

ROLE PROFILE – Senior Community Organiser

Status & Hours: Permanent, full-time (31.5 hours a week, which may be worked flexibly over 4 or 5 days)



Reports to: Head of Campaigns

Location: Greater Manchester (home-working), with travel

Salary: £40,985, rising to £46,129 in 4 annual increments

How to apply: Please complete and submit the application form and equal opportunities form by 9am on Monday 6 March 2023 to

application@debtjustice.org.uk

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1. About Debt Justice

[Debt Justice](#) is a campaigning organisation working to end unjust debt and the poverty and inequality it perpetuates, in the UK and across the world. Founded in 1996 to campaign in solidarity to end the debt crisis faced by countries in the global South, over the past six years we have expanded our work to organise around UK household debt issues in response to the growing crisis in the UK.

Our **vision** is of a world that is fair, democratic and sustainable, where everyone has their basic needs met, their human rights respected, and the opportunity to flourish, live a dignified life, and contribute to their community and to society as a whole. This is a world where finance and the banks serve the public interest, and where no-one is exploited, oppressed or driven into poverty by debt.

Our **mission** is to stop debt from causing and exacerbating poverty, inequality, exploitation and oppression. We undertake research, education, organising and campaigning, in partnership with allies in the UK and around the world. We aim to tackle rip-off and irresponsible lending, to secure the write-off of unjust and unsustainable debts to give people and countries a fresh start, and to address the underlying reasons why so many people and countries have no option but to borrow just to survive.

We believe that no-one should be exploited, oppressed or driven into poverty by debt.

Our values

The core values that guide our work are as follows:

1. Justice, equity and fairness

The fundamental values that motivate our work are justice, equity and fairness. We don't believe it is fair that the world is so unequal that some people have to borrow just to put food on the table, or that some countries are so poor they have to take on debt to provide basic healthcare and education to their citizens. We believe wealth and power should be more equally distributed within our society to promote dignity and wellbeing for all.

2. Solidarity and empowerment

Our work is motivated by solidarity and empowerment, not charity. We want to abolish the hierarchies and inequalities in wealth and power that make charity necessary. And we believe that the only way to do this is by acting in solidarity with and helping to build the power and leadership of those who are most marginalised and disadvantaged by the current system.

3. Courage and integrity

The injustices caused by debt in our world are huge, and the transformations needed to our economies to tackle those injustices are equally huge. It is critical to us that we are true to our mission to tackle the root causes of unjust debt. This means acting with courage and integrity, and campaigning for ideas and proposals that are commensurate with the scale of the problems, taking calculated risks as necessary to achieving our goals. We will never give people false hope by over-playing our victories. We are aiming high, and to go far with the people who campaign with us, and we will speak the truth along the way.

4. Effectiveness

We are committed to being as effective as we possibly can be. This means being smart, strategic, focused, and agile: making hard decisions, informed by the best available information, and making the best use of our resources to achieve change. Our agenda brings us up against some powerful and wealthy vested interests, and our work relies on the generosity of thousands of dedicated supporters. Our commitment to our mission and to our supporters means we constantly strive for ongoing improvement.

5. Collaboration

Jubilee Debt Campaign has a critical role to play in tackling the problems caused by debt, but we are only ever going to be part of the solution. We see ourselves as part of a global movement for justice, equity and sustainability. We are committed to working in collaboration with those who share our values and goals, and in helping to broaden and strengthen the movement so that our collective work is bigger than the sum of its parts.

6. Dignity, kindness and compassion

We are committed to treating everyone who comes into contact with our work with dignity, kindness and compassion. We will always seek to reach out to the best in people, to listen, to educate, and to learn. We believe this is how we will most be able to effect positive change.

Structure, approach and impact

Debt Justice is governed by our Board of Trustees according to our Memorandum and Articles of Association, as a charitable company limited by guarantee. We have a small, highly-skilled team of eleven staff with an agile, creative, and flexible approach; a network of local activists across the UK; a community of online activists; and a strong network of allies in the UK and around the world. We have a small office in London and three members of staff work remotely outside of London. We have recently successfully completed the shorter working week national pilot and will continue to operate shorter working hours on a permanent basis.

We operate a highly participative approach to strategy development, planning and decision-making. All team members are involved in the development of our overall organisational strategy and plans.

We have three priority thematic areas under our current organisational strategy:

1. The debt crisis in the global South
2. The UK's household debt crisis
3. Debt and climate change

We see strong and lasting alliances as critical to the realisation of our aims. We take a highly collaborative approach, with an emphasis on building informal and formal networks and alliances around shared values and goals.

We have a new anti-oppression strategy in the organisation which has been developed collaboratively by our staff team. The strategy reflects our organisational priority to centre anti-oppression work in our strategy development, structures, operations, culture and how we work with external partners.

2. About you and the role

This role plays a key part in our campaign to end the UK's household debt crisis. Nearly eleven million people in the UK are now 'overindebted', meaning they are behind on bills or are finding their debt repayments a heavy financial burden. The crisis has been growing over the last decade but has increased dramatically because of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. More and more people are now borrowing to cover bills and essentials.

In response to this, we are organising with people in debt across the UK to campaign against unjust debt and change policy and practice. As part of the [Together Against Debt](#) project we have set up four local groups, and aim to set up more groups with the aim of building a national campaigning network, led by people who are in or have experienced high levels of overindebtedness.

The Senior Community Organiser is responsible for supporting existing groups and group leaders and building new groups of people in debt to campaign for solutions to the UK's household debt crisis. This is an exciting role at the front line of the cost-of-living crisis, building on work undertaken over the last two years, where groups have launched in London, Glasgow and Manchester.

In this time group members have had some fantastic wins, from securing a commitment of over £1 million worth of repairs for an estate in South London, helping to bring down energy bills, to campaigning to stop bailiff visits.

This role also works closely with other members of our household debt team to bring the voices of people in debt into national policy making spaces. This includes supporting members with media training, and media work, for example, in 2022 we had over fifty pieces of media coverage for the campaign. It also includes advocacy and policy development, supporting members to feed into national consultations, meet with decision makers and lead campaigns.

We're looking for an experienced Community Organiser with at least three years' experience in organising. You will have the ability to outreach within a community to find people who want to be part of a group campaigning on debt, launch groups and support them to develop, run and win campaigns. You will also play a key role along with others in the team to scale up this work to develop a national campaigning network of people with lived experience of debt.

You will be skilled in the use of organising tools such as one-to-ones and power mapping and understand what is needed to build the power of people facing high levels of debt to win change to tackle the UK's household debt crisis.

A strategic priority of our community organising work is to strengthen our group in Manchester as well as use this as a base to build more groups across the north of England so the role-holder will be based in Manchester and work from home, with regular travel across the UK to support our local groups. Initially the role will involve supporting existing groups in London and Glasgow but over time, we envisage this role will have a regional focus of the north of England and Scotland.

3. Role responsibilities

The main responsibilities for the Senior Community Organiser are as follows:

Outreach and relationship-building

- Use community organising techniques and approaches, such as 1:1 meetings, to identify and build relationships with community members in key areas
- Identify leaders from diverse backgrounds who can build power locally
- Create opportunities and support meetings for community members to come together to share experiences and build relationships

Training and leadership development

- Build the power of people affected by household debt to take action on the issues they care about
- Develop and deliver training to support local campaign strategy and leadership development
- Work closely with group leaders to provide support and build their capacity and confidence to develop and win campaigns
- Support and develop freelance organisers

Strategy and campaigning

- Support communities to build local campaign strategies that deliver change, including identifying opportunities for strategic interventions and nationwide coordination
- Maintain a good knowledge of the issues and campaign asks with regards to household debt
- Contribute to the development of our overall household debt campaign strategy helping to ensure that an organising approach and perspectives are built into the strategy
- Contribute to the strategy, planning and implementation of a new national campaigning network of people in debt

Organisational

- Participate in team discussions on strategy and day-to-day operations and help with facilitation
- Support the team with shared responsibilities around administration

4. Person Specification

ESSENTIAL

Experience

- A proven track record in community organising, with at least 3 years' experience of successfully using community organising techniques e.g. 1:1s, listening campaigns
- Experience of supporting groups to develop and win campaigns
- Good experience of developing and delivering training, including strong facilitation and public speaking skills and understanding of different learning approaches.

Skills

- Strong interpersonal and relationship-building skills, including demonstrable ability to engage with people from a diverse range of backgrounds including those with lived experience of injustice
- Experience of facilitating difficult conversations and mediating / resolving conflicts
- Ability to communicate in a clear, sensitive and confident manner verbally and in writing
- Effective project management skills, with ability to deliver projects without day-to-day supervision, including planning, monitoring and evaluation to ensure work is delivered to a high standard, on time and with attention to detail.

Personal attributes

- An understanding of the campaigning and organising landscape around UK economic justice issues
- Ability to work collaboratively as part of a team and demonstrate a can-do attitude and willingness to 'pitch in'
- Commitment to anti-oppression work and to tackling all forms of oppression, bigotry and exclusion
- Commitment to Debt Justice's vision, mission and values

- Willingness and ability to travel for work, including sometimes being away from home for consecutive nights, and to work occasional evening and weekends as required (NB. Time worked out of hours is always paid back as TOIL).

DESIRABLE

- Ability to draft clear, concise and engaging copy and experience of writing blogs, emails and social media content for campaigning
- Experience of managing project budgets and monitoring expenditure
- Experience of working with the media
- Basic content production skills e.g. video, reels, graphics, photos.

Safeguarding

Please note that the candidate who is offered this position will need to undergo a DBS check before the appointment is confirmed.

5. Remuneration and benefits

This is a permanent role being offered on a full-time basis of 31.5 hours per week. These hours may be worked flexibly over 4 or 5 days. In 2022 we moved to a shorter working week as part of a pilot project with the aim of increasing wellbeing for staff, which is why a full time role is now equivalent to 31.5 hours. Applications for job shares or annualised hours to allow for extra childcare during school holidays will be considered.

Debt Justice has an office in London, however this role will be a home-working role based in or around Greater Manchester. Regular travel around the UK will be required, as will occasional evening and weekend working.

We offer:

- Pension contributions of up to 7.5% of your salary plus 1% of the average organisational salary
- An annual leave entitlement of 27 days (6 weeks) per year plus bank holidays
- Flexi-time working arrangements outside the core hours of 10am-4pm
- Access to other benefits including interest-free season ticket loans and tax savings on bikes and home technology equipment via salary sacrifice schemes.

6. How to apply

Please apply by completing our **Application Form** and an **Equal Opportunities Form**. Applications must be submitted by email to application@debtjustice.org.uk by 9am on Monday 6 March.

If you have any questions about your experience or suitability for this role before applying, please email application@debtjustice.org.uk with your questions or to request a call back.

Please **DO NOT** submit a CV; we will only accept applications submitted on our application form.

Applicants must have the right to work in the UK; unfortunately, Debt Justice cannot sponsor visas for people who do not already have this right.

7. Further guidance on your application

These following notes are intended to help you complete the application form.

A. General

- Remember to complete all parts of the application form. If you think some parts do not apply to you, write 'not applicable' in the spaces provided for your answer.

B. References

- Remember to check with your referees that they are happy for us to contact them before you nominate them. We will not contact them without informing you.
- You are asked to supply details of referees that cover the last five years of your employment. One should be your current line manager, or your most recent line manager if you are not currently in employment.
- If you are unemployed, your last employer should be named and if you have any voluntary or unpaid experience, e.g. as a member of a committee, you could include the chair of the committee among your referees.

C. Employment History

- Please give details to the nearest month and year of previous jobs held, and account for any gaps in your employment record.
- Some people will have developed many relevant skills through voluntary unpaid work. These details should be included on the form, particularly where the experience has helped you to develop skills and abilities we have asked for.

D. Education or Training

- In this section please include information about any relevant courses that you have attended, as well as your educational history from A-level (or equivalent) onwards.

E. Supporting Statement

- This section gives you the opportunity to demonstrate why you are suitable for the post. Before completing it, please refer to the Role Responsibilities and Person Specification earlier in this pack.
- In this section of the form it is essential that you set out how your skills and experience meet each of the points in the Person Specification, giving specific examples. This means telling us what you personally did in your role rather than what the team did. It also means giving us concrete examples of where you demonstrated a particular skill, rather than simply saying that you have it.

- We will assess how you meet every criterion in the Person Specification, so it is important that you try to address each specific skill or experience that is listed.

F. Criminal Convictions

- The fact that you have a criminal record does not automatically prevent you from being considered for a job. We will take into account the nature of the offence, when it happened and its relevance to the job. If you are shortlisted, this will be discussed with you at the interview.

8. Equality and Diversity Policy

Debt Justice is committed to promoting equality and diversity, providing an inclusive and co-operative environment in which all individuals working for and on behalf of the organisation feel respected and able to give their best. Through the implementation of this policy we seek to:

- Ensure that all staff (current and prospective), volunteers, members of the Board, and other elected representatives and members are afforded equal opportunities regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or political belief or affiliation, trade union membership, age, health, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, parental status, caring responsibilities, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic background, educational background, ex-offender status, or any other inappropriate distinction.
- Promote diversity and equality for persons working for and on behalf of Debt Justice and value input from individuals and groups of people from diverse cultural, ethnic, socio-economic, and other distinctive backgrounds.
- Promote fair and equal treatment for employees in fulfilling their potential, ensuring that no individuals or groups of people are afforded unfair privilege within the working environment.
- Treat all members of staff fairly and equally, irrespective of their length of service, status and number of hours worked.
- Challenge discriminatory practice and less favourable treatment, wherever this is identified.
- Undertake positive action, wherever possible, to encourage greater participation of under-represented groups of people across the organisation.
- Promote an environment free from discrimination, victimisation or bullying in any way or form in relation to all employees and visitors to the organisation.
- Regard breaches of the Equality and Diversity Policy as misconduct which may lead to disciplinary action.
- Keep under review all employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- Keep under review all practices and procedures as set out by the Management Committee and as defined within the Staff Handbook, to ensure fairness and equality.

Finally: Thank you again for your interest in Debt Justice. We very much look forward to hearing from you.