

Programme Lead – SEND (X3)

Salary £58,855

12 month Fixed Term Contract – starting from September 2025, based at London Councils, 12 Arthur Street, EC4R 9AB

Secondments and agency appointments welcome

This role is a full-time position. However, part-time applicants will be considered.

Who we are

The [London Innovation and Improvement Alliance \(LIIA\)](#) is the Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS) sector-led improvement partnership and is hosted by London Councils. We exist to facilitate collaboration to address ALDCS priorities, provide a platform for innovation, identify and share effective practice and produce and make accessible shared datasets. Aligned to ALDCS priorities our programme is focused on five key workstreams; [Adolescent Safeguarding](#), [SEND](#), [Resources](#), [Workforce](#), and [Care Leavers](#), underpinned by crosscutting themes.

We are seeking to grow the team and require motivated leads to join us in supporting London's local authorities through collaboration to improve the outcomes and experience for children in the capital. This will also offer opportunities to take a key role in helping London local authorities and partners gear up for and respond to national policy changes when announced, so we build on great practice in London to improve outcomes for children with SEND.

What you'll do

The ALDCS SEND Programme is entering its fourth year of operation and an exciting new phase of development, to drive forward an ambitious programme of pan-London work. To support this expanded agenda, we are recruiting three new SEND Programme Lead roles. These roles will be central to shaping and delivering key priorities for the next stage of the programme, working closely with London local authorities, partners, and wider stakeholders.

Each role will lead a major strand of work within the ALDCS SEND Programme:

- Inclusion
- Resources & Commissioning
- Innovation & Targeted Support

While each post has a different thematic focus, all will involve working at a strategic, cross-borough level, supporting collaboration, innovation and shared learning across London's SEND system.

You will work as part of a dynamic and expert team, with access to a strong professional network and the opportunity to influence practice and policy across education, health, care and children's services. The roles require close working with senior local authority leaders and offer a unique opportunity to

contribute to system-wide improvement for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

How to Apply

Apply for this role via the [LIIA Website](#), submitting your CV and Cover Letter [to the hiring team](#).

- Closing date for applications: **12pm – noon, Monday 14th July**
- Interviews will take place on either the **17th or 18th July**.

Please contact [Frank Offer – LIIA Lead for SEND](#), for an informal conversation about the role.



Job Description

Job Title: SEND Resources and Commissioning Lead – LIIA

Responsible to: LIIA Strategic Lead

Key Contacts: ALDCS, Children's Services Practice Leaders Network, SEND and Education Strategic Leaders, Society of London Treasurers (SLT), DfE, London Councils Officers, Health, Parents/Carers, Children and Young People, Leaders and strategy makers across services for children in London.

Band: E

Job Purpose

- To be responsible for coordinating and delivering the pan-London SEND Resources and Commissioning workstream as part of the wider SEND programme, working with Directors of Children's Services (DCSs), senior officers and services across the London region.
- To lead the development of collaborative responses to challenges in the efficient use of SEND resources, understanding sufficiency of provision and commissioning.
- To ensure effective stakeholder engagement, consultation, and communication across all work areas, including developing and supporting finance and commissioning networks and cross-borough learning.
- To build on DfE Programmes such as Delivering Better Value and Safety Valve and support sharing of learning from these programmes
- To provide research, information, advice and support on SEND resource, commissioning and policy issues within local government children's services across London.

Principal Accountabilities

1. To take responsibility for the project management and delivery of LIIA's SEND Resource and Commissioning workstream, ensuring it supports ALDCS priorities and align with the broader London Innovation and Improvement programme.
2. To lead and coordinate pan-London networks for SEND finance and commissioning leads, enabling the sharing of practice, collaborative problem-solving, and innovation across boroughs.

3. To plan, monitor and deliver projects and activities related to SEND resource and commissioning, ensuring they progress in accordance with agreed work plans, deliverables and timelines.
4. To report on progress to programme boards, sponsors and key stakeholders, producing high-quality briefings, updates and presentations as required.
5. To build and maintain strong relationships with senior stakeholders across commissioning, finance, education, and care, acting as a key contact for SEND resource and commissioning activity across the region.
6. To support the delivery of the recommendations of the regional SEND Commissioning Review, working with boroughs to develop joint approaches to sufficiency, provider engagement and financial planning.
7. To support the development of tools, frameworks and shared data that strengthen local authorities' strategic planning and financial oversight of SEND services.
8. To work collaboratively with other members of the LIIA team, contributing to shared improvement priorities across the SEND Programme and ensuring alignment between SEND resource/commissioning and other workstreams, including inclusion and placements.
9. To contribute to the preparation and dissemination of communications, including newsletters, website updates, and key messaging for London boroughs and national partners.
10. To represent ALDCS and LIIA in relevant regional and national SEND or inclusion-focused projects and forums, as agreed with the LIIA Strategic Lead.
11. To support the evaluation of the impact and value for money of the SEND programme, including the collection and analysis of feedback and performance data where relevant.
12. To deputise for the LIIA SEND Programme Lead when required and contribute to a high-performing, collaborative team environment.
13. To adhere to London Councils' corporate policies, procedures, regulations and protocols, including the Data Protection Act 2018.
14. To always take care to uphold health and safety at work for self and others. To always observe London Councils' Health and Safety policy and related procedures.
15. To uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct in line with the expectations of a local government officer and to lead staff to adhere to such standards in order to uphold the reputation of London Councils and local government in London.
16. A Flexi system is worked. Evening and out-of-hours working may be required on occasions and a willingness to travel within England and Wales.

Person Specification

LIA Programme Lead

Experience

- Proven track record of successful project management or leadership within a multi-disciplinary public or private sector organisation, including developing, leading and implementing strategies and initiatives which cross service and professional boundaries.
- Experience of delivering outcomes in partnership with local authorities, education providers, health services, and/or voluntary sector partners.
- Significant experience of working in or with Children's Services, with a focus on SEND commissioning, sufficiency or related areas.
- Experience of working effectively within a complex political environment, with evidence of shaping and influencing service delivery or strategic outcomes.
- Demonstrated ability to advise and constructively challenge senior managers to ensure high-quality service and improvement across organisations.

Knowledge

- In-depth knowledge of SEND commissioning practice, sufficiency planning and provider markets in education or care.
- Good understanding of the workings of local government and the specific challenges faced by London boroughs in delivering sustainable, inclusive SEND services.
- Awareness of national SEND funding policy, including High Needs Block funding and related financial pressures and existing programmes including Delivering Better Value and Safety Valve.
- Knowledge of the strategic direction of Children's Services and education, and how services and plans are developed with and through partners.
- Understanding of relevant inspection frameworks and the national policy context affecting SEND funding and provision

Skills and abilities

- Strong partnership working and collaboration skills, including with senior stakeholders across education, health, social care, and voluntary sectors.
- Ability to lead and deliver transformational change in complex, multi-agency environments.
- Highly developed communication skills, with the ability to produce and present high-quality briefings, reports and communications on complex policy and practice issues.
- Strong influencing and negotiation skills, with a track record of building consensus and delivering impact across organisational boundaries.
- Effective relationship-building and the ability to sustain networks and communities of practice across the sector.
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills, including experience of using evidence and feedback to drive improvement and innovation.
- Excellent organisational and project management skills, including the ability to prioritise, manage competing demands and deliver to deadlines.

- Confidence in facilitating and supporting cross-borough collaboration, including working groups, learning events and governance forums.

Personal characteristics

- Strong performer who can achieve results through personal drive and influencing others.
- Innovative and creative thinking.
- Politically and culturally sensitive and able to work effectively with London and local politicians and officers.
- Able to assess and operate comfortably across different cultures and systems while retaining confidence from all key partners.
- Strong interpersonal skills to relate effectively to politicians and senior leaders in a range of organisations.
- An inclusive team player.
- Self-starter, comfortable with operating with limited oversight and guidance, while keeping senior managers suitably engaged.

Political Restrictions

This is a politically restricted post, under Section 2 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.