

OrganicLea C.I.C

JOB PACK COMMUNITY KITCHEN LEAD



CITY BRIDGE
FOUNDATION

Key Information

Community Kitchen Lead



Location: Hawkwood Nursery, Chingford, London (and occasional outreach locations)

Hours: 3 days/week, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday (with opportunities for occasional weekend work as additional hours)

Start date: January 2026

Salary: £30,503 pro rata (based on 35 hour week)

Contract: Starting as a one-year contract with potential for full Cooperative membership

Responsible to: Community Learning and Inclusion team

Closing date for applications: Midnight Thursday 4 December

Interviewing: Wednesday 10th and Friday 12th December

Start date: Tuesday 20 January if possible

For us, experience of working with people is more important than formal education. So if you do not meet all the skills and experience listed in this job pack, but feel you are the right person for this work, you are encouraged to apply. We particularly welcome applications from people who are from Black and Minoritised communities, disabled, LGBTQIA+, or don't have university degrees, so as to better reflect the communities in which we live and work.

About OrganicLea

Who are we?

OrganicLea is a workers' cooperative growing food, plants and community in the Lea Valley. We produce and distribute food locally, support people to learn about sustainable growing and cooking, and work towards a socially and environmentally just food system.

OrganicLea was set up in 2001 in the belief that more food can and should be grown in London; and bringing people together to do this grows more than food. Together we can grow healthier, connected communities that are working with nature and not against it. We work in partnership with local organisations and take part in national networks of support.

Grow it Cook it

Our community kitchen is at the heart of our Grow It, Cook It programme — inspiring people to eat more plant-based, seasonal and organic food, improving personal health, supporting biodiversity and reducing our collective carbon footprint. Much of this food is grown 10 meters away from the kitchen!

The CLI Team

The kitchen lead is part of the Community Learning and Inclusion (CLI) team at OrganicLea, which puts people at the centre of all we do. The team works closely together, sharing responsibilities to bring people and plants together. All of this is linked with our enterprise and market gardening work as part of our mission to reimagine a socially and environmentally just food system.



Community Kitchen Lead

About the role

Location: Hawkwood Nursery, Chingford, London (and occasional outreach locations)

Hours: 3 days/week, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday (with opportunities for occasional weekend work as additional hours)

Start date: January 2026

Salary: £30,503 pro rata (based on 35 hour week)



The Community Kitchen Lead will oversee OrganicLea's community kitchen and contribute to the development and delivery of the Grow It, Cook It programme.

Each week, the kitchen provides nutritious plant-based lunches for all site users (Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays). Working alongside a team of volunteers, the Kitchen Lead ensures the smooth running of kitchen operations and creates a welcoming, educational and empowering environment for all participants.



The Kitchen Lead will also support the development of activities, training and communications that bring a focus on how to cook with the produce we grow and how plant-based diets connect to human and planetary health. You'll need to have a passion for food, the ability to spot and nurture cooking talent, and skills to communicate food and climate justice issues in an engaging way.

Role Responsibilities

Kitchen Leadership and Operations

- Planning the communal meal to create a filling and nutritious lunch for between 30-90 people (with numbers varying according to time of year and level of activity onsite).
- Manage set up and full clean-down of kitchen space after service, and maintain an organised kitchen and storage environment.
- Manage kitchen logistics — including inventory, ordering, food storage and hygiene compliance.
- Lead and support volunteers in meal preparation, including people requiring additional prompts and guidance, and speakers of English as an additional language.
- Provide volunteer training and induction on safe and hygienic food practices.
- Support the delivery of lunchtime announcements highlighting seasonal ingredients, plant-based benefits and climate connections.

Grow It, Cook It Programme Delivery

You will work alongside the Grow It, Cook It project manager and CLI team to:

- Coordinate the kitchen as a learning environment, integrating cookery with environmental education.
- Embed cooking, climate and diet awareness into existing volunteer and learning programmes.
- Support volunteers working towards AQA qualifications in "Planning, Cooking and Sharing Meals with a Group."
- Contribute to activities, training and communications on plant-based diets, food sovereignty and climate action.
- Help develop volunteer/trainee progression routes into further volunteering, training or employment.

Cooperative and Team Responsibilities

- Work collaboratively within the CLI team and wider OrganicLea co-op structure.
- Attend weekly CLI meetings (usually on a Tuesday afternoon)

Where the choice is made to join the OrganicLea Coop (more information available on request):

- Participate in cooperative meetings and consensus-based decision making.
- Contribute to governance, peer appraisal, and cooperative-wide responsibilities (training, risk management, facilitation).

Who we are looking for

We are looking for the following experience, skills and commitment. It is unlikely that anyone will meet all the skills and experience listed here. If you think you are the right person for the work, you are encouraged to apply.

Experience and Skills

- Experience of regularly cooking at scale (25+ people) in community or commercial kitchens.
- Ability to create nutritious, plant-based meals with fresh seasonal ingredients.
- Understanding of kitchen management, including stock control, budgets, hygiene, and health & safety compliance.
- Experience working with volunteers and creating an accessible and educational kitchen environment.
- Knowledge of, or willingness to learn more about organic food growing and global food and climate justice.
- Familiarity with safeguarding principles and practices.

Abilities

- Ability to motivate and empower others with empathy and sensitivity.
- Strong self-management and ability to prioritise tasks under minimal supervision.
- Calm, confident and flexible approach to leading a kitchen team, including when circumstances change at short notice
- Willingness to collaborate in a cooperative, non-hierarchical team.

Commitment

- Commitment to OrganicLea's cooperative values.
- Passion for community empowerment and environmental sustainability.
- Commitment to inclusive, respectful communication and continuous learning.
- Willingness to undergo DBS check.

How to Apply

Please send answers to the questions below to alice@organiclea.org.uk

1. Write a brief statement explaining why you are interested in this role, including your relevant experience and how you meet the person specification (max 600 words).
2. Provide details of your paid and unpaid work history, including the month/year you started and finished each role, and the key responsibilities in it.
3. Provide details of any relevant training or education including dates and qualifications achieved.
(2&3 can be submitted as a CV if preferred)
4. Please complete our [equal opportunity monitoring form](#)

You can also answer these questions via video or audio if this is more accessible to you, please contact us on the above email to arrange this.

We are a Disability Confident Committed employer. We are happy to make appropriate reasonable adjustments during the interview stage and to our workplace if selected. Please let us know if this is relevant to you and any adjustments you may need at interview (you do not need to share any details about your conditions or impairments at this stage). If you meet the minimum requirements for the role we will offer a guaranteed interview.

If you have any more questions, or need any support to apply, please reach out to Alice on the email above.

For more information about our work, visit
www.organiclea.org.uk.