

Lively Minds Job Description – Manager of Special Projects

Reports to: Chief Operating Officer

Based: In year 1 you will need to be based in Tamale Ghana. In year 2 you can decide where to work.

Salary: Starting salary £40,280 per annum

Hours: Full time

Contract: Permanent

About us

Our mission is to get preschool children in rural Africa to thrive. At present over 250 million children worldwide fail to receive the education and care they need in their early years which means they are less likely to do well in school, find gainful employment, and are at greater risk of early marriage, early parenthood and even criminality. Current approaches to solving this crisis are not proving effective or scalable in low & middle income countries.

That's where Lively Minds comes in. We have developed an award-winning Early Childhood Development programme that has been proven through randomised control trial to improve cognitive and socio-emotional skills and reduce malnutrition for pre-schoolers in hard-to-reach communities, so they have a greater chance of succeeding in school and in life. The programme provides marginalised Mothers with a parenting course and weekly radio broadcasts that empowers them to run educational Play Schemes for pre-schoolers and to provide better home-based care, using cheap local resources. The programme is delivered through government partners, is cheap and highly scalable. It genuinely has the potential to play a transformative role in ending the global ECD crisis.

We are extremely proud that the Government of Ghana have now adopted the programme and we have a ground-breaking partnership with them to support them to institutionalise it, fund it and to scale it to 60 education districts, reaching over 4000 communities and 1million children. In addition, an award-winning international research team are conducting a further randomised control trial to help us understand its impacts at scale. We are now turning our attention to scaling the programme nationwide across Ghana, scaling up the radio in it's own right and moving to new countries.

We're a lively ambitious organisation, determined to have a major positive impact on the world. We work hard at a fast pace, in a challenging environment. We expect everyone to give their best to achieve the best possible results. Our work is demanding but provides plenty of opportunity for innovation, responsibility, growth, collaboration, creativity and fun. We want all staff to be happy, fulfilled and to feel appreciated and valued in their work.

To find out more about our programme, take a look at the videos about our programme
<https://www.livelyminds.org/videos>

About the role

Working directly with our COO, the Manager of Special Projects will work closely with the PMO and will lead on project management best practice across the organisation. The Manager of Special Projects will lead projects as a project owner. We are developing new systems and processes to ensure that our government partners are able to deliver to quality standards at scale, and our staff are enabled to provide them with high-quality technical support.

The postholder will also lead on projects assigned by the CEO. These will typically focus on our partnerships work and collaboration with key stakeholders as we progress our scale plans.

The postholder will work with global team members build capacity in project management best practice. The post holder will provide specialised support to our Ghana and Uganda implementing teams to employ these project management systems and tools effectively.

Main duties and responsibilities

Project Management

- Support COO to ensure project management best practice is implemented to excellence across the organisation
- Working closely with the PMO, support development & implementation of internal project management tools and systems
- Lead on projects assigned by CEO and COO as a project owner.
- Manage and report on a set of projects. This will involve running regular status meetings, monitoring milestones and logging/flagging risks/issues.
- Provide coordination between project teams, identifying dependencies and bottlenecks
- Log, manage and analyse information flow on all projects, flagging when project progress is at risk
- Proactively identify risks in projects in consultation with the Operations Manager, COO and Country Directors and facilitate problem solving discussions.
- Provide coaching support to project leads and other team members on effective project management
- Conduct field visits to assess progress against specific projects leading on
- Line management of secondees, including supporting the secondee to contribute to project plans and providing development opportunities

Other

May be asked to deputise for the COO or Country Director Ghana or other members of SMT at external events with key stakeholders.

You may be assigned any other responsibility in agreement with your line manager, in contribution to Lively Minds work and in recognition of your experience and skills. It is therefore expected for staff to be flexible and willing to contribute to the work of the wider team.

To succeed in this role, you:

- Are an excellent communicator – you are clear on standards and expectations and rally people around new ways of working
- Are an expert in developing project management tools (risk registers, status reports) that are user-friendly and make work easier & in coaching and coordinating others to ensure effective project delivery
- Have a passion for project management practise and instilling this in others
- Have a systems-mindset – always eager to improve systems and processes to ensure effective teamwork and operations
- Are able to drive high performance in others by setting clear goals and expectations
- Are creative, proactive, and energetic
- Are a team player that values and prioritises inclusivity
- Are able to deliver high-quality thoughtful work in a fast-pace high pressure environment

Technical abilities

Essential

- Minimum of 2 years of project management experience
- Professional Project Management certification (i.e., Prince 2, Six Sigma, PMP, APM, PMQ)
- Experience in creating user-friendly tools and processes to support project and quality management
- Experience using Microsoft 365 package including Visio, PowerPoint, with advanced Excel skills
- Tech savvy – ability to learn new tech tools efficiently
- Excellent communication (English), both oral and written
- Experience coordinating others and highly professional communication skills
- Ability to manage a complex and varied work load and to work under pressure

Desirable

- Change management experience
- Experience supporting complex long term projects
- Experience developing high level communications e.g. PowerPoint presentations and briefing papers for a wide range of stakeholders
- Experience designing internal operational systems (I.e. finance, HR, IT)
- Experience with strategic goal-setting (I.e Objective and Key Results) systems
- Experience working in the global south

How to apply

If this sounds like you, please send your CV and cover letter to jobs@livelyminds.org by **11:59pm GMT on Monday 11th March**

The cover letter should be a maximum of two pages and outline how you meet the role requirements.

Due to resource constraints, we apologise, but we will only respond to shortlisted candidates.

Lively Minds operates a strict Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy, and we therefore check suitability of successful candidates through background checks consisting of references and police checks.

Lively Minds is fully committed to equity, diversity and inclusion. We want this to be reflected in the diversity of the people who work for us and we welcome applications from people from all backgrounds and identities.