

# FIRST STORY RECRUITMENT PACK

## **YOUNG WRITERS PROGRAMME & PARTNERSHIPS MANAGER (MANCHESTER)**

- FTE salary £28,000 - 30,000
- 0.6 FTE
- 1 year fixed term contract
- FTE 25 days annual leave + public holidays + Christmas

**Closing date 21 February 2022**

**Interviews 3 March 2022**

[firststory.org.uk/vacancies](https://firststory.org.uk/vacancies)





**Thank you for your interest in joining the First Story team. This recruitment pack offers more information about the role and our organisation, to help you make the most of your application.**

## **About First Story**

First Story was founded in 2008 by a state secondary teacher and a published author, both of whom recognised that students from low-income backgrounds deserved fairer access to enriching creative learning experiences, beyond the classroom curriculum. From a pilot project in a west London comprehensive, we have grown to work across Greater London, the East Midlands and Yorkshire, with exciting plans to expand into Manchester in 2022.

Our flagship Young Writers Programme places inspiring professional writers in residence in non-selective secondary schools in low-income areas, where they work intensively over an academic year with a consistent group of students, towards publication of a printed anthology. Regular national competitions and events, plus resources, training and support for teachers, complement our core provision. Participants in a First Story group are encouraged to develop their own unique voices and taught to tell their own stories with confidence and skill. Our growing portfolio of exclusive opportunities for First Story alumni provides a progression pipeline for talent.



## Our vision

We believe there is dignity and power in being able to tell your own story, and that writing can transform lives. Our vision is a society that encourages and supports young people from all backgrounds to write for pleasure, self-expression and agency.

## Our mission

Every young person deserves to reap the benefits of a rich creative education. Society benefits too, when we nurture a greater diversity of voices and support young people from underrepresented backgrounds to flourish and be heard. Our mission is to assist young people experiencing disadvantage to advance in life and realise their potential, by providing extracurricular support and enrichment activities that foster their creativity, literacy and talent, whilst developing their confidence, skills, and cultural capital.

It's also within our charitable purpose to promote the value of arts and culture, and specifically creative writing. We do this, in part, by commissioning talented professional writers to deliver our programmes.

“First Story is a fantastic idea. Teenagers are under increasing pressure to tailor their work to exams, and to value themselves in terms of the results. First Story offers young people something else. It helps them find a voice. Creative writing can change people's lives; I've seen it happen. It's more than learning a skill. It's about learning that you, your family, your culture and your view of the world are rich and interesting and important, whoever you happen to be.

**Mark Haddon, author**





## Our values



- We value the agency and authentic voices of young people. Empowering and amplifying young people's voices is at the heart of our work; we want them to be heard in society and to inform what do.
- Inclusion is our driving force. We champion equality of access and opportunity. We are committed to providing support and opportunities that help to 'level the playing field' for young people from underrepresented communities. Our people and partners should represent diverse experience too.
- We are an agile, open, and collaborative organisation. Delivery partners, sharing our values, are essential to the quality of our offer for young people; we embrace working with others to achieve the best outcomes for the young people we serve.
- Our young people deserve the highest standards. We support them to be rigorous in their writing and ambitious. We commit to professional presentation of their work.
- We value the talent and commitment of the professional writers who deliver our programmes. We pay writers fairly for their services. We are committed to promoting the arts and, in particular, literature, poetry and creative writing.



## Our team

First Story has a small permanent staff spread across three regions: London, East Midlands and Yorkshire. The team bring diverse perspectives and knowledge, with a friendly, dynamic culture. We are used to working together virtually. Some staff have always worked from home, while some are based at our office in Waterloo, London—sharing a character-filled building with two other charities, also working in literacy and education.

We contract a wide range of freelancers to help deliver our programmes, including our community of professional writers, plus copywriters, editors, proof-readers and others.

Our board of trustees is very engaged, experienced and committed. We also benefit from insights and expertise provided by volunteer advisory panels in our regions.

This is an exciting time to join First Story, as we recently launched our new strategy, with ambitious plans to widen our reach and deepen impact in the coming years.



## Role description

# YOUNG WRITERS PROGRAMME & PARTNERSHIP MANAGER

### Reports to: Head of Programmes

This is a newly created role that will be responsible for developing and embedding First Story and our provision in the Greater Manchester region for the first time. The post-holder will ensure that appropriate school partnerships are identified and secured; that a network of cultural and HE delivery partners are researched and appropriate relationships to extend the offer of the programme are secured; and that our year one 'taster' version of the Young Writers Programmes is ready to launch in a number of schools in the Manchester region in the 2022/23 academic year.

The post-holder will need to develop a knowledge of the regional need for our provision, and to identify and cultivate relationships with eligible schools in the region. They will also be expected to establish and maintain relationships with potential collaborative organisations and delivery partners, embedding First Story within cultural and education networks in the region, with the aim of extending local opportunities for our young writers, teachers and partner schools and teachers. This role also involves identifying and building a network of suitable writers to deliver our programme in the region.

The post-holder will be supported by a small central team based in London (primarily providing communications, fundraising and administrative support), as well as closely working with their fellow regional leads working remotely in First Story's other operating regions, as part of a programme team which is led by a Head of Programmes.





# Key responsibilities

## REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND STRATEGY

- Hold an overview of secondary education provision, issues and need in the region;
- Develop a clear understanding of the higher education and cultural landscape ensuring the potential for FS to provide a collaborative and worthwhile offer in the region;
- Research, identify and secure new school partnerships in line with FS school recruitment strategy;
- Develop region specific networks to extend the reach of the Young Writers Programme/Young Ambassadors Programme;
- Identify and secure a network of local cultural and education partners embedding FS as a partner in local communities and creating extended opportunities for FS students and alumni;
- Secure school partnerships for the Young Writers Programme for Manchester schools 2022/23;
- Together with Head of Programmes and Yorkshire programme managers support a North Advisory Panel.

## SUPPORTING NATIONAL COMPONENTS OF YOUNG WRITERS PROGRAMME

- Play an active role in supporting Young Ambassadors Programme, FS residential, Young Writers Festival, Rathbones' mentorships, commissioning resources and digital resources, FS competitions as required.

## CONSULTATION AND RECRUITMENT

- Work with CEO, Head of Programmes and Head of Development to develop and implement a consultation and communications strategy to recruit partner schools including:
  - Working with schools and youth organisations to consult young people and teachers to ensure our offer is informed by its beneficiaries;
  - Initiating and organising cultivation events aimed at teachers and senior leaders in schools;
  - Initiating and supporting a social network of teachers interested in creative writing/cultural capital;
  - Collecting and recording relevant data on salesforce (school and programme information).

## SUPPORT FOR MARKETING/COMMUNICATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

- Work with Head of Development and Communications Manager to engage stakeholders in the region and to raise FS profile in the region;
- Together with SMT develop key messages and recruitment (school partnerships) strategy for YWP ensuring it matches requirements for recovery programmes;
- Support the Head of Development through providing information, relationships and case studies to support fundraising efforts and supporting any regional fundraising efforts;
- Liaise with local media contacts to promote the project and support on delivery of the comms and advocacy plan.



# Key relationships

## INTERNAL

- CEO, Head of Programmes, Programme Team
- Operations Manager and Assistant
- Head of Development
- Communications Manager
- Schools, writers and students in the region and across the First Story network
- Other partners where appropriate

## EXTERNAL

- Senior leaders, teachers, and students at current and potential First Story partner schools
- Our network of professional writers
- Other charitable organisations, particularly those in the fields of literature and creative writing





# Person specification

The successful candidate will demonstrate the following:

## ESSENTIAL

- 3 years' experience in working in a private, public or charitable organisation.
- Knowledge and understanding of schools and the way they work.
- Knowledge of cultural and education provision in Greater Manchester.
- Excellent relationship-building and networking skills.
- Confidence negotiating with people at all levels of seniority within schools, corporations, local authorities and high-profile individuals and brokering close working relationships.
- The ability to prioritise workload and to take on a range of tasks, from essential record keeping and administration to developing new business.
- A demonstrated history of working in a team and working independently and striking the right balance between the two.
- Strong communication skills, both written and oral.
- Strong organisation and administration skills.
- Strong IT skills, including sound knowledge of Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, CRM databases.
- Knowledge of and ability to use social media platforms.



## DESIRABLE

- An interest in literature and creative writing.

## PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Committed to First Story's vision and ethos.
- Collaborative
- Resilient and optimistic
- Empathetic and imaginative – able to understand other points of view
- A good problem solver

## Benefits include

- The opportunity to work in a committed and diverse team
- 21 hour week
- 25 days' Annual Leave per annum (pro-rated), plus pro-rated public holidays and additional days off between Christmas and New Year
- Defined contribution pension scheme for all employees

## Contract

This is initially a one year fixed-term contract.

## Location

Home based with frequent travel in Manchester to schools/partners when required.





## How to apply

Please email your CV and a brief cover letter, outlining how you fit the person specification and why you want the role, to [vacancies@firststory.org.uk](mailto:vacancies@firststory.org.uk) with ref. 'Programme & Partnership Manager (Manchester)' in the subject line, by **9am on Monday 21st February**.

Please also complete our Diversity and Inclusion Recruitment Survey online [here](#).

First Story welcomes applications regardless of race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or religious belief, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or age.





England's leading creative writing  
charity for young people, empowering  
students experiencing disadvantage  
with the skills and confidence to tell  
their own stories.

Find out more at [firststory.org.uk](http://firststory.org.uk)  
and follow our story at @FirstStory



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