**Job Description**

**Support Worker – Women’s Support Programme**

**The Suitcase Project**

**Position**: Women’s Support Worker – The Suitcase Project (Female\*)
**Location**: The Emmanuel Centre, East Belfast
**Hours:** Full time (37.5 hours per week) with the option to discuss a reduced hours arrangement (e.g., around 30 hours)
**Reports to**: Suitcase Project Leader
**Duration**: 12 months (with potential extension to 3 years subject to funding)
**Salary**: NJC Scale 4 (dependent on experience)

**Employer**: Church of Ireland Diocese of Down and Dromore

**Pension:** The employer will contribute 8% of salary to a personal pension scheme.

**About the Suitcase Project**

The Suitcase Project, is an outreach of the Church of Ireland Diocese of Down and Dromore, which seeks to express God’s love to asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants by welcoming newcomers, providing practical support, building relationships, and when invited, to share the gospel.

**About the Women’s Support Programme**

This programme aims to foster integration and mutual understanding between migrant women and women from host communities in East Belfast. Through one-to-one support, group activities, and partnership with local organisations, this programme seeks to reduce social isolation, improve wellbeing, promote inclusion, and build sustainable networks of support.

**Role Purpose**

The Women’s Support Worker will be responsible for delivering this Women’s Support Programme under the supervision of the Suitcase Project Leader. The role includes reaching out to and establishing initial connections with women in the local area, providing one-to-one support, facilitating group activities, and signposting participants to relevant services. Working in partnership with local organisations, the Women’s Support Worker will support women from both migrant and host communities to build relationships, share experiences, and access opportunities that promote integration and inclusion.

**\*Occupational requirement**

The Women’s Support Worker will provide confidential, one-to-one care and group activities for women – some of whom have experienced sexual violence, domestic abuse, trafficking or come from cultural and faith backgrounds where it would be inappropriate for them to work closely with a male worker. To create a safe and accessible environment for these women, this post is only open to female applicants.

**Key Responsibilities**

**1. Outreach & Engagement**

* + Proactively identify and establish initial connections with women in East Belfast, particularly from migrant communities.
	+ Build trust and rapport to encourage participation in project activities.
	+ Reach out through community centres, schools, faith-based groups, and informal networks.

**2. One-to-One Support**

* + Provide regular one-to-one meetings to assess needs, offer guidance, and support women to overcome barriers (language, isolation, access to services).
	+ Support goal-setting and monitor progress, maintaining confidentiality and safeguarding standards.

**3. Group Support & Facilitation**

* + Plan, organise, and facilitate group sessions that bring migrant and host community women together for peer support, shared learning, and cultural exchange.
	+ Evaluate group activities and adapt to meet participants’ needs.

**4. Signposting & Partnership Working**

* + Connect women with relevant local services and organisations (e.g. childcare, schools, churches, health providers, welfare systems, language classes).
	+ Maintain up-to-date knowledge of services and referral pathways.
	+ Develop and sustain partnerships with other organisations (e.g. EBCDA, East Belfast Sure Start, local churches) to strengthen community integration opportunities.

**5. Supporting the Suitcase Project Leader**

* + Assist with programme planning, monitoring, and evaluation.
	+ Assist with the recruitment, training and supervision of a team of volunteers from local churches
	+ Maintain accurate case records and outcome data.
	+ Contribute to evaluations, reports, feedback collection, and funding applications when needed.

**6. Administrative Duties**

* + Manage logistics for group sessions and community events.
	+ Ensure compliance with health and safety, data protection and the Church of Ireland Safeguarding Policy.
	+ Contribute to regular internal reporting and funder reports.
	+ Work to agreed budgets.

**7. Other Duties**

* + Uphold the ethos of the Diocese of Down and Dromore through ethical conduct, integrity and responsible stewardship of resources
	+ Uphold organisational values of inclusion, diversity, and respect.
	+ Flexible working required (occasional evenings/weekends).
	+ Undertake training and development as agreed with line manager.
	+ Any other duties as needed that are related to the role

This job description is subject to review in the light of changing circumstances and is not intended to be rigid and inflexible but should be regarded as providing guidelines within which the post-holder works. It may be modified to meet changing needs and other duties of a similar nature may be assigned from time to time by the Suitcase Project Leader.

**Person Specification**

**Support Worker (Women’s Support Programme)**

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| --- | --- |
| **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **Occupational requirement** |  |
| Female applicant. |  |
| **Educational Qualifications** | **Educational Qualifications** |
| Educational qualifications at an A-level standard (or equivalent) and 5 GCSE’s (or equivalent) at grades A\*- C including English and Mathematics. | Formal qualification in community development, social work or similar. |
| **Ethos** | **Knowledge** |
| Commitment to the ethos of the Diocese through ethical conduct, integrity and responsible stewardship. | Local knowledge of East Belfast services and networks. |
| Awareness of equality, inclusion, diversity, and safeguarding principles. |  |
| Commitment to justice, dignity and respect for asylum-seekers and refugees. |  |
| **Skills** | **Skills** |
| Strong organisational skills, ability to manage diaries, logistics, and records. | Language skills relevant to migrant communities (e.g. Arabic, Somali, Polish). |
| Strong outreach skills: ability to identify, engage and build initial connections with women. |  |
| Effective communication, computer literacy, prioritisation and time-management skills. |  |
| **Experience** | **Experience** |
| Experience, in a paid capacity, of working with migrant or minority ethnic communities, especially women. | Experience in report writing for funders or stakeholders. |
| Experience providing one-to-one support. | Experience in project monitoring and evaluation. |
| Experience in facilitating group sessions. | Experience collaborating with schools, churches, grassroots groups. |
| Experience of working on their own initiative as well as in a team. | Experience in recruiting, training, supporting and supervising volunteers. |
|  | Experience working in East Belfast or similar community contexts. |
|  | Experience of women who have been victims of abuse. |

It is important in making your application, along with the essential criteria listed above, you provide sufficient detail of all the desirable criteria that you think you meet.

**Working Conditions & Other Requirements**

* Based in East Belfast, with travel across the city as required.
* Must be available for occasional evening and weekend work.
* Appointment subject to AccessNI / enhanced background check.