 [foundationoflight.co.uk](http://foundationoflight.co.uk)

Candidates who have not heard within six weeks of application should assume they have been unsuccessful.

Appointments are subject to an enhanced DBS Check.

Foundation of Light is an Equal Opportunities Employer.







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