A note from the Director

Dear Prospective Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the position of VRF Coordinator with the St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity, where we are committed to breaking the cycle of homelessness.

For years, the St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity has provided the VRF (Vicar’s Relief Fund) for people experiencing homelessness across the UK. The money is raised through our partnership with BBC Radio 4 and the annual Christmas Appeal, and provides a vital resource in the form of small grants which are administered through frontline workers.

The role of VRF Coordinator is crucial to ensuring that we are able to make grants through the VRF on a daily basis and reach people as quickly as possible. We are looking for someone who is passionate about supporting people experiencing homelessness and ideally has a background in grant administration.

You’ll find a job description and person specification later on in this pack, along with some more information about us, and details of how to apply. I hope it gives you the information you need, and that you will be interested to talk to us more about the role.

Thank you and very best wishes

Tim Bissett - Director
About us
The St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity supports people experiencing homelessness. We are best known for our BBC Radio 4 Christmas Appeal with St Martin-in-the-Fields, the Vicar’s Relief Fund and the Frontline Network. The money we raise is used across the UK to prevent homelessness, and to enable people to access accommodation.

BBC Radio 4 Christmas Appeal with St Martin-in-the-Fields
For over 90 years the BBC and St Martin-in-the-Fields have partnered to raise support from Radio 4 listeners to help people experiencing homelessness. In the last two years the Appeal has raised over £5.9 million. The money we raise directly supports people through The Connection at St Martin-in-the-Fields and across the UK through the Vicar’s Relief Fund and the Frontline Network.

Vicar’s Relief Fund
The VRF (Vicar’s Relief Fund) helps people experiencing homelessness through small-sum, rapid response grants to prevent eviction or access accommodation. The average size of grant is £270, with grant requests usually processed within 1-3 days. Grants are given to individuals across the UK through frontline workers.

We provide grants for:
- Accessing accommodation – Rent deposits, rent in advance, admin fees, ID, or temporary accommodation costs.
- Preventing eviction – Rent arrears, service charge arrears, Debt Relief Orders and bankruptcy fees or money to pay for a hoarding clean up.

St Martin’s Frontline Network
After the VRF went digital in 2014 we realised just how many frontline workers were accessing it and the range of roles that were represented by those supporting people experiencing homelessness. We saw this as an opportunity for us to do more. In 2016 the St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity set up the Frontline Network.

The Frontline Network aims to build relationships, share best practice, develop solutions, and communicate the experience and views of frontline workers.

We support workers from the public, statutory and voluntary sectors working on the frontline with those experiencing homelessness.

It’s not about us. It’s about frontline workers. We work with frontline worker ideas and expertise, finding ways to help their work. As part of that, we offer funding, community and resources. You can find out more about the Frontline Network at www.frontlinenetwork.org.uk
Job description

Job title: VRF Coordinator

Responsible to: Development Manager

Contract type: Permanent

Location: London – St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square

Salary:

Main purpose of role: Carry out operational VRF (Vicar’s Relief Fund) tasks on a day to day basis, including assessing and processing new grant applications.

Main duties and responsibilities:

General Grant Processing

- Process and evaluate grant applications received and, where necessary, obtain further information from applicants, applying good judgement and flexibility in the process
- Maintain user records through our grant management system (Flexi-Grant)
- Reply to correspondence in VRF inbox and telephone queries about the VRF
- Deal with all information in line with Data Protection (GDPR).
- Process return of grants, check and chase evidence submitted by grant recipients
- Process new user registrations
- Make grant payments
- Actively highlight if there are any concerns with VRF applications or the process for applying for a grant
- Liaise with Fluent Technology (who host Flexigrant) where necessary

Other activities

- Maintain a good working relationship with Charity Director, Frontline Network Team, St Martin-in-the-Fields Ltd staff, BBC Christmas Appeal volunteers and donors, and Connection at St Martin’s staff
- Contribute relevant information, insights, and expertise to the Team and the wider organisation, and take an active role in the development of the organisation’s life and effective functioning.
- To contribute, where necessary to the development of the Charity and its initiatives, including but not limited to the VRF and the Frontline Network
- Perform any reasonable duties commensurate with this post, to ensure the success of St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity

This is not an exhaustive description of the job. Aspects will change over time and the jobholder is expected to contribute to its development and progression.
Person Specification

Qualifications: A-Level minimum, degree preferred

Experience:

- Grant administration or management
- Knowledge and understanding of the range of situations that people experiencing homelessness face
- Liaising with a range of stakeholders, including people who may be in distress

Skills and abilities:

Essential

- Ability to manage and prioritise a heavy workload to set timescales and performance targets with minimal supervision and exercise good judgment in the process
- Great attention to detail
- Ability to maintain confidentiality in line with current Data Protection legislation (GDPR)
- Good communication skills – the ability to clearly communicate difficult information both in writing and verbally
- Excellent telephone call handling skills
- Ability to use a range of IT packages, including case management or grant management systems
- Ability to work effectively within a small team, approaching change with enthusiasm and a pragmatic approach
- Excellent inter-personal skills

Desirable

- Understanding of homelessness
- Experience of identifying improvements which can be made to existing processes

Key attributes: A willingness to be flexible in response to the reasonable needs of the Charity and in taking on appropriate new responsibilities
How to apply

If you are passionate about our work and would like to join the team as a VRF Coordinator, please provide:

- A current comprehensive CV outlining your key achievements in previous and current roles (2 pages max)
- A supporting statement, explaining how you believe your skills and experience match the requirements of the role, directly addressing the person specification (2 pages max)
- Details of two referees (who will not be contacted without your prior consent)

Please apply here.

https://stmartininthefieldscharity.peoplehr.net/Pages/JobBoard/Opening.aspx?v=4188b3a9-06b6-4249-be45-530a187efa32

Interviews will take place Tuesday 21st May PM and Thursday 23rd May.