

St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity

Recruitment Pack – VRF Grants Coordinator

A note from the Head of People and Operations

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the position of VRF Grants Coordinator with St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity. Our Vision is that everyone has a safe place to call home and the support they need to maintain it, and we are delighted that you are interested in being a part of that.

For years, 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 Grants 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, ideally understands the issues they face and has a background in grant administration.

You will find a job description and role 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 let us know if you are interested to talk to us more about the role.

Thank you and very best wishes,

Angela D'Souza - Head of People and Operations

About us

St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity exists so that everyone has a safe place to call home and the support they need. We support frontline workers and organisations across the UK. Our goal is that homelessness is prevented. But that when it does occur, that people receive the best possible support that enables them to secure and keep a safe place to live. We do this by providing evidence-led funding, resources to support those working on the frontline and gaining greater support for solutions to homelessness.

The Charity is committed to developing a diverse, inclusive and culturally sensitive workplace and community for everyone. We will do so by fostering an environment that respects and values difference, where everyone feels welcome and confident to be themselves. We are proud to be an equal opportunity employer.

In recruiting for our team, we appreciate the unique contributions that every individual can bring without regard to race, ethnicity, colour, religion or no religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or age. We actively welcome applications from people from marginalised identities, especially those with lived experience of homelessness.

VRF (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. People can apply for up to £500, 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

Grants to organisations

In addition to the VRF, we have developed a portfolio of nine funded partner organisations across the UK through two grant programmes (Frontline Fund and Mental Health and Homelessness Fund). We also have an ongoing funding relationship with The Connection at St Martin's, and have three research and development programmes.

More information about these grants can be found on our website - [The Frontline Fund, UK homelessness support | St Martin's Charity \(smitfc.org\)](#)

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

BBC Radio 4 Christmas Appeal

For 96 years the BBC and St Martin-in-the-Fields have partnered to raise support from BBC Radio 4 listeners to help people experiencing homelessness. In the last two years the Appeal has raised over £9 million.

For more information, visit our Appeal page on the BBC website [BBC Radio 4 - Radio 4 Christmas Appeal](#)

Job description

Job title: VRF Grants Coordinator

Responsible to: Grants Manager

Line Management: None

Contract type: Full-time (35 hours a week); Permanent

Location: Central London. We offer flexible and hybrid working but office-based work will be essential on a regular basis.

Salary: £26,000 - £33,000pa

Benefits: includes 25 days holiday (plus bank and public holidays) with length of service increments, contributory pension scheme, flexible working options, enhanced staff wellbeing package

Main purpose of role: To 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
- Process new user registrations
- Check and chase evidence submitted by grant recipients
- Make grant payments on occasion
- Maintain user records through our grant management system (Flexi-Grant)
- Deal with all information in line with Data Protection (UK GDPR)
- Actively highlight if there are any concerns with VRF applications or the process for applying for a grant
- Liaise with Fluent Technology (who host Flexi-Grant) where necessary
- Actively identify, follow up and respond to safeguarding queries raised through the grant application process
- Actively participate in team communication channels (Outlook and Teams) and in weekly team meetings, chairing on a rotational basis
- Proactively identify and contribute ideas to ongoing VRF developments and implement any agreed changes to improve the offer and processes

Other activities

- Engage with wider St Martin's Charity meetings to develop ideas, better practice and improve networking links with other team members
- 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
- 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 job holder is expected to contribute to its development and progression.

Role Specification

Experience:

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

Skills and abilities:

Essential

- Experience of managing and prioritising a heavy workload with minimal supervision, and exercising good judgement in the process
- Can demonstrate an organised, adaptable and efficient approach to work and an understanding of the importance of attention to detail
- Self-motivated and self-starter who can evidence taking initiative
- Experience of maintaining confidentiality in line with current UK GDPR legislation and Charity policy and procedures
- Can demonstrate a high level of written and verbal communications skills
- Ability to communicate effectively across a range of stakeholders and adapt approach to suit each audience
- Experience of customer service across different platforms, including handling a range of telephone queries

- Proficiency in MS Office 365 and case management or grant management systems as well as a solid understanding of IT systems and troubleshooting techniques
- Ability to work effectively within a small team, approaching change with enthusiasm and a pragmatic approach
- Can demonstrate effective interpersonal skills
- Understanding of homelessness and related issues
- Commitment to personal and professional development and growth, proactively identifying ways to develop further

Desirable

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

How to apply

If you would like to join the St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity team as one of our VRF Grants Coordinator, please provide the following via our online jobs board:

- A current comprehensive CV (no longer than two A4 pages) outlining your key achievements in previous and current roles with details of two referees (who will not be contacted without your prior consent)
- A covering statement (no longer than two A4 pages) supporting how you believe your skills and experience match the requirements of the job description and role specification

Further information about the Charity and our activities can be found at our website - [St-Martin-in-the-Fields | UK homeless charity \(smitfc.org\)](https://www.stmartin-in-the-fields.org.uk)

If you have any questions about the role or the recruitment process, please contact Nikki Wimborne, Grants Manager at nikki.wimborne@stmartinscharity.org.uk

Closing date: Sunday 12 November 2023, 11.59pm

Interviews will be held in person at St Martin-in-the-Fields in the week beginning 20 November 2023.