



Head of Impact, Learning and Policy
Recruitment Pack
January 2025

Our Vision

A society in which all young people are ready, equipped, motivated, and able to enter the world of work.

Our Mission

To ensure all young people, particularly those who will most benefit, have access to meaningful employer engagement, work readiness skills development, and employment opportunities, enabling them to transition into sustained work and rewarding careers.

Our Values

Empowerment

We believe in empowering young people, ourselves, and others, to be self-determining in achieving personal and professional goals.

Collaboration

We believe that a collaborative approach is the most productive and effective way to work, and actively seek to be inclusive and partner with others in achieving our vision and mission.

Reliability

We strive to always be reliable, dependable, and trustworthy in our dealings and interactions with partners and beneficiaries.

Quality

We have a continuous commitment to the highest of quality, actively aiming to constantly improve what we do and how we do it.

Learning

We are a learning organisation, always seeking to listen, reflect, develop, adapt, and improve.

Thank you for your interest in this role

At Spark! we believe it is possible for every young person to be ready, equipped, motivated and able to enter the world of work.

We work in partnership with schools and colleges, and alongside a large and diverse range of employers and funders, **enhancing young people's employability skills, knowledge, experience and access**, so that they are better prepared for and able to effectively transition into the workplace, finding and keeping a job.

We do this through:

- a diverse range of **meaningful employer engagement** opportunities
- engaging **employability skills workshops** and activities
- high quality **work experience placements** and internships
- inspiring **one-to-one career mentoring** relationships
- impactful **place-based partnerships**

We are embedded in the communities we serve with **a deep knowledge and understanding of the needs**, challenges and opportunities, establishing long-term, cross-sector and local relationships and collaborations.

We are a growing and ambitious organisation, with a motivated and passionate team who are more determined than ever to reach our target young people and to have a deeper impact on their employment prospects and life chances. With a new strategy to be launched in 2025, we are now looking confidently towards the future.

A key element of our success will be in our ability to:

1. understand and articulate the needs that we are seeking to meet
2. effectively demonstrate and communicate our impact
3. ensure we are evidence and data-led in our approach
4. influence change at every level across all stakeholders

This role will lead and steer the organisation towards these goals, in order to significantly reduce youth unemployment in west London and beyond. If this is something that interests you and you have the appropriate experience and skills to deliver, then please read on and apply.

Matt Lent
Chief Executive Officer

Our history

1980

A group of business people and the London Borough of Hounslow's Education Department together created the 'Industry Education Working Group' (IEWG).

1989

The IEWG became the Hounslow Education Business Partnership (HEBP). HEBP, and the IEWG before it, forged close links with contacts in schools across Hounslow; ensuring that as many students as possible were engaged with a diverse range of career services.

The staff of HEBP would later be based at the London Borough of Hounslow, with direct input from schools, companies, the Careers Service and other West London training organisations.

2010

We obtained charitable status and began trading as 'Hounslow Education Business Charity'.

2011

The Department for Education abolished funding for Education Business Partnerships. The staff and assets of Hounslow Education Business Partnership (HEBP) were formally transferred to the Hounslow Education Business Charity.

2012

We rebranded as Spark!, established to operate in Hounslow, across west London, and beyond.

2021

A new strategic approach, alongside a new vision, mission and values were established and published, with a priority focus on building place-based partnerships across the 7 west London boroughs (Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow), alongside the objective of developing high impact services directed towards young people who had been identified as being at risk of becoming 'Not in Employment Education and Training'.



"I had struggled with finding my voice when it came to my career, as I lacked confidence. It was through the mentoring sessions that I gained the knowledge that I needed, and this boosted my confidence massively"

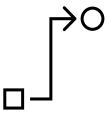
Our 4-year strategic priorities

INCREASE REACH



We will actively seek to increase the numbers of communities, young people, and businesses with which we work, and to build a 'place-based approach' in identified regions of need which are currently under-served.

IMPACT



In all that we do we aim to have as high an impact as possible on beneficiaries. We will continuously and rigorously assess and measure the value of our work and our delivery, with the objective of constant improvement in service of our targeted young people and partners.

INNOVATE AND LEARN



As a learning organisation we will continue to test and iterate new and impactful approaches, sharing learning, and further developing models that are the most viable. We will maximise our long-standing and embedded relationships in the London Borough of Hounslow, acting as a beacon of innovation and excellence; from where we can learn, replicate, and scale initiatives and programmes, wherever need is identified.

IMPROVE



We understand that however well we are performing as a team and an organisation, we can always make incremental improvements to systems, processes, and our delivery. We are therefore committed to quality assurance and to continuously striving to be the best at what we do, ensuring effective and efficient systems to allow us to function to an exemplary standard.

INFLUENCE



As part of a community of providers we appreciate that Spark! can offer significant value to young people by understanding what works, sharing our learnings, and supporting others to excel, in order that we might influence systemic changes to achieve our wider vision.

You can read our [2021-2025 strategy here](#)

Some of our employer partners



Some of our funders and community partners



Some numbers from our last year (2023/24)

5338

young people on a Spark! programme and activity

58

schools and colleges participated in a Spark! programme

835

young people matched with a career mentor or work placement

406

local employers engaged as partners

619

volunteers supported delivery of activities and events

16,303

hours of volunteering given

89%

of young people would recommend Spark! work experience

85%

of young people state that they feel more prepared for work

98%

of young people would recommend a Spark! Career Mentor

You can read our [2023/24 Reach and Impact Report here](#)



"It was a lovely, wonderful, and amazing place to have work experience. The Manager and employees were very kind and respectful. Thank you Spark! for offering me work experience!"

About the role

We are growing and are seeking to significantly strengthen our organisation and our work, through effective impact data collection and management, and the embedding of an evidence-led approach to inform and enhance our services and influence.

We know that to enable real change for young people we need to take a systemic approach, engaging and influencing cross-sector stakeholders, local Government, employers, schools and voluntary sector partners.

The holder of this position will need to confidently take charge of these priorities, building internal and external relationships, and developing the systems we need to excel and effect long-term change.

You will lead on 4 core areas of work:

1. Understand and articulate the needs and service gaps that we are seeking to meet

- You will become extremely well-informed on the challenges and opportunities related to youth employment and all elements of the youth employment and youth careers eco-system at a local and national level.
- You will build and cultivate the relationships needed to ensure Spark! is central to the conversation and solutions, at a local and national level, to reduce youth unemployment and effect systemic change.

2. Effectively demonstrate and communicate our impact

- You will develop and enhance our existing systems to ensure we are collecting and analysing the qualitative and quantitative data we need to better understand our impact and value.
- You will work with colleagues to ensure we are effectively reporting and communicating on our impact and learning to funders, partners and our wider community of stakeholders.

3. Ensure we are evidence and data-led in our approach

- You will work with the delivery team to ensure our services are informed by an evidence base, enhancing provisions to increase our impact.
- You will utilise the growing evidence base for our work to generate and cultivate new relationships and opportunities, in order to grow our reach and our impact.

4. Influence change

- You will work closely with colleagues to influence change across all stakeholders, including Central Government, Local Councils, employers, schools/colleges and voluntary sector partners.
- You will represent the organisation, our work and evidence, at a range of external meeting and events.
- You will work with our partners to establish and garner support for a 'Youth Employment Roadmap', developing cross-sector and collective approaches to address the youth employment challenges in west London and beyond.

In addition to the above, you will:

- Be a member of the 'Strategic Oversight Team', meeting quarterly to review our delivery against our strategic priorities and to establish and implement priorities for the next quarter.
- Support the development of your own practice and expertise by taking part in personal and professional development opportunities as required and provided by Spark!.
- Adhere to Spark!'s code of conduct and safeguarding policies, and all other policies which relate to our practice.

Person specification

Experience

- Experience of designing and carrying out both formative and summative evaluation, understanding how to appropriately collect and analyse quantitative and qualitative data.
- Experience of data visualisation and effectively communicating complex concepts in a straight-forward and accessible manner.
- Experience of working at the interface of policy and research, ideally with expertise in issues related to young people and youth employment, with a good understanding of education and employment policymaking.
- Highly research literate, with a good understanding and experience of different research methods and a demonstrated ability to communicate, synthesise and analyse research, to identify opportunities to maximise impact and influence.
- Experience of driving and informing an evidence and data-led approach, ideally within the charity sector.
- A strong track record of collaboration and teamwork with a range of individuals and groups.
- Experience of building relationships, representing organisational priorities and influencing decision-making.

Skills

- Analytical skills with the ability to analyse and interpret data in an accurate manner.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with a proven ability to present material that is accessible to diverse audiences, including policy makers, employers, the education sector and young people.
- Excellent relationship builder, with the ability to engage, energise and influence others.
- Ability to plan, prioritise and deliver tasks to agreed deadlines
- Highly organised, with an attention to detail, excellent project management skills, and the ability to manage multiple priorities under pressure.

Attitude

- Passionate and enthusiastic about improving young people's lives.
- Positive and solution-focussed.
- Self-assured, with a 'can-do' approach.
- Welcomes and thrives in a fast-paced busy environment.
- Welcomes feedback, with a desire to continuously improve and develop.
- A commitment to our organisational values of empowerment, collaboration, reliability, quality, and learning.
- Willingness and ability to travel to schools, delivery venues, meetings and events across west London and beyond.

Terms and Conditions

Job title	Head of Impact, Learning and Policy
Reports to	Development Director
Salary	£41,250 to £44,500
Contract	Permanent / Full-time
Line management	None (with the potential for some in the future)
Benefits	28 days leave (inc. 3 days between Christmas and New Year) Volunteering and life event days Matched pension contributions (up to 6%) Flexible working (our core business hours are 10am to 3pm) Life insurance Canada Life WeCare employee support package
Location	Our office is currently based in White City and we support hybrid-working. We have a fortnightly mandatory office day and some further office-based work will be required. Most programme delivery is based in west London, but some is delivered in other regions and online.

How to apply

Please apply by submitting a CV and covering letter, of no more than 2 sides of A4, explaining your motivation for applying and how you fulfil the role specification, to mattlent@sparkcharity.org.uk.

We welcome candidates with links to our priority areas of Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow and from those with backgrounds that reflect the very diverse communities that we serve.

Application deadline

9am, 17th February 2025 (applications submitted after this time will not be considered).

Interviews

Following the deadline, if you have been longlisted for the role, we will be in touch within one week to arrange a time for an informal telephone conversation. Shortlisted candidates will have an in-person interview scheduled within a further two weeks. We will share details of interview structure and questions in advance.

We endeavour to respond to all applicants, however we are a small team with limited capacity, and we are not always able to do this quickly. If you do not hear from us within a week of the deadline I'm afraid it means you have not been longlisted.

Any questions?

Our CEO, Matt Lent, would be happy to respond to any questions you might have about Spark! and the role, please feel free to e-mail him at mattlent@sparkcharity.org.uk.



"The sessions have been amazing and made me smile and helped me to write out my plans for the future. I learned that goals can be small or big, or short term or long term, and I found out some of my strengths and weaknesses and ways to grow and learn from them."