

The Barmy Army is recruiting



Role - Process facilitators. Five/Six roles.

Calling all - artists/activists/mad people/dreamers/schemers/workshop facilitators/organisers/disability ecological racial social justice warriors/peaceniks/unrecognised visionaries/listeners/collectors of unheard ideas and ambitions/the people who weren't cool at school/radicals/calm people.

What we need - artist and activist 'the vacuum cleaner' is working with MIF, HOME, Contact and Horsefall at 42nd Street to build an army of barmy young people (and their allies) to imagine, demand and make real the mental health care (and everything around it) that young people deserve, need and has been denied of them. This means working with, supporting, listening to, being challenged by and encouraging a large range of young people from across Greater Manchester to work towards a series of creative actions, events, performances and an exhibition. It will also involve working with the NHS staff, adults and carers, teachers, social workers, cultural workers and everyone else who is sick of an unhealthy care system - so a real legacy is embedded in the process.

To facilitate this process and make sure we centre those most impacted we are looking to recruit a core team of people to run a range of sessions to build a mini creative, safe and fun movement for mental health justice. We're not totally sure what we are looking for, but we know the kind of people that we want to work with. The kind of skills and qualities we are looking for, or we want to support you to have, and blossom into, include but are not limited to....

- Hard working and determined - it is important those we work with can depend on you.
- Believe in the strength of intersectional organising/being/listening - mental health is not an island.
- Vulnerable and open about it, but not trauma junkies - burn out is not an option.
- Responsive, whilst also defending your 'me/family/fun time'. There will be some complex diary chats (yuk)

- Being aware of your limits - hurt people can hurt people, so you need to be mindful and firm with your limits.
- May have lived experience of mental distress (mental health), experience of care work, or supported others in other ways - relatability is vital for the young people we work with.
- Strong in your softness - the work will be happening in some demanding contexts with people who maybe distressed, and so we need to be honest that it will require emotional health and an ability to be aware of how something is effecting you and adjust accordingly (get support), step back, or step away or take a break.
- Funny and joyful - yes the project is about really hard stuff - real pain, and whilst totally making space for that.... we take that on with love, and pride in being silly and joyful and with awesome dance moves, slogans and graphics.
- A commitment to process and at the same time being comfortable with giving yourself to another artist's process. Whilst also being willing to challenge and call out when things aren't right. This is the vacuum cleaner project, but we hope that whilst there is a leadership, that leadership is accountable, transparent and open to criticism and change. And that ultimately we give this project over to those we work with, without burdening them with adult stuff - budgets and diary management etc.

We will be working in a range of places, hospitals, youth centres, art spaces, schools, colleges, and so on. We are looking for 3 pairs (affinity groups) to work in these spaces and support a group of young people to run with the project, shape it, change it, destroy it and build something better. An affinity group would have 2 people in it, so you never work alone, but may involve changing groups, stepping in for others, filling gaps etc. Our hope is that this approach can provide the flexibility we need to support each other, whilst also providing the consistency those we work with may need.

In early September 2022 there will be a period of training, development and planning in person in Margate and Manchester, expenses covered.

What you need:

- To be over 18.
- To be able to get an enhanced DBS check and for that to be OK.
- To be able to be legally paid.
- To be based in the North West, ideally in Greater Manchester.
- You may also need to comply with safeguarding and health and safety policies of other organisations - you will be trained in this.

What it would be nice to have:

- Some knowledge of the mental health system.
- Some knowledge of mental health language - formal and informal.
- Some knowledge of art, in particular 'process led' art - like social practice, performance or visual art.
- Some knowledge of activism - or having been part of activism - like climate stuff, BLM, Pride, Trans activism, Student activism, Party activism, etc.
- A cat or a dog to cuddle when you have had a hard day.
- A good support network - a friend you can call on if you need them.
- To not be what you are not, and be OK to learn stuff you don't know.

When - September 2022 to July 2023. Minimum 20 days over this period - which may increase once the process is locked, depending on your other commitments and what you are up for.

Pay

- £4000 fee.
- This would be a minimum amount, we are still working on the budget and fundraising. Once we have confirmed all the project financing we

will review and scale appropriately then, but we can't promise it at this stage and want to be honest about that.

Care, wellbeing, emotional labour and access.

To support and enable each facilitator to be able to do this work, we acknowledge the huge emotional labour involved and will work closely with the person individually and collectively to provide formal and informal care and access requirements. This is a new approach and we aren't going to get it perfectly right. However, we are deeply committed to pioneering better models of care and emotional wellbeing for those we work with and for ourselves. We hope to be able to work with you around your needs and to balance those with our own.

Starting points include

- A paid rest day for every 6 days worked - on the seventh day you rest and get paid. Just like God.
- You will receive professional oversight from a qualified therapist. This will switch between group and individual and will begin before working, to plan your care strategies.
- £10 to cover food when working on location, to cover the cost of a coffee and sandwich for example. Or chips and gravy on the way home if you are tired.
- Informal mutual care will also be built into day plans, including debriefs and check ins.
- Agreed working methods covering 'how they are going to work together' - this could include communication requirements, times of work, expectations of each other, safety processes (such as being able to send up an "I'm not ok" message), privacy and safeguarding guidance.
- Other access costs will be covered as required, if not covered by access to work.

It is important you communicate with us your access requirements. This could be around disability and/or emotional wellbeing, but could also be around other things such as experiences of inequality and violence, supporting dependents, being a

carer. We ask this to be undertaken in an open and honest way, whilst always respectful of privacy and confidentiality of all.

Participation in evaluation and research steps.

We will be working with an evaluation team to help us learn, be able to evidence what we are doing and make sure we are reflecting at key steps along the way. You will be required to participate in this process, this will be covered under your time.

IP

Working out copyright and Intellectual property for collective made art is complex and messy. Often impossible. The work and process will not be copyrighted, in line with a lot of the vacuum cleaner's work. The work and process will sit under the credit of the vacuum cleaner. Where possible they will also always be collectively credited (but this list could be 100s of names long and thus logistically challenging). Future presentation of the work may happen and this decision would be made by the vacuum cleaner. Future versions of the process may also happen. It is unlikely there will be future fees for things like restaging exhibitions and talks, as once divided between such a huge team the amount would be tiny. If you are asked to do further labour for future presentations this would be paid.

WOW you got this far

Interested?

Send us half a page of A4 in response to the question 'I fit this because...' or a video, or list of bullet points, or similar...

AND

A CV and link to your socials - if you have professional ones (we don't want to see pictures of your cats or dogs or plants, yet).

With an outline of any access requirements however you want to share those.

You can apply as a pair or as an individual or more.

Email to barmyarmy@thevacuumcleaner.co.uk by 11.59pm 19th May 2022.
Informal interviews/chats/coffee will happen 30th (afternoon) and 31th of May
in Central Manchester.