



Job Description

ConnectFirst - An Experiential Learning Opportunity for Future Leaders

Contract term 3-6 months

Background

Business in the community (BITC) exists to create healthy communities with successful business at their heart. A Business Connector is a talented employee from either the private or public sector who is seconded to BITC to work across a specific city or area which typically has greater social needs. Trained by BITC, they seek to understand local needs and match them to business objectives. They bring together local businesses and community organisations to create sustainable and rewarding collaborative partnerships across sectors, to make a positive difference.

Over the last 6 years £45.4 million has been leveraged as our Business Connectors work in communities of greatest need while simultaneously achieving a return on investment for participating organisations.

Business Connectors focus on four key issues that are faced by all of the communities we work in, and the ones that our Business members believe they are best placed to tackle:

Employment Education Enterprise Community Cohesion.

Purpose of job

Building on the success of having Business Connector presence in over 131 communities across England, the ConnectFirst role has been identified to drive specific assignments within those areas.

A ConnectFirst Secondee will operate in a specific City or community that has benefitted from a BITC presence for 1-3 years. A scoping exercise to determine the needs in a local area will have already been completed, so that when the secondee starts, they will immediately begin working in partnership with the community on a specific assignment that will deliver on the most vital areas of local need.

To deliver on the assignment aims, the Secondee will need to

- Work in partnership with known local organisations and develop new relationships to create cross sector connections and collaborations that will be a catalyst for change. This may involve working with businesses, local authorities, government departments, other charities, Chambers of Commerce, and other potential providers.
- Demonstrate the ability to listen to the needs of others, whilst influencing to galvanise collaboration.
- Effectively manage their own time and the timeframes of their given project to ensure deadlines are met.
- Ensure the sustainability and legacy of their project beyond their secondment.





- Inform and champion new ways of working within local organisations and their own.
- Engage proactively in learning and development opportunities to progress according to their personal development plan.

Their connections will lead to collaboration between the private, public and the voluntary sector, enabling sustainable improvements in the four key focus areas:

- **Education**, such as mentoring, role-modelling, helping young people improve skills, encouraging healthy lifestyles or reducing isolation. A typical project could be designing and implementing a suite of sessions for a business to deliver in school.
- **Employment**, such as helping people into training or jobs, coaching and mentoring e.g. working with an employability charity to build their business network
- **Enterprise**, such as encouraging inward investment, matching need with sources of expertise;
- **Community Cohesion**, such as encouraging local networks of business and other organisations to sustain a community as a place to live, work, visit and invest. For example working across multiple race / faith / age groups to build workable relationships and breakdown barriers of discrimination.

In addition to the local impact, the secondee may develop critical insights for their seconding organisation to help develop their sustainable business strategy and the volunteering skills needed in their locality.

Training & support

To enable consistency and quality in delivering local connections:

- Each Secondee will receive intensive training before starting the role and subsequent mentoring support and network opportunities through BITC regional offices and online resources.
- The Secondee will have the opportunity to shadow a current Business Connector in the first month of their secondment.
- They will have regular and structured support and catch-ups with their Business Connector Coordinator, other Future Leaders and a Buddy.

Skills and behaviours

The programme is designed to enhance the following skills, so ideal candidates are those who have potential in these areas:

- Creative and strategic thinking
- Tenacity, resilience and drive
- Problem-solving and an ability to spot new ways of working¹
- Effective management of their own time and the ability to deliver a project to deadline.
- An ability to bring people with them without authority (to demonstrate effective leadership skills¹ where required)

¹ This skills are cited in the [Job Skills Companies Want But Can't Get, Bloomberg Recruiter Report, \(2015\)](#) as those demonstrated least by graduates but desired most by employers.





- An ability to adapt style to engage diverse groups of people and build positive working relationships²
- Attention to detail particularly when recording activities on an online platform
- A passion for seeing something to the end

Candidates need to recognise that they are representing the brand of their seconding company as well as BITC while working in the community. They also need to understand that this is an opportunity to further their career, and they will be required to demonstrate and use their understanding of responsible business back in a business.

Please note that is this a flexible role and may require individuals to work during the evenings or on occasion weekends. All of BITC's Safeguarding, Health & Safety and Lone Working policies are applicable and must be adhered to while working within the community. Details of these are in the Business Connector Handbook which you will be given at your induction training.

² Feedback will be sought from these collaborators

