



Quaker Social Action

Down to Earth development worker

- **Location:** QSA's office is based in Bethnal Green, London, and we operate a hybrid working policy so you have the option to work from home some of the time
- **Responsible to:** Down to Earth manager
- **Salary:** Full time £30,753 or part time £23,919
- **Hours:** Full time 36 hours per week or part time 28 hours over 4 days

How to apply

We're keen to make our recruitment process clear and transparent. Firstly, by 9am on **Monday 23 May**, we'd like you to send (to info@gsa.org.uk) the following two documents:

- Your CV, highlighting the areas of your experience pertinent to this role.
- Your supporting statement, explaining why you want this role and how you have the experience, skills and values we're looking for. You will find this within our person specification further on in this pack. We'd encourage you to demonstrate why you'd be a great fit, but also be honest with us if you feel there are some aspects of the role you have less experience in.
- We also invite you to complete our online [equality and diversity monitoring form](#).

We're holding interviews on **Thursday 9 June**, ideally in person, at our office in Bethnal Green – however we can accommodate Zoom too. In order to enable all candidates to come to the interview well prepared, we'll send you the interview questions the day before. We're hoping to be able to make decisions that day, but if we've got a couple of particularly strong candidates, we may want to speak with you again.

Being a diverse and inclusive organisation is very important to us. We actively encourage and welcome applications from candidates of diverse cultures, perspectives and lived experiences. We hope you find this job pack clear and welcoming and indeed, should you apply for this role, that you find the same to be true of our whole recruitment process. Please do let us know if you don't. We would genuinely welcome the feedback.

About the role

What does QSA do?

Quaker Social Action's mission is twofold. We enable people on low incomes in east London and beyond to seek solutions to the issues affecting their lives. To do this, we listen and respond to the needs of the community by running practical, sustainable and collaborative projects. Where we see the potential to bring benefit to communities outside of our own, we share our learning by running professional training, and by using our voice to seek structural change by speaking truth to power.

Services include: crisis support for those unable to afford funerals; courses that empower people to manage their money more confidently; practical support for people experiencing homelessness such as a mobile library and a community kitchen space; wellbeing interventions, and the UK's first dedicated supported housing project for young carers.

QSA was founded by Quakers in 1867, troubled by the social injustices of the time and keen to tackle them. This sense of taking practical action to has stayed with us over our 150 year history and our organisational values are aligned with Quaker values of equality, truth and peace. We are proud of our Quaker heritage and our place within the Quaker community, while also clear that our services, jobs and volunteering roles are open to all.

[Learn more about our practical action against poverty >](#)

What is Down to Earth?

Down to Earth is a project dedicated to supporting and advocating on behalf of people who find themselves struggling to pay for a funeral. [Down to Earth](#) delivers free support via a national helpline and through online resources, explaining what is available and appropriate to each individual's situation and personal beliefs, and ultimately helping clients to find a funeral that is both affordable and meaningful.

As of April 2022, Down to Earth has helped over 6,000 clients. Off the back of our breakthrough Fair Funerals campaign (2014-2018), Down to Earth has continued to advocate for change in the funeral industry and in government, sharing stories and evidence from our ongoing front-line casework as we do so.



“THEY WERE VERY COMFORTING AND UNDERSTANDING. THEY GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY, THE ROOM, THE SPACE.”

Percy, Down to Earth client



What is the role of the Down to Earth development worker?

The main role of the development worker is to support clients directly via our phone helpline. To do this well requires a very sensitive manner, as well as an ability to move practically through the options available to someone. This is a challenging area of work, but a deeply rewarding one and, as a development worker, you would be joining a small and dedicated team supporting people at an incredibly vulnerable time.

You will need to be a great ambassador for our work, speaking plainly about a subject matter that many find difficult. There is an exciting breadth to the project; as we balance the existing support we can offer directly to clients with the sharing of our work and services with partner organisations through training. The rewards will be in having a varied workload, within a friendly work environment and making a direct contribution to the charitable aims of QSA.

What is it like to work for QSA within the Down to Earth team?

The various teams at QSA undertake very different tasks but there is a strong sense of collaboration and of celebrating the successes of other teams with gusto and goodwill; as a small organisation, everyone has to work hard, and each person has their role to play. Our staff are enthusiastic and engaged with what they do, and there is both an openness and a solid commitment to social justice that is visible across the organisation.

Down to Earth talk to people every day who are living through one of the worst times of their lives, so the need for supportive colleagues is high. This is a role – and an organisation – that will suit someone who is looking for a close-knit working environment, who has an inner resilience, who understands the need to be flexible and sometimes all-hands-on-deck, and is ambitious to work as part of a team with a reputation for delivering work of the very highest standard.

We have always sought to be a flexible employer and that approach reaps dividends for us when our organisation had to start working remotely during lockdown. Our workforce was trusted to get on with their roles and they delivered. We're now thinking together as an organisation about what the post-lockdown world of work will look like, and we're doing this collaboratively, keen to maintain flexibility and morale all round.

Role description

The role

Responsible to: Down to Earth manager

Purpose of post: To deliver all aspects of Down to Earth, QSA's funeral poverty project

Main duties

Directly supporting people to obtain an affordable & meaningful funeral

1. To offer direct support to clients, usually over a phone helpline.
2. To develop a deep level of knowledge about planning and paying for a funeral, dealing with debt arising from a funeral and managing money after a bereavement.
3. To build up awareness of Down to Earth among professionals who are likely to come into contact with a person who needs to plan a funeral so they can refer smoothly into the project.
4. To build up knowledge of different funeral options to provide people with choices when planning a funeral.
5. To develop knowledge about other relevant services to signpost people on to.
6. To work with colleagues to design and test a range of complementary online tools and downloadable resources.
7. To work within the impact reporting framework for Down to Earth, ensuring all data collection requirements are met, and to share learning from delivery of the project.

Communications and sharing learning from Down to Earth

1. To assist with work, as appropriate to role, to help the service meet strategic aims, such as carrying out research or liaising with other agencies like the DWP.
2. To work with colleagues on developing ways of sharing our learning with other professionals, including the provision and delivery of training courses.
3. To be a strong advocate for the work of Down to Earth, keeping up to date with relevant research, trends and opportunities within this field.
4. To work with colleagues to promote the learning from Down to Earth through QSA's online platforms and by liaising with local and national networks as appropriate.

General

1. To work within, and actively promote, the policies and procedures of QSA.
2. To receive line management, supervision and appraisal from the Down to Earth manager.
3. Any other duties, as appropriate to role, as agreed by the QSA director.

Person specification

Experience

1. Experience of supporting people through a crisis or difficult experience, or issues relating to low income.
2. Experience of related sectors such as bereavement is highly desirable.
3. Experience of designing and delivering training sessions is highly desirable.

Ability

1. Ability to engage with people who have experienced a bereavement, with empathy and tact.
2. Ability to manage own workload and to work flexibly.
3. Strong commitment to, and knowledge of, assessing impact.
4. Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
5. Ability to promote and publicise Down to Earth enthusiastically and effectively to individuals and groups.

Knowledge

1. Knowledge of end of life issues, funerals, bereavement and of debt are all desirable.
2. Knowledge of the funeral payments element of the Social Fund is desirable.
3. Knowledge of credit and debt as well as budgeting support is desirable.

Other

1. Commitment to equal opportunities and diversity, in the workplace and in service provision.
2. A willingness to work within a Quaker ethos, as clarified by the vision & values of QSA: QSA's vision is: *"We want a just world, where people put people first". We fulfil this through our mission: "To enable people on low incomes in east London, and beyond, to seek solutions to the issues affecting their lives. To do this we will listen to and respond to the needs of the community, by running practical, sustainable and collaborative projects. We will share our work with others when it is clear that it has the potential to bring benefits to communities outside of our own".*

Main terms and conditions of employment

1. QSA uses the local government pay scales for salaries. Your salary will be on NJC scale point 20-25, which starts at £30,753 for a full time role or £23,919 for the part time option. All appointments are made at bottom of scale.
2. This is a full time role of 5 days a week/36 hours with a part time option of 4 days a week/28 hours.
3. You will be entitled to pro rata of 25 days holiday per year with the leave year running from January to December, plus bank holidays.
4. QSA's office is based in Bethnal Green, London, but this post can involve some home working.
5. The period of notice will be one week during the probationary period and 1 month on its completion.
6. QSA has a union recognition agreement with Unite although staff are welcome to join any trade union.
7. This post is subject to a 6 month probation period.
8. The QSA pension policy means staff receive 6% on top of their salary paid into the QSA group personal pension, with a 2% staff contributory element.
9. Due to the nature of this post, a DBS check will be required for the role.