

Surrey Docks Farm - Youth Worker Application Follow-up

Applicant Questions	Surrey Docks Farm Answers
Do you have projects that relate to climate change and promote climate action.	<i>Yes, our youth club members regularly lead projects about the environment. We're very much in support of projects which enable youth climate action.</i>
Have you got a preference for Wednesday, Thursday or Friday?	<i>No, this will be negotiated with the right candidate.</i>
I was wondering about the working relationship between this position and the Youth Manager. From the job description, it is unclear how much the Youth Worker is working independently and how much the role collaborates with the Manager.	<i>The Youth Worker will design and deliver the sessions independently, but will have regular meetings and reviews with the Youth Manager to contribute to internal monitoring, reporting and programme development.</i>
Will I also play a large role in animal care and food growing?	<i>The Youth Worker role is primarily to support the young people in our Greenagers programme and the main focus will be developing these young people within the Farm environment. As such this will include supporting young people to engage in animal care and food growing activities, therefore experience in these areas is beneficial. The Farm has dedicated teams of staff and volunteers for both animal care and gardening / food growing.</i>
Does the farm plan to return to normal function as the pandemic controls are eased?	<i>We are working on a phased re-opening in line with Government guidelines and the demands of the site.</i>
What do you think is the key quality for a youth worker in this role?	<i>We're looking for a Youth Worker who is able to develop young people to meet their potential, using the Farm environment. The qualities we're looking for include being able to communicate effectively with young people; to actively listen and work with young people to ensure a youth-led programme; and to be adaptable and a good problem solver.</i>
Would there be any opportunity for this role to become a full time role?	<i>The position is likely to remain part-time for the foreseeable future. Though there may be opportunities for additional work supporting seasonal holiday club delivery.</i>

<p>Will there be opportunities to open up new projects and/or creative interventions if they arise?</p>	<p><i>This is a highly responsive and proactive role, and we anticipate the Youth Worker will develop and deliver new and creative opportunities in response to young people's ideas and needs.</i></p>
<p>Is this role also available on a voluntary basis?</p>	<p><i>This role is a paid position. Once in post the Youth Worker will assist with the recruitment for a volunteer to help deliver the programme.</i></p>
<p>I am aware I may have less experience than other applicants. I am curious to find out how other candidates obtained their work experience with young people in an environmental setting. How does one gain this experience?</p>	<p><i>Volunteering is a great way to gain experience. Please do keep an eye out for opportunities to volunteer with our youth programme in the future by checking this site periodically: https://www.surreydocksfarm.org.uk/youth-volunteer/</i></p>
<p>How regularly do you receive your core funding and from who? Do your funders dictate any of your decision making?</p>	<p><i>The core funding for our Youth Programme comes from the National Lottery Community Fund, British Land and the Jack Petchey Foundation. We apply for additional small grants to fund projects that are identified by participants e.g. our recent Spacehive crowdfunder. We apply for both short and long-term funding depending on the reach and scale of our programme outcomes at the time. We are proud to be youth-led, with young people being central to our decision making processes. We select funders who are supportive and understanding of youth-led principles to enable us to respond directly to young people in the community. Further details about the whole organisation's funding and our other programmes can be found via our annual and financial reports here.</i></p>
<p>How accessible is the site for wheelchair users? Do you have an area or allocated time for wheelchair users? Have you considered a wheelchair user specific gardening club? Extra-raised beds make this easy and accessible for all!</p>	<p><i>We have an accessibility audit here. Although we don't currently run a wheelchair user gardening club, this is something we'd be open to if the need arose. We don't have a specific area or allocated time for wheelchair users, although recent site upgrades have been completed with wheelchair accessibility in mind.</i></p>
<p>How big are the average youth groups? What size are the groups I would be hosting?</p>	<p><i>Typically 10 young people attend each session. We follow the National Youth Agency's readiness levels which dictate youth group sizes during the pandemic.</i></p>

<p>Do you have a waiting list for places?</p>	<p><i>At present there are still places available in Greenagers, although we anticipate these to be taken very quickly upon launching the programme. We will then operate a waiting list if viable to do so in conjunction with partner organisations who will refer into the programme.</i></p>
<p>Is the scheme free for participants?</p>	<p><i>Yes, it's very important to us that Greenagers is free to attend, as our long-running Young Farmers Club is. This is to ensure we maximise engagement with young people experiencing hardship for which a charge would be a barrier to entry. Other projects within our informal youth programme are charged to generate income to support the delivery of our work with more vulnerable young people.</i></p>
<p>What does 'a success' in this role look like for you? (e.g. after me doing this position for 6 months, what would you hope to have achieved.)</p>	<p><i>Success would look like consistent, high quality engagement with our project participants with their feedback reflecting an increase in educational, experiential, vocational, social and health-promoting opportunities they would not otherwise have received. After six months we establish positive partnerships with key external stakeholders to aid in the development of our members. By the end of the first six months meaningful collaboration should be occurring with our Youth Committee and the Youth Worker to plan for the extension of the project and associated funding applications.</i></p>
<p>Is there a structure for the types of projects I would be engaging the groups with?</p>	<p><i>The projects would all be based around the fields of agriculture, horticulture, environmentalism, social action and wellbeing. The structure of Saturday sessions is likely to follow the seasonal demands of the Farm, the animals and plants with additional educational and experiential opportunities offered via trips, workshops and residentials. The weekday after-school sessions will provide bespoke support in areas identified by the young people and Youth Worker throughout the year.</i></p>
<p>Would the ideal candidate be influencing the type of projects heavily?</p>	<p><i>We encourage the ideal candidate to build into the programme particular expertise if it aligns with the interest of the participants/aims and outcomes of the programme and organisation. The ideal candidate will not heavily influence the projects, but rather take their lead from the young people involved. The ideal candidate will understand the challenge of working in a youth-led environment and will be able to establish working practices to further embed this.</i></p>

<p>Is there capacity for 1-1, or small group mentorship too?</p>	<p><i>Yes, the young people involved in consultations to design Greenagers told us they'd benefit from mentorship and small group or individual support. We shifted the working hours of the weekday shift with this in mind so that we can offer weekly late afternoon/early evening contact time with the young people to offer bespoke support in the areas of education, employment and wellbeing.</i></p>
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