

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

Q. What is a Lived Experience Influencer?

A Lived Experience Influencer is someone with lived experience of suicide who draws on their knowledge and insight based on their lived experience in order to influence suicide prevention policy and practice. People go through a recruitment and training process to become a Lived Experience Influencer and are provided with ongoing support as part of NSPA's Lived Experience Network. Please see Lived Experience Influencer Overview for more information.

Q. What do you mean by “lived experience” of suicide?

By ‘lived experience’ we mean people who have experienced or live with suicidal thoughts, people who have attempted suicide, people who support or care for a loved one who experiences suicidality, and people who have been bereaved by suicide.

Q. Why is this work important?

It is important because people with lived experience of suicide have invaluable insights and perspectives that need to be heard when suicide policy and practice is being discussed and developed. Ultimately, suicide prevention activity is more likely to have an impact if it is based on what people with lived experience are saying is important, and when decisions are made collaboratively with people who have lived experience.

Q. How do I apply to become a Lived Experience Influencer?

You can download the influencer recruitment pack from the NSPA [website](#) or by emailing livedexperience@nspa.org.uk.

Q. How many influencers are you recruiting?

There are currently 30 Lived Experience Influencers in NSPA's Lived Experience Network, and in this this round of recruitment we are aiming to recruit up to 10 new Influencers to join the group

Q. Can children and young people apply?

At the moment applications are only open to people aged 18 and over (adults). We hope to explore ways of involving and working with children and young people in the future to ensure their perspectives and experiences influence this important agenda.

Q. What if I am not selected to become an influencer?

Due to limited space on the programme, we may not be able to invite everyone who applies on to the Influencer programme.

- Some candidates may show many of the skills and experiences that fit the role, but are not invited to join immediately due to limits on places or the need to recruit a diverse group in order to maximise the representation of different voices and experiences. This will depend on the number of applications we receive.
- Some candidates may not be selected because their applications don't demonstrate the skills, experiences or qualities we're keen for Influencers to have, or may not be quite ready to be part of the group. In most of these cases, they will be welcome to apply again in the future.
- There are other ways of being part of NSPA's Lived Experience Network if you haven't been invited to become an Influencer. If you have lived experience of suicide and are a resident in England, you can join our online Lived Experience Network and still take part in online surveys and discussions.

Q. Can I apply again to become an influencer if I have not been selected the first time?

Yes, you can as and when we are recruiting again for Influencers. We will advertise on our website and through mailings.

Q. How long will it last?

We are keen for Influencers that commit to our training programme to be involved with the lived experience programme for a minimum of one year.

However, should anyone feel at any point that they cannot continue in the role for whatever reason, we would talk to individuals about this to find a way forward.

We may also review the membership periodically with Influencers to support your needs and the programme.

Q. Will I be paid?

Remuneration (payment) is offered for roles or opportunities that you take part in as an NSPA Influencer. The payment rate varies depending on the role and responsibilities, in line with our Lived Experience Payment policy. For many Influencer roles, this will be at a £150 a day/ £75 ½ day rate, although there may be some roles where a higher amount is offered. There may also be some participation opportunities where a thank you gift voucher is offered rather than payment. Payment amounts will always be stated when we share opportunity descriptions.

We recognise that some people will be unable, or choose not to, accept payment for various reasons. Whilst we feel it is important to offer payment as recognition of time, expertise and skills, accepting payment is optional.

Please note that we do not offer payment for people to attend Influencer training programme, or to take part in further optional learning opportunities or mentoring conversations. As this is part of our offer of support, which we hope you can also use in other activities outside of NSPA.

Q. If I become part of the Influencer group, how do I get involved in Opportunities?

Opportunities and roles are made available on an ad hoc basis, coming from both within and outside of the NSPA. We will share these, using an Opportunity Description, with all Influencers when they arise, and invite Influencers to express an interest. We will then match Influencers with opportunities based on skills, experience and interest. There may be limited numbers of Influencers who can do some opportunities, so there may be times when an Influencer is not selected for a particular role.

There will be no expectation for you to put yourself forward for opportunities or roles that you do not feel able, or wish, to do.

In addition to formal NSPA Influencer opportunities, we will encourage Influencers to share events and activities that others in the group may be interested in and will share anything of interest that we are made aware of.

We will also be inviting Influencers to take part in discussion groups to inform suicide prevention.

Q. What additional support and training is provided to Influencers?

A range of support and development opportunities will be offered to Influencers, including:

- Initial Influencer Training, plus additional development and learning opportunities throughout the year
- Opportunities to benefit from informal peer support and mentoring within the Influencer group.
- Support from NSPA's Lived Experience Network staff.
- Remuneration (pay) will be offered for time spent on opportunities and roles, in recognition of time, skills and expertise.

Your main points of contact will be Jess Worner, NSPA's Lived Experience Network Manager, and Rosie Ellis, NSPA's Lived Experience Network Officer. Both Rosie and Jess have lived experience themselves, and experiences in lived experience involvement and co-production. You can find out more about Rosie and Jess on [NSPA's website here](#).

Q. Will it affect my benefits?

We know that some Influencers or potential Influencers may be concerned about the impact that payment for influencing could have on their benefits. NSPA cannot accept responsibility for the impact that accepting a payment may have on someone's benefits and

/ or HMRC tax responsibilities. We can provide all Influencers a NSPA headed letter for you to give to the Jobcentre or DWP that describes what you do, why we involve people with lived experience of suicide, and how the organisation offers support measures where required, and that you can discontinue involvement at any time to prioritise Jobcentre Plus requirements.

Whilst we want to ensure that Influencers are offered remuneration for your involvement in opportunities and roles, you are entitled to not accept payment.

Q. I would like to get involved but I am not confident in a group setting or speaking up?

Whilst the training and the Influencer role does involve joining group discussions at times, we understand that many people are less confident in group settings. At NSPA we have things in place to help group our Influencer spaces feel as safe as possible, and the training is delivered by experienced facilitators. Please do feel free to contact us if you are worried about this, and we can talk about ways that we may be able to support you if you proceed with the Influencer role.

Q. I have a disability or have other communication needs; can I still apply?

Yes, we can discuss with you what reasonable adjustments you require and agree how we can involve you in the programme.

Please be aware that training for influencers is currently taking place online.

Q. Can someone else support me to complete my application, such as a friend or carer?

Please do feel free to ask someone you trust to support you with your application, so long as the application is still made by you. We want the application process to be as open and user friendly as possible, and that might include asking someone to help with your application.

Q. What if I cannot use online technology or require other support?

Please be aware that training for influencers is currently being delivered online, and whilst there may be some in person opportunities, the majority of Influencer opportunities involve communicating online (e.g. involving email correspondence and/or virtual meetings).

If you are unable to complete the online application, you can ask a friend, family member or carer to help you. If this is not possible, please contact us and we will have a conversation to see how we may help you complete the application.

If you are concerned about accessing technology for the training or Influencer role, please get in touch, and we will see how we can help.

You can email livedexperience@nspa.org.uk or phone 07485384001 (Rosie) or 07485345484 (Jess).

Q. Will I be asked to complete a diversity monitoring form?

We will be asking people to complete diversity monitoring forms, which will be anonymized and kept separate from the application forms. We wish to seek as diverse a group of people as possible. We believe that it is vital that diverse voices are heard in suicide prevention and that this will lead to better outcomes for all groups in society. The diversity form will help us reach that ambition by highlighting any specific gaps or needs. Completing a diversity monitoring form will be optional, and if you do complete it, all questions are also optional.

Q. How long will the process take?

Applications will be reviewed following the closing date (31st August 2023). We will then be in touch with those who we have shortlisted about a week later to arrange a further conversation to discuss the Influencer role and training more, and to find out more about you. Following that conversation, you will be told if you have been accepted as an influencer within a few days.

We plan to have a meet & greet session for all new Influencers on 20th September 2023 and the training will start on 4th October 2023. Please see the full training schedule for more details.

Q. How long is the influencer training and how many days will I need to attend?

The training consists of 7 training sessions, which are each 2-3 hours long, as well as a meet & greet session. These will be taking place online via Zoom. Ideally, we would ask that Influencers attend all of the sessions, as well as the meet & greet session. If there are any sessions that you are unable to attend, do talk to us, and we may be able to accommodate on a case-by-case basis.

Please do check if you are able to attend the training sessions before making your application.

Q. Can I leave at any time if I don't wish to be an influencer anymore?

You can leave or take a break at any time. We just ask that you inform us in writing by emailing livedexperience@nspa.org.uk.

We also encourage you to talk to us about any support needs, and we are really happy to talk about what we might be able to do help you feel comfortable as an Influencer.