

VCSE Health & Wellbeing Research Partnerships Coordinator (Maternity Cover)

Candidate Pack

July 2026



Strengthening the VCSE Sector – Sharing Knowledge – Supporting you



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Welcome

Thank you for your recent interest in the Health and Wellbeing Research Partnerships Coordinator (maternity cover) role at VONNE (Voluntary Organisations' Network North East).

VONNE is the North East regional infrastructure organisation supporting, championing and representing the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector across the North East region and promoting social action and economic growth.

- We have over 1,500 members and extensive reach through our subscribers and networks.
- We have a strong Board of Directors who collectively bring a wealth of experience and knowledge across the North East.
- We have a committed and experienced staff team.
- VONNE has built a strong reputation for expertise and quality with funders and stakeholders over its 26-year history.
- VONNE is recognised as the go to organisation for knowledge and networking the VCSE in the region.

We are seeking an individual with strong coordination and communication skills, experience in stakeholder engagement, and the ability to coordinate a project that supports a more co-ordinated and systematic approach to research partner collaborations with the VCSE sector.

We offer 25 - 28 days holiday plus Bank Holidays (pro rata), a training and personal development allowance, flexible working, Simply Health care plan and the opportunity to work in a busy yet supportive environment.

The closing date for applications is **Sunday 23 August, midnight** with interviews being held on **Thursday, 3 September**. Please email any queries and/or your completed application form and EDI form to recruitment@vonne.org.uk.

If you would like to discuss the role before applying, please contact VCSE Engagement Manager, Beth Reeves by emailing beth.reeves@vonne.org.uk.

If you require this pack in an alternative format, please contact Alli Madine on 0191 2332000 or email recruitment@vonne.org.uk.

We welcome applications from all suitably qualified candidates, regardless of their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age.



Martin Brookes, Chief Executive



About VONNE

Established in 2000, we have developed and continue to maintain a strong understanding of the needs of the sector and how we can best support organisations through ongoing research and conversations.

Our unique regional position gives us the ability to pilot new projects and approaches to benefit the North East area, often working across sectors with a wide variety of partners. We apply professionalism and knowledge to all the work that we do, and we strive to be a role model for the sector and the region by championing excellence, collaboration and social justice.

Through our work we:

- Share knowledge.
- Build partnerships and collaboration.
- Strengthen the sector.
- Give our members a collaborative voice.



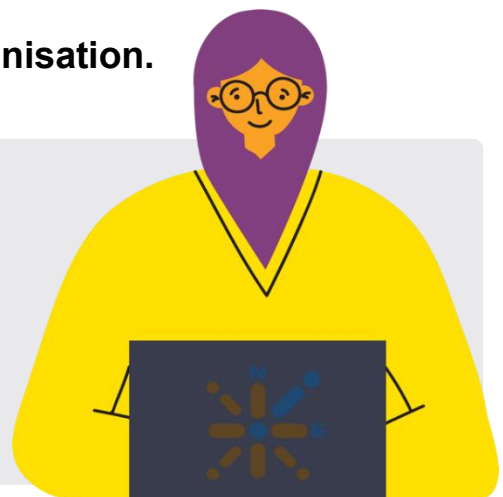
VONNE'S Mission

To support the development and sustainability of a strong, effective, and well governed Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector, and promote engagement, involvement and collaboration with the sector as a valued partner.

VONNE's strategic aims

- To be the expert source of knowledge and intelligence on the VCSE sector in the North East with a particular focus on the existing and emerging needs of the people and communities it serves.
- To be a source of information to the VCSE sector on issues that impact upon it.
- To be a leading voice and raise the North East sector's profile.
- To support external stakeholders to effectively engage and collaborate with the VCSE community, through effective system change and new approaches.
- To support the North East VCSE sector to be effective, ambitious, and enterprising.
- To be an effective and sustainable organisation.

We **facilitate networks** to **strengthen the VCSE sector** and act as a 'connector', **bringing people and organisations together** to make things happen.



VONNE's values



We strive for
excellence



We value
transparency



Inclusivity and
fairness



We encourage
learning and sharing

History of VONNE

VONNE was established as a registered charity and company limited by guarantee in 2000, and it was recognised that the VCSE needed a voice and representation at every level of decision making. VONNE's region spans 12 unitary authorities, ranging from Berwick in the north to Saltburn in the south, and the Pennines in the west.

VONNE has remained both relevant and much needed throughout the ever-shifting picture of sub regional and regional arms of government and has grown in strength, adapting to the new policy environment in which it operates.

VONNE is an expert on the sector in the North East and is a credible presence, continuing to attract funding and generate new revenue streams that are aligned to our mission enabling us to maintain a healthy reserves position.

VONNE's profile is high, and our reputation remains solid both within and beyond the North East region. Information to the sector has been of a consistently high standard and VONNE's advocacy work, intelligence, and expertise on behalf of the sector continue to be well regarded.

“VONNE encourages ambition and thinking out of the box, not afraid to lead from the front if that's what's required to get something started.”



WELLBEING
OF WOMEN

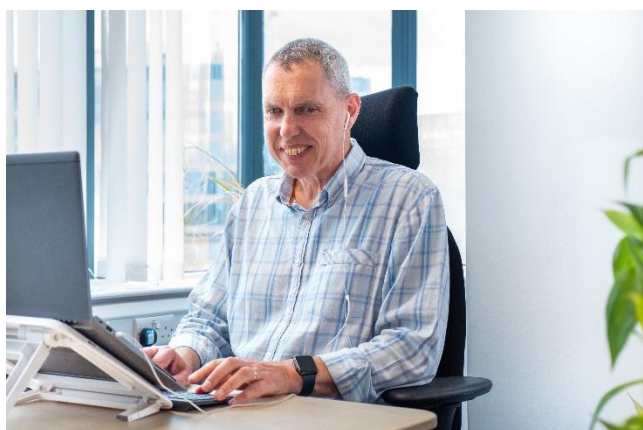


Strategic Development

Since 2019 VONNE has experienced a period of rapid growth and development; we have increased the range of partnerships, collaborations, and networks across sectors, and developed strategic relationships with key regional bodies, funders and commissioners. We now hold numerous positions with key strategic bodies to enable us to both represent the VCSE sector and influence policy and practice.

Examples include:

- We provide learning opportunities and encourage collaboration through our [Membership+ supporter scheme](#) and CEO Peer Support Network.
- We support networks of Local VCSE Infrastructure Organisations (LIOs) across the region, bringing them together both to facilitate joint working, and to disseminate relevant policy information.
- In 2022 we launched the North East VCSE Policy Forum in partnership with IPPR North providing a vehicle to ensure a unified VCSE sector voice to policy makers at a local, regional and national level.
- We have successfully ensured the sector has a voice in shaping strategies for a socially inclusive economy. Through our work representing the sector within the economic strategic partnerships in the North East we have provided a focus on the sector's role in supporting skills development, employability, NEETs and those with multiple barriers to employment.
- VONNE has established the VCSE sector as a vital partner within both the NHS nationally and within the North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care System. We have established key partnerships supporting the health, wellbeing, and health inequalities agenda, including the North East & North Cumbria VCSE Partnership Programme ensuring the VCSE organisations representing both communities of interest and place have a voice in shaping our regional health & care system. We facilitate the Healthy Communities & Social Prescribing workstream within the North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care System and represent the VCSE



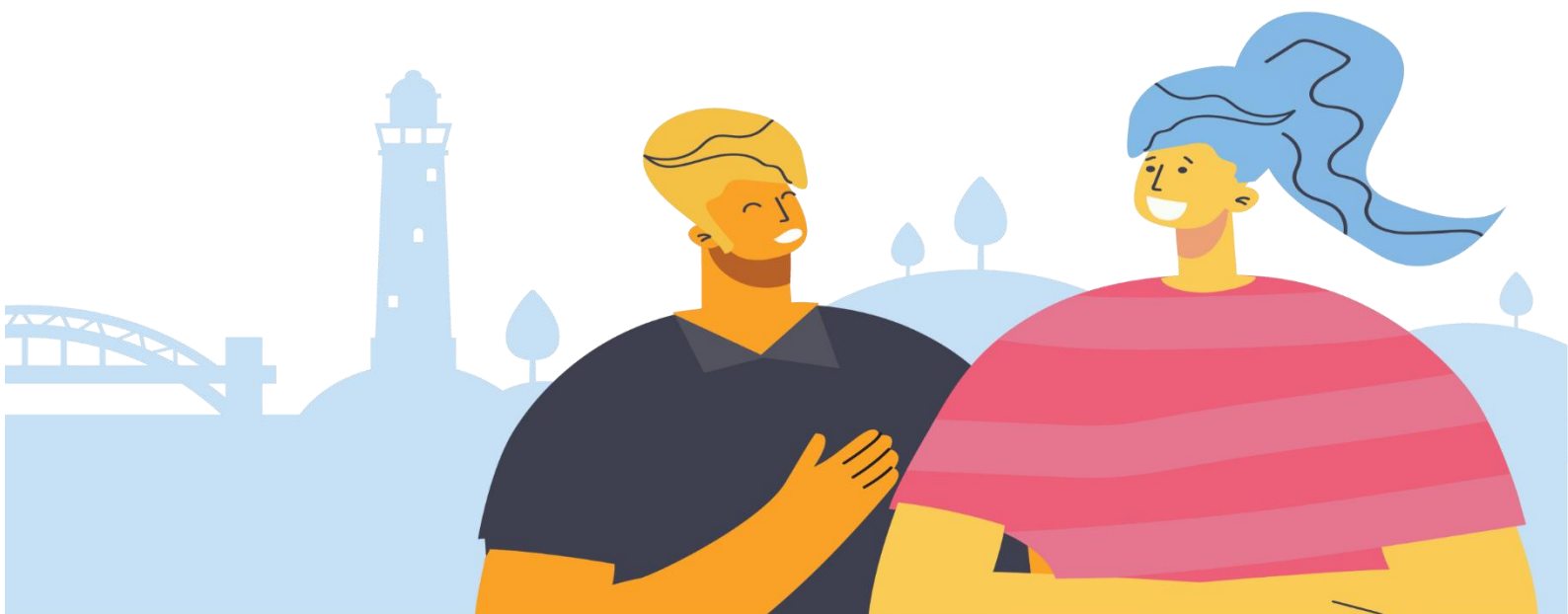
“VONNE takes the sector voice into rooms and networks where it has previously not been heard – well done, that isn’t easy to achieve – keep up the good work.”



- **Local Access Redcar & Cleveland and Hartlepool (LARCH)**, which is tackling localised community inequality in the Tees Valley's social economy through enterprise development support and access to blended social investment. **Digital Pathfinders**, a three-year cross sector partnership which aims to encourage digital adoption across sectors.
- **VONNE Climate Action Alliance**, which successfully secured National Lottery Community Fund and County Durham Community Foundation funding to launch the next stage of our **Going Green Together** programme. (www.goinggreentogether.org)
- **VONNE Policy Team** was recently created in response to member feedback calling for a stronger connection between policy and practice. Their focus will be on listening to members and the wider sector, ensuring their views help shape policy decisions, and strengthening advocacy and understanding of their work.



With the help and engagement of our Board, members and stakeholders, VONNE will launch a refreshed strategic plan that will enable us to effectively serve and support our members and the wider VCSE sector, for the good of the North East region, our people and communities. These aims will be in place for the next three years and lay the groundwork for the longer-term.



Structure

In recent years we have been successful in developing and securing funding for a number of new multi-year strategic projects. In early 2022, after 2 years of significant growth, we undertook an organisational restructure to establish three core teams – Operations, Members Services and Projects and Partnerships. This exercise has enabled us to recruit additional staff and ensure adequate staff capacity across the various functions of the organisation.

You can see our [Organisational Structure here](#).

Why work for VONNE



VONNE is a great place to work. We have a fantastic team of highly skilled, knowledgeable and kind people, who are passionate about the work they do.

We have a welcoming and supportive environment, and you will be a valued member of the team, where your views and opinions will be encouraged and welcomed, we work together to achieve our goals, have a strong mission and positive values.

VONNE offers lots of staff benefits including:

Hybrid and flexible working, up to 28 days annual leave plus Bank Holidays AND the period between Christmas and New Year, access to our Simply Health to cover costs of everyday healthcare such as prescriptions, visits to the dentist, opticians etc.

A training and development allowance, refreshed annually to support your career development and a small amount each year to support your personal development to either undertake a course or activity that will broaden skills or knowledge, or that is designed to increase self-esteem or self-confidence and support overall wellbeing.

We have a focus on health and wellbeing and discuss this regularly through supervisions.

Further benefits include a clear salary scale so you can progress each year, and a 5% employer contribution to our pension scheme. We offer a travel scheme so you can spread the cost of commuting across the year, and a Cycle to Work scheme which will support you to buy a bike, plus several other benefits.



Job Description

Job Title	Health and Wellbeing Research Partnerships Coordinator (Maternity Cover)
Days Worked	3 days (22.2 hours) per week
Salary	NJC scale points 23 to 25 (£34,434 to £36,363 pa pro rata)
Responsible to	VCSE Engagement Manager
Role Summary	

Background Information

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and [Creating Connections network](#) are working with VONNE to explore the development of diversity within research, focussing on partnerships within the VCSE sector in the North East & North Cumbria. The Coordinator post was initially created to support a more coordinated and systematic approach to research partner collaborations with the VCSE sector. This includes strengthening relationships between researchers and VCSE organisations and creating the opportunity for each sector to learn more about the other to develop further opportunities to engage communities and organisations in research that is meaningful to them, with a focus on the communities driving and shaping research as well as participating in studies. By growing and developing greater connections and partnerships, this work also aims to create greater collaborative opportunities for the VCSE sector to support the production of evidence-based research and evaluation to help secure resources and commissioning. The post establishes a clear point of contact for researchers to prevent VCSE organisations being overwhelmed with requests and ensures appropriate protocols and reimbursement systems are in place to support VCSE and PPIE involvement.

VONNE Health & Wellbeing Work

We represent the VCSE sector as a strategic partner in health and care system-wide workstreams that form part of the North East and North Cumbria (NENC) Integrated Care System (ICS), the country's largest ICS which serves around three million people.

ICS's bring together NHS providers, commissioners and local authorities to work in partnership with the VCSE sector in planning and commissioning health and care services at a strategic level. VONNE leads on VCSE sector representation within the North East and North Cumbria (NENC) ICS, via the NENC VCSE Partnership Programme, working with Cumbria CVS to cover the geographic footprint of the ICS.

Job Purpose

To support the development of mechanisms for meaningful engagement, involvement, and collaboration between VCSE organisations, NENC NIHR infrastructure and wider research community across the North East and North Cumbria. To support the development of research to inform the development, funding and delivery of health and care services to



contribute to the collective aim of improving the health and wellbeing of our population and tackling health inequalities.

This post will sit within the VCSE Partnership Programme. It is a coordination and engagement role to support community engagement and involvement across the NIHR Research Infrastructure and facilitate collaborative research and development opportunities with the VCSE sector. It gives the opportunity to develop a range of partnership working skills across the VCSE and research sectors, from within a busy VCSE sector organisation. Active experience, shared learning and access to external courses will be provided to support learning, training, and professional development.

This role offers the opportunity to work across the voluntary and health research sectors in the North East and North Cumbria, within a programme that is held in high regard locally and nationally.

As a valued member of our team, your opinions and insight will be encouraged and welcomed – we work together to achieve our goals and we all have equally valuable contributions to make. This applies specifically to the Health and Wellbeing team, but also to VONNE as an organisation.

Responsibilities

- To work with research partners and VCSE sector leaders to develop models for effective involvement of the VCSE across the NENC footprint, ensuring strong connections to existing place-based and community of interest networks within the VCSE sector.
- To support VCSE organisations to increase their knowledge of the opportunities research can afford to their organisations, and support them to access opportunities to engage in research and provide evidence for the planning of health and care services.
- To support work with research partners and health and care system leaders to actively engage with VCSE organisations by increasing their knowledge and understanding of both the VCSE and research sectors, through training and relationship brokering.
- To contribute to the production of reports and evaluation as required and support NIHR Infrastructure Partners, the Creating Connections Network and VCSE Partnership Programme team in the production and distribution of reports and information.
- To connect the VCSE into opportunities to collaborate and co-produce research projects, funding applications and secure funds in partnership with NIHR and the health and care sector, with the goal of improving health and wellbeing for local communities.
- To support the overall successful delivery of the programme, and the implementation and delivery of governance and reporting processes to provide programme assurance to all stakeholders.
- To carry out administrative duties relevant to the post, including maintaining accurate records and ensuring compliance with obligations for GDPR and Information Security.
- The postholder must be aware of and comply with the Equality and Diversity policy and practices of VONNE & NIHR as well as actively promoting equality and diversity issues relevant to the role
- Such other duties at a comparable level of responsibility as determined by the Programme Director & NIHR Research Infrastructure Partners.



Person Specification

We are seeking an individual with excellent organisational skills who can manage competing priorities and work independently, while also thriving in a team environment and collaborating with external partners. The ideal candidate will have a strong interest in health and wellbeing, research and the NHS agenda and landscape.

Essential criteria:

- Able to communicate and build relationships at all levels with tact and sensitivity where needed
- Experience of working with and knowledge of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE)
- Experience of working with or within, and knowledge of, the health research sector
- Experience of adapting communication style and content to meet the needs of the audience
- Ability to self-manage and organise workload
- Community engagement/development/ patient and public involvement experience
- Excellent written, verbal, and digital communication skills including MS Office and presentation delivery
- Project management skills
- Good attention to detail
- Supportive of VONNE's commitment to implementing equal opportunities and promoting diversity
- Whilst a specific qualification is not required, you must have relevant and sustained work experience at this level
- Committed to personal development.
- This role is regional and therefore requires the ability to travel across the North East and North Cumbria on occasion.
- Willingness to work flexibly (this will be reciprocated).

Desirable criteria:

- Group facilitation skills
- Experience of delivering training
- Knowledge of the health and wellbeing agenda
- Experience of working across sectors and supporting collaboration in a health and care environment
- Knowledge of health and care structures
- Experience/knowledge of writing online content



Recruitment Timetable

Application deadline: Sunday 23rd August, midnight

Interview Dates: Thursday, 3rd September



Principle terms and conditions

Responsible to	VCSE Engagement Manager
Hours worked	3 days (22.2 hours) per week. Usual working hours are between Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. However, we operate a flexible system to allow for working patterns outside these hours to be accommodated, with agreement, according to need.
Salary	NJC scale points 23 to 25 (£34,434 to £36,363 pro-rata). Standard of living increases will be awarded each year in line with local authority pay settlements. Following the probation period, salary scale increments will be awarded annually.
Contract	Fixed term maternity cover (11 months) with the possibility of a 1 month extension.
Notice	Notice to terminate employment is one month by either side (one week during the probationary period).
Annual leave	The full-time entitlement is 25 days plus Bank Holidays and the period between Christmas and New Year. Annual leave increases to 28 days with annual increments of one day for each full year of continuous service.
Pension	VONNE's pension provider is The People's Pension and VONNE is prepared to make an employer contribution to this or the post holder's personal pension scheme of 5% of salary, provided the staff member makes at least the minimum contribution as per auto-enrolment.
Location	Home working predominantly with the option to work from various co-working locations. The role will also require the ability to work at other locations (mainly in the North East) to attend meetings and events.
Expenses	VONNE will pay for travel and subsistence if an employee is requested to travel as part of their role (outside of commuting to work).
Health	VONNE staff are covered by the Simply Health scheme, through which employees can claim for visits to an optician, physiotherapist, chiropodist, emergency care from the dentist and more.

