



Creating impact
Reducing inequalities
Transforming systems

Application pack for

OPERATIONS ASSISTANT

October 2025





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Our mission

To grow and scale the boldest and best innovations that deliver long term impact for people, address persistent inequalities and transform the systems around them.



About us

Innovation Unit is a not for profit social enterprise with a mission to grow and scale the boldest and best innovations that deliver long-term impact for people, address persistent inequalities, and transform the systems that surround them.

We have 17 years experience of doing this work with ambitious partners in local and central government, schools and hospitals, voluntary and community sector organisations, trusts and foundations.

We hold a bold vision: we want to see a world in which all people belong and contribute to thriving societies.

To achieve this vision, we must challenge and change the systems that people who experience disadvantage rely on most.



What it's like to work at
Innovation Unit?



Our team come from a wide variety of professional backgrounds and life experiences – researchers, service designers and programme managers work alongside colleagues with grass roots, community experience, as well as occupational therapists, social workers, and central and local government professionals, to design new solutions and take them to scale.

People who work at Innovation Unit share a core set of beliefs about enabling change that is owned and driven by the people it affects. We all work with the tools and methods from our tried and tested formula for innovation and impact.

Our 2024 areas of impact are:

1

Mental Health
Innovation

2

Tackling
Health
Inequalities

3

Justice and
Reducing
Violence

4

Children
and Families

5

Place based
transformation



Explore our recent work



Mental Health Innovation

Living Well UK

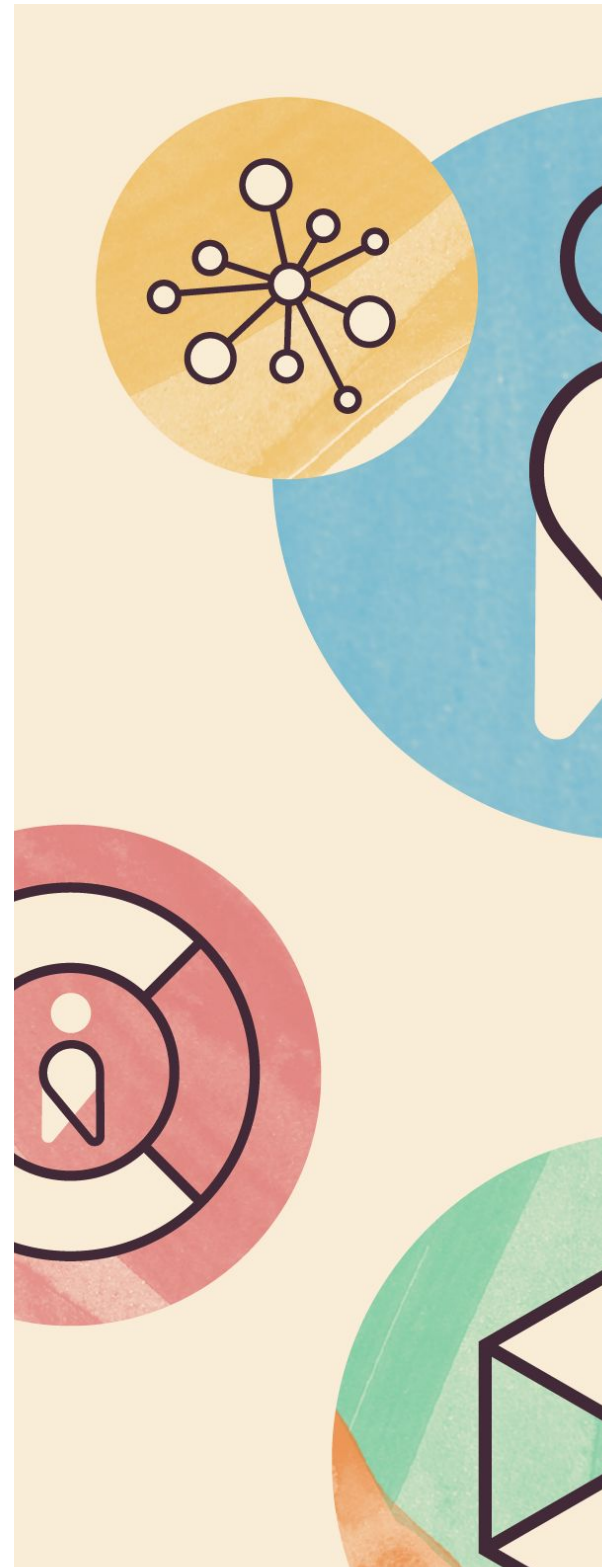


Living Well systems are designed to help people recover and stay well as part of their community. They are a response to mental health systems in the UK that have struggled for a long time to provide person centred, holistic support, where and when it is needed.

National Lottery Community Fund funded Innovation Unit to support four pioneering places in the UK to design and build Living Well systems of support for good mental health and wellbeing (2018-22), inspired by Lambeth Living Well, South London.

We helped our sites generate insights about people's lives, then used this new knowledge to co-design and prototype new multidisciplinary teams, implement them successfully, and, finally, scale (extend and grow) them across whole places. We coached leaders and their teams as they introduced difficult changes, and helped build local capabilities to ensure that new ways of working can be sustained long after our work is complete.

Since then, the movement has grown and is now influencing and supporting transformation of adult community mental health across Derby and Derbyshire County, Greater Manchester, Edinburgh and York.



Go to project website



Place based transformation

Good Lives GM

GoodLives GM grew from conversations with brilliant innovators across Greater Manchester. They identified common barriers to embedding community-led innovation. Together, we are exploring and learning how a system shifting capability could help them tackle these barriers.

GLGM is facilitated by a strategic partnership between Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Innovation Unit. Our work is steered by VCSE and public sector colleagues, working closely with the 10 GM localities.

We are currently working on behalf of GM in relation to Live Well, a programme of work aiming to reduce health inequalities by growing community-led support for healthy lives. The GLGM team have been supporting five GM localities to anticipate the system barriers they will encounter and design-in collaboration and experimentation to overcome them.

We are also working with four trailblazer localities regards Early Family Help to reduce inequalities through community-led support that helps families to flourish.

All underpinned by a new kind of leadership collaborative. Supported through 1:1 and group coaching and a programme of learning opportunities whilst trios of leaders conduct system shifting experiments to rebuild structures and cultures.



[Go to project website](#)

Our approach

We grow and scale the boldest and best innovations that deliver long-term impact for people, address persistent inequalities, and transform the systems that surround them.

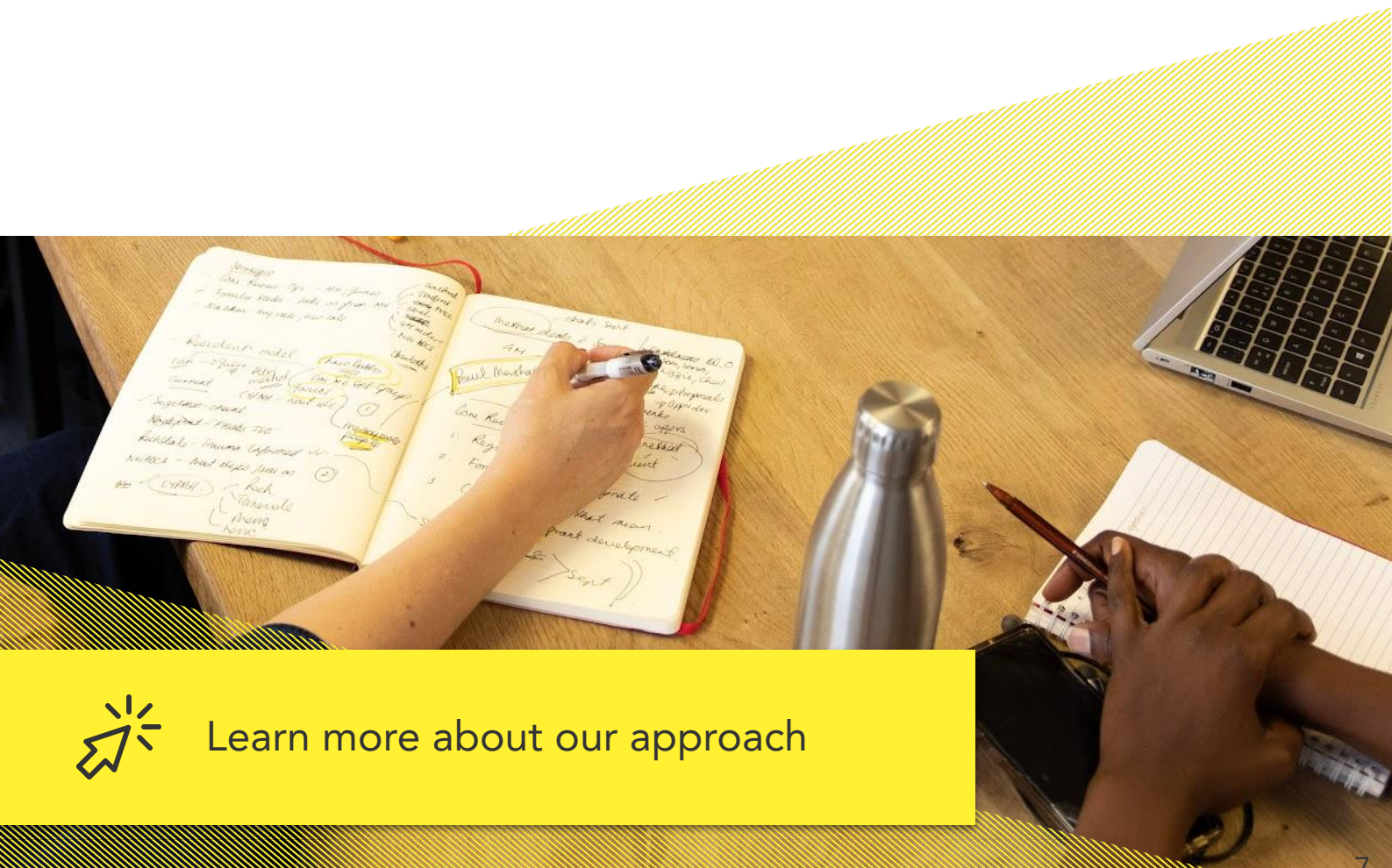
We do this by coaching leaders and their teams as they introduce difficult changes. And we help build local capability to ensure that new ways of working will be maintained long after our work is complete.

We work closely with people with lived-experience and frontline staff.

Together, we dig deep to find root causes of problems, challenge assumptions, design and test new ways of working and help implement change.

We help organisations collaborate with one another and build strong partnerships that can transform a system or a place.

The impact is better outcomes and experiences for vulnerable people and better outcomes for the wider system.



Learn more about our approach



Equity, diversity and inclusion

We are actively seeking to recruit a diverse pool of talent for the available roles.

Our recruitment process will test your ability, skills and knowledge and we encourage you to apply even if you only have some experience for the role.

We put lived experience at the heart of the work we do at Innovation Unit – whether through co-design, storytelling or participatory research. Much of our work is within the mental health, health, children's social care, and criminal justice systems.

We know that staff members with lived or professional experience of these systems make us stronger, and more capable of creating meaningful impact.

We value all forms of diversity as a matter of principle, and because innovation thrives on new perspectives, we want our new team members to help us see entrenched social challenges in new ways.

We are committed to becoming an anti-racist organisation, and strongly encourage people of colour to apply. We also welcome applications by candidates from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, those with disabilities as well as those who identify with any other underrepresented group.

OUR RECRUITMENT PROCESS

At Innovation Unit we use Applied for our recruitment. Applied aims to overcome unconscious bias in recruiting. Instead of using your CV alone, we'll be asking you to answer questions to test skills needed for the role. The responses are then anonymised, and reviewed in a random order by members of our team.

The Applied platform also asks some demographic questions before you start your application. We at Innovation Unit never see the responses to these demographic questions with your application. We only see summary statistics to help us check if our candidate pool is balanced and if everyone has an equal chance to get hired irrespective of their background. If you prefer, you can easily opt out of answering these questions.



Operations Assistant





Personal attributes

We have developed strong systems and processes over the past five years and are now focused on enhancing their efficiency and effectiveness to support the continued growth of Innovation Unit.

We are seeking a capable and proactive Operations Assistant to help deliver this ambition. This is a varied and fast-paced role that sits at the heart of our organisation, supporting the smooth running of our core business functions, including HR, IT, systems, finance, recruitment, team events, and workspace coordination. Reporting to the Head of Finance and Operations, and working closely with the HR Manager, you will engage with colleagues across the organisation to ensure our operations are well organised, responsive, and people-centred.

You will be responsible for a broad range of activities, including managing shared systems and records, supporting recruitment and onboarding, coordinating team events and workspace logistics, and providing day-to-day support with IT and organisational platforms. You will also contribute to finance administration, business development processes, and support initiatives that strengthen team culture and employee experience.

This role requires proven experience in administration, operations, or HR support, ideally gained within a consultancy, charity, or purpose-driven organisation. You will be confident using systems such as Google Workspace, Zoom, Slack, and demonstrate the ability to learn and use new platforms effectively. You will be expected to manage tasks independently, apply sound judgement, and deliver work to a high professional standard.

You will need to build and maintain strong working relationships with colleagues, associates, and suppliers, and work effectively across a range of internal functions. This will require excellent communication skills, strong organisational ability, and the flexibility to adapt when circumstances change. A high level of discretion and care will be essential, particularly when handling sensitive information or supporting compliance processes.

Innovation Unit is a mission-driven organisation committed to tackling persistent inequalities and transforming the systems that shape people's lives. You will be joining a collaborative, supportive, and high-performing team that values learning, inclusion, and a shared commitment to meaningful impact. From your first day, you will be expected to contribute actively to the success of the team and to the continuous improvement of our operations and employee experience.

If you are looking for a role that offers variety, responsibility, and purpose, and the opportunity to build and apply your operations expertise in a values-led organisation, we would be delighted to hear from you.



Job Description

Purpose

To provide comprehensive organisational, administrative, and HR support across our core business functions, including IT, systems, HR, Finance, recruitment, team events, and workspace coordination. This role is crucial for ensuring the organisation runs smoothly and efficiently, maintaining high standards of organisation, communication, and employee experience.

Roles & Responsibilities

1. Operations & Office Administration

- Act as a first point of contact for operational queries.
- Manage shared mailboxes, triaging and forwarding emails as appropriate.
- Help maintain shared systems and records (Google Workspace, Sharepoint, HR and operations files).
- Liaise with shared workspace providers on desks, room bookings, supplies, and office logistics (including managing couriered mail).
- Keep organisational records, templates, and compliance documents up to date and well organised.

2. System & IT Support

- Provide day-to-day support with organisational systems (e.g. CMAP, Slack, Zoom, TravelPerk, Miro, Google Drive), ensuring data is up to date and processes are followed.
- Set up IT and systems access for new starters (Google Workspace emails, CMAP, TravelPerk, Slack).
- Provide first-line IT troubleshooting (password resets, access issues) and escalate to external IT support when needed.
- Track laptops/phones, order new kit, and coordinate disposal.
- Maintain accurate records of equipment and system access.
- Provide guidance and basic training on organisational systems (CMAP, Slack, Zoom, TravelPerk, Miro, Google Drive).

3. HR & Recruitment Administration

- Support recruitment campaigns (posting adverts, managing applications in BeApplied, scheduling interviews, and coordinating assessments)
- Assist with onboarding and offboarding administration (Contracts, inductions, IT/equipment and systems coordination and training).
- Maintain accurate and confidential HR records.
- Support HR initiatives such as diversity monitoring, staff surveys, probation reviews and mid-year reviews/annual summits in collaboration with the HR Manager.



Job Description

4. Events & Team Culture

- Lead planning and logistics for key organisational events including:
 - Board meetings
 - Quarterly Away Days
 - Annual Associates Evening
 - Summer and Christmas social events
 - Internal learning Programme sessions (e.g. Innovation Academy)
- Research and book venues, catering, and travel for events and meetings.
- Coordinate milestone celebrations and gifts (weddings, new babies, leavers).
- Support team culture by coordinating birthday cards, end-of-week notes, and other initiatives to promote connection and belonging.

5. Business Development (BD) Support

- Support proposal and tender submissions, including formatting, document preparation and input of corporate details.
- Maintain organised records of contracts, proposals, and associate agreements.
- Assist with basic BD reporting from CRM data.

6. Finance Administration

- Support staff with purchases of equipment and other expenses.
- Collect and record credit card receipts to support reconciliation.
- Organise and code supplier invoices for processing by the Finance team.
- Support the update purchase order and client invoicing trackers.
- Provide day-to-day support for expense claims and timesheet processes.
- Ad hoc support to the MD, Head of Finance and Operations and HR Manager as required.



Experience, knowledge and skills

SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Proven experience in administration, operations, or HR support.
- Strong organisational and coordination skills, with the ability to manage competing priorities.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with confidence engaging colleagues and external stakeholders.
- Strong IT skills, including Google Workspace/Microsoft Office and online meeting platforms (e.g. Zoom, Google Meets, Teams).
- High attention to detail and accuracy, with ability to keep records and processes well organised.
- Experience handling sensitive or confidential information with discretion.

Desirable

- Experience working in a charity, social enterprise, or purpose-driven organisation.
- Experience supporting recruitment campaigns, ideally using an applicant tracking system (e.g. BeApplied).
- Previous HR administration experience (contracts, onboarding, staff records).
- Experience coordinating events or office logistics.
- Familiarity with systems such as CMAP, Slack, Zoom, TravelPerk, Miro, Google Drive or other organisational tools.



Contract details

Location

We only accept applications from people with the right to work in the UK and are UK based, with the ability to travel to one of the main offices and others as required.

London office

Runway East
20 St Thomas Street
London
SE1 9RS

Manchester office

x+why 100 Embankment
Embankment East Tower
Cathedral Approach
Salford
Greater Manchester
M3 7FB

Hybrid working

Our team splits their time between home, on client sites and office, with moments to come to the office for project work, away days and socials. Schedules vary depending on the requirements of your role.

Salary

£ 28k p.a.
depending on experience

Type

Part-time permanent (3 days per week)

Hours

22.5 per week

Holiday

27 days holiday plus bank holidays. In addition, we close the office for three days between Christmas and New Year.

Who will I report to?

Head of Finance & Operations

Benefits

4% pension contribution

Pension salary exchange scheme

Life cover

Flexible working

Employee Assistance Support

Please get in touch with any questions about the role or the contract at:



contact@innovationunit.org



How to apply

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We actively seeking applications from a diverse range of candidates, including people of colour, those from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups. Our recruitment process tests your ability, skills, and knowledge, so apply even if you have limited experience.

We use the Applied platform for recruitment, which aims to reduce unconscious bias by having you answer skill-based questions instead of relying solely on your CV. Responses are reviewed randomly by our team. Please refrain from using AI for your sift questions to ensure a fair representation of your abilities. The platform also asks demographic questions, which are anonymous to us and only used for summary statistics to ensure a balanced candidate pool. You can opt out of these questions.



Follow the link to Be Applied to submit your application
<https://app.beapplied.com/apply/kxnedv3bvc>

DEADLINE

The deadline for receipt of applications is 09:00 Thursday 30th October 2025

INTERVIEWS

First round interviews will take place between 3rd and 7th November over video call. Final screening interviews with the Managing Director and aptitude tests will be in the week commencing 10th November online.

All candidates will receive an email confirming that their application has been received. After this, we will only contact the applicants that have been selected for interview. Feedback on your application will be given through the Be Applied system.

Due to the nature of our work with children and vulnerable adults, Innovation Unit operates a Safer Recruitment policy. All offers of employment will be made on the condition of a DBS check being carried out and we will ask for two references.