Job Posting: Part-time Lived Experience Consultant

Position Type: Part time 20 hours
Location: Warwick, RI

About the Housing Network of Rhode Island (HNRI)

The Housing Network of Rhode Island (HNRI) was founded in 1992 as the state's association of nonprofit community development corporations. Collectively, HNRI's members have built thousands of affordable homes and initiated community revitalization projects that strengthen neighborhoods across Rhode Island. In 2017, HNRI launched the Housing Opportunities Initiative—later known as Homes RI—to build public will for affordable housing solutions statewide.

As HNRI looks ahead, its new three-year strategic plan marks an evolution from a member service organization to a broader alliance focused on advancing affordable housing solutions through coalition building, increasing public support, and policy advocacy. HNRI believes that safe, high-quality, affordable housing is a basic human right and the foundation for well-being. Grounded in equity, collaboration, and people-centered solutions, HNRI works to ensure that all Rhode Islanders live in safe, healthy, and affordable homes in thriving communities.

Position Summary

HNRI seeks a Lived Experience Consultant to help shape and guide statewide housing and systems-change strategies through the meaningful inclusion of people with direct experience of homelessness, housing instability, recovery, substance use disorder, and/or navigating housing systems.

The Lived Experience Consultant will play a critical role in ensuring that program design, policy recommendations, technical assistance activities, and stakeholder engagement efforts are informed by the expertise of people directly impacted by the systems this work seeks to improve.

The consultant will work closely with the Cross Sector Systems Lead, housing stakeholders, service providers, and community members to help ensure that housing policies, programs, and practices are person-centered, equitable, responsive, and grounded in real-world experience.

The purpose of this position is to ensure that people with lived experience of housing instability, homelessness, recovery, and related systems help shape the policies, practices, and systems-change efforts that affect their lives. This role centers lived experience as systems expertise and supports recommendations that are grounded in how systems are accessed, navigated, and experienced. It is designed to ensure that solutions are developed **with people, not for people**.

Responsibilities:

Lived Experience Leadership

- Ensure project activities reflect the needs and priorities of people impacted by homelessness, housing instability, OUD, and SUD.
- Identify barriers and challenges encountered when accessing housing and supportive services.
- Share insights and recommendations that help improve housing access, retention, and system responsiveness.

Engagement Framework Development

- Assist in developing a statewide Lived Experience Engagement Framework.
- Recommend best practices for community participation and shared decision-making.

Focus Groups and Community Engagement

- Support planning and implementation of focus groups and listening sessions.
- Assist in recruiting individuals with lived experience to participate in project activities.
- Provide feedback on discussion guides, outreach materials, and facilitation approaches.
- Participate in focus groups and community conversations.

Policy and Systems-Change Input

- Provide feedback on proposed housing, homelessness response, recovery-supportive, harm-reduction, and systems-change strategies and implementation plans.
- Help identify unintended consequences or barriers in housing policies and procedures.
- Support development of recommendations that increase equity and access within housing systems.

Technical Assistance and Training Support

- Participate in trainings, convenings, and technical assistance activities related to housing access, stability, recovery, harm reduction, and systems change.
- Share lived-experience perspectives during presentations, meetings, and training events when appropriate.
- Assist housing stakeholders in understanding how policies impact tenants and applicants.

Cross-Sector Collaboration

- Participate in meetings with housing providers, service providers, healthcare organizations, and community partners.
- Advocate for meaningful inclusion of lived-experience perspectives in decision-making processes.
- Help strengthen relationships between housing systems and the communities they serve.

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

- Provide feedback on project activities and implementation efforts.
- Assist with collection and interpretation of participant feedback.
- Help assess whether engagement efforts are meaningful, accessible, and effective.

Desired Qualifications

Required

- Personal lived experience with homelessness, housing instability, recovery, substance use disorder, behavioral health systems, housing navigation, or related systems.
- Ability to share relevant experiences in a professional and constructive manner.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to work collaboratively with diverse groups and stakeholders.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and professional boundaries.

Preferred

- Experience participating in advisory boards, focus groups, community engagement initiatives, or advocacy efforts.
- Familiarity with Rhode Island housing, homelessness, behavioral health, or recovery systems.
- Experience presenting or facilitating discussions.
- Experience supporting community-based programs or systems-change initiatives.
- Knowledge of housing access strategies, harm reduction, trauma-informed care, recovery-oriented approaches, homelessness response systems, or tenant-centered practices.

Compensation: $25 an hour 20 hours a week

To Express Interest

Please submit a cover letter or statement of interest, resume, and summary of relevant experience to Emmeline Orellana at eorellana@housingnetworkri.org. Applications will be reviewed based on experience and alignment with the scope of work.