



## MUSICAL CONNECTIONS PROJECT VOLUNTEER ROLES

Quench Arts CIC is seeking to appoint 3 local volunteers to become a part of our Musical Connections Project support team.

Musical Connections is an established creative music-making network for adults who consider themselves isolated, lonely, vulnerable or marginalised as a result of their personal circumstances or specific needs. The project offers members across Birmingham, Solihull & Sandwell free creative music making activities to help connect with others and support wellbeing. Members are fully engaged in steering the project and bring with them a huge range of skills, interests and lived experience to the project's benefit, describing themselves as a beautifully diverse and creative group where difference is celebrated and friendships formed through shared experiences and musical interests. Around 87% of our members are, or have been, mental health service users, with others having long-term health conditions, physical disabilities or sensory impairments affecting their mental health, mental and physical health being intrinsically linked. Members access a combination of one-to-one and group music making sessions encouraging both individual development and peer connection through engagement in group sessions, social activities and performance opportunities. For more information see the project's website:

[www.musicalconnections.info](http://www.musicalconnections.info).

### **Musical Connections Outcomes**

- Participants will show an improved ability to express their thoughts, feelings and emotions in a constructive and positive way.
- Participants will feel increased social connectedness.
- Participants will show increased self-esteem.

Through our music and wellbeing strand activities our longer term aims are to improve participants' resilience, their capacity to reach their potential and encourage greater engagement in the arts. We have an organisational theory of change and evaluation framework that we will share as part of our volunteer training offer.

### **Musical Connections Volunteer Role**

The role of a volunteer within Musical Connections is to support the project in practical and creative ways, and to help with the interaction between participants. The hope is that the benefit is two way – the project is enriched by the unique contribution of each volunteer, whilst the volunteer gains valuable experience in working with and supporting a diverse and creative group of people in a participatory setting.

We are seeking to recruit and train a team of 3 volunteers specifically to help support participants, primarily at Musical Connections group sessions, which will be facilitated by our music leader team, and in Music Support Worker collaborative/band activities. Ideally, we would like to have 1 volunteer in attendance per group session so will train a team of 3 volunteers (alongside our existing volunteer team) in order to accommodate volunteer availability, as we recognise that volunteers will have other commitments.

The role will include a variety of tasks. This task list and detail of essential and desirable skills has been put together with the Musical Connections member advisory group.

## Key tasks

- Undertake appropriate training (provided through the project).
- With other members of the Musical Connections team, help out practically at group sessions and concerts by:
  - Supporting with setting up rooms/equipment.
  - Meeting and greeting members on arrival; supporting with register taking.
  - Making and giving out refreshments on arrival and in any breaks (and/or assisting member volunteers with this).
  - Attending and supporting at least 10 group/collaborative sessions per year (see 2024 schedule up until October below. November onwards are tbc).
  - Encouraging and supporting participants to engage in project activity. For example, encouraging contributions from individuals (potentially vocalising an individuals' ideas/responses to the group); giving appropriate praise; passing out adaptive instruments; supporting participants to move between rooms (potentially assisting someone with a visual impairment or limited mobility); helping music leaders to keep the session flowing by suggesting creative ideas where necessary (but always leaving space for participant contributions).
  - Contributing musical skills as appropriate (instrumental/vocal/songwriting).
  - Supporting our music leaders in small group facilitation/ breakout sessions.
- Supporting the Quench Arts and Musical Connections team with front of house at events/ concerts (or assisting member volunteers with this).
- Supporting with occasional member liaison/reminders using Quench Arts' project social media, email and phone facilities, adhering to our safeguarding policy (training given).
- There will also be the opportunity to give short contributions to the project newsletter.
- There is also the potential possibility of supporting members across our weekend residential on 21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> September 2024, which will include an overnight stay.

*Please note that no personal care is required (any participants that need this level of support with attend with a personal assistant). Quench Arts' participant recruitment includes participant needs and risks assessment.*

## Schedule of group activities:

- Songwriting sessions (all Thursdays, 2-4pm): 7th March, 11th April, 2nd May, 6th June, 4th July, 1st August, 5th September.
- Rap, production & spoken word club (all Tuesdays, 4-6pm): 5th, 12th, 19th March.
- Music & Mindfulness (all Tuesdays, 11am-1pm): 5th, 12th, 19th, March; (no session on 26th March or 2nd April due to Easter); 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th April; 7th, 14th, 21st May.
- Female only group (all Wednesdays, 2-4pm) \*please note, only female volunteers will be able to support these sessions due to the nature of the group: 29th May, 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th June; 3rd, 10th, 31st July (no sessions on 17th nor 24th July); 7th, 14th August.
- Instrumental skills (all Tuesdays, 11am-1pm): 10th, 17th, 24th September; 1st, 8th October.
- Recording days (all Thursdays 11am-6pm) - 25th April; 25th July; 26th September.
- Online open mics (all Fridays on Zoom, 7.30-9.30pm): 27th April; 27th July.
- Concerts - TBC

## Essential skills and requirements

- Must be Birmingham based (or within an easy commuting distance to our base in Winson Green)
- Ability to commit to the project for a minimum of 1 year after the training (preferably longer)
- Be able to attend the 2 training sessions (Thurs 7<sup>th</sup> March 6-9pm & Mon 11<sup>th</sup> March 6-9pm)
- Able to contribute as part of a team and respond to constructive feedback.

- Able to take own initiative within the context of the role.
- Ability to listen and communicate effectively with participants, other volunteers and staff. Able to talk to people on an individual basis and group basis.
- Interest in working with people from a range of backgrounds, with a variety of needs, skills and musical interests.
- A basic understanding of the social model of disability (which will be covered in training).
- Willing to undertake a DBS check (as required for safeguarding reasons) and able to understand and adhere to Quench Arts policies and procedures. Please note, as the project works with vulnerable adults all volunteers will be required to have a satisfactory DBS check and 2 suitable references regarding their suitability for the role.
- Personal qualities:
  - Reliable and punctual.
  - Non-judgemental and encouraging – someone who recognises the potential in people and helps to bring this out.
  - A positive attitude and demeanour.
  - Enthusiasm.
  - Friendly and caring.
  - Patient.

### **Desirable skills/ experience**

- Has some musical skills - instrumental/vocal ability.
- Some experience of songwriting.
- Some experience of participatory work in a group context.
- Some experience of working with or supporting vulnerable adults (not necessarily in a paid role).

### **Support/ Training Offered**

- Becoming Mental Health Aware training (half day course delivered by [www.mhfaengland.org](http://www.mhfaengland.org)).
- Training in the Musical Connections Approach and Why Music? from Quench Arts (2 sessions, Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March (6-9pm) and Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March (6-9pm)).
- Sessional reflection with the project team.
- We have budget to cover volunteer travel expenses at 45p per mile or the cost of a day bus pass. This is capped at a maximum of £10 per session as we are focused on Birmingham based volunteers.

### **Service Delivery**

The main base for the delivery of the project is:

Afro Caribbean Millennium Centre  
 339 Dudley Road  
 Winson Green  
 Birmingham  
 B18 4HB

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please complete the application form online via the link below or post your completed application to: FREEPOST QUENCH ARTS (just those 3 words are needed on the envelope).

The application form can be completed online here: [Apply Online](#)

**Deadline for applications:** Wednesday 21st February, 5pm

**Informal interviews will take place on:** Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February