



Community Food Growing Organiser (3 - 4 days per week)

We are looking for someone to join our workers' co-operative to work with the community in Waltham Forest to make change in the local food system.

The role holder will work with the community in Waltham Forest to take action towards our vision of a socially and environmentally just food system, in particular by supporting the development of community-led food growing projects via a Food Growing Network; and by bringing people together to take action on food issues.

The Food Growing Network has been established for two years in its current form (though Organiclea has been working to support and establish food growing projects in northeast London for many years). It has brought people together; supported the growth of more than 30 projects using mentoring and workshops; supported action and understanding on biodiversity and climate resilience; and facilitated youth activity in food growing. Now we are in the process of working to expand the network, make it more real, and develop the way it functions, especially in recognition of the entrenched inequality and racial injustice in the food system and our desire to change this. Our vision is also to decentralise this work, so that it is not Organiclea who controls the network or holds the resources; and therefore we have committed to using resource to facilitate this shift. The role holder will be required to listen, connect, and to think and act boldly to find ways to support network members, and to make the current network more diverse, inclusive and empowering; and to decentralise its organisation and share resources.

This is an exciting time to join this work as we also try to shape local food policy and action. The Food Growing Network is working in partnership with other food activity in the borough, such as the redistribution of surplus food, as part of the Waltham Forest Food Partnership. This is a real opportunity to centre food growing within the local food system.

We are looking for someone to co-lead this work. You will be joining someone already in post, who has the same role responsibility. You will need to collaborate closely together, and support each other.

We are also looking for someone who is excited to engage in the co-running of the Organiclea cooperative. As a workers' cooperative we seek to take collective control over our work, without the need for separate managers, owners or bosses. As such the role holder needs to be able to work independently and confidently, using the peer-support structures we have available. At the same time this role is very much about listening, connection and collaboration, both with Organiclea colleagues and with community members and organisations.

You may come from a community organising background and you will definitely have a lot of experience in working with diverse communities. You will also have skills relevant to facilitating and supporting a network; be happy being out and about talking to people; be good at practical problem solving; and have the capabilities to join the dots to think innovatively and strategically.

Experience of working with diverse communities and an understanding of and willingness to listen and to develop and co-create projects alongside residents and community groups is more important than formal education.

OrganicLea believe that, in most cases, it is best for the organisation and the worker to be fulfilling a 4 day per week role. This particular role has some flexibility from 3 - 4 days a week, depending on the capabilities and interests of the applicant. We would hope to support the successful candidate to identify 4 days of work within the cooperative, which could be from across other areas of work too. This particular work is funded for 3 years, and given this and the ambition of the role, it will be necessary for the role holder to be flexible in evolving the aims and workplan after this time.

More detailed tasks and responsibilities, and the skills and qualities we are seeking, are set out below.

This work is funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Platinum Jubilee Fund and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Job Description

Coordinate a network of food growing projects in Waltham Forest, supporting them to thrive and grow; whilst ensuring that the network is diverse, inclusive and empowering:

- Listen and act on the needs of residents and groups who want to grow food together or do other food related activity, and support them to take collective action
- Support residents and community groups to co-create growing spaces that work for them, including organising and/or delivering trainings and workshops and supporting with fundraising and planning
- Support residents to set up food related activity on their street or estate such as food growing and food buying coops
- Work with member groups, and biodiversity specialist colleagues, to develop and implement biodiversity action plans at their sites; and link local biodiversity activity into London-wide biodiversity action.
- Empower groups to be part of a network together, and co-create the shape and activity of this network. Explore how resources and leadership can be shared, and find ways to grow and enable new community leaders in this space.
- Enable groups to communicate and connect through, for example, newsletters and gatherings.

- Enable group members to take on paid and leadership roles, supporting people to deliver trainings and facilitate sessions.
- Provide training and delivery support for sessional workers and volunteers on projects.
- Collaborate with colleagues to coordinate training, reflection spaces and new activities to ensure increased diversity, equity, and inclusion in the cooperative, and the network

Mobilise and equip the network to be engaged in food activism

The Food Growing Network is part of the Waltham Forest Food Partnership, a partnership bringing together OrganicLea, Hornbeam and key food partners together with the council to develop a vision and strategy for a more resilient food system in Waltham Forest.

- Represent the Food Growing Network in the Waltham Forest Food Partnership and other policy spaces; and/or enable others in the network to do this
- Ensure connections and collaboration with the Food Resilience Network and its food access activities, to enable residents to take action on food issues, beyond food growing.
- Support members of the Food Growing Network to feel empowered about food matters, equipping them to contribute to local and national campaigns.

Develop, fund, and administer the work

- Collaborate with coop colleagues to make sure this work is well connected to the work of other teams; and identify and act on opportunities to collaborate and develop the work
- Develop project proposals and negotiating contract budgets
- Contribute to fundraising strategy, writing funding proposals as required and often to tight deadlines
- Maintain up-to-date project budgets
- Organise the collection of monitoring, feedback and evaluation data

General Co-op responsibilities:

OrganicLea is a workers' co-operative (currently 24 coop members in paid contracted roles) whose activities are managed by its members. We are recruiting for a coop member with this role, so you need to be able to contribute to OrganicLea's governance and strategic development which can involve occasional paid and unpaid work in addition to your role hours. These include:

- Participate in work planning and management meetings of the Community Growing team where this role sits, and be a key player in developing strategy for the team.
- Participate in General Meetings of the cooperative and support the processes of consensus decision-making within the cooperative.

- All workers are required to monitor and mitigate financial, health and safety and other risks within their area of responsibility.
- Share responsibility for peer appraisal and support, facilitating meetings, minute-taking, and other organisation-wide tasks.
- Participate in the development of OrganicLea as a workers' cooperative organisation, including contributing to the development of other related projects within the cooperative.
- Work together with other Co-op members and volunteers according to co-operative and permaculture principles (For more information on these principles, see our website)

Members are expected to abide by the Secondary Rules and policies of OrganicLea, work considerately and respectfully with all, and be willing to undergo training as deemed appropriate by the Co-op. Full members are normally appointed as Directors of OrganicLea. Whilst these are strong commitments, our cooperative structure also offers a strong sense of community, a beautiful work environment, shared lunchtimes, flexibility in work styles and hours, and the opportunity to do meaningful and rewarding work that helps people and the environment in very real and direct ways.

Person specification

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

Experience and Skills

- Very good community listening skills, which enable you to respond appropriately to expressed hopes and needs.
- Experience working to reduce barriers to participation, and proactively engaging with diverse communities
- Community organising experience, especially in an urban context
- Experience of developing, coordinating and delivering community-based projects or network(s) and consultations
- Experience monitoring and reporting for a funded project
- Experience of coordinating and supporting people
- Gardening and garden planning skills, with horticultural qualification (or willingness to complete this with OrganicLea)
- Knowledge and passion for urban biodiversity and supporting it to thrive
- Strong organisation skills including time and project management, an ability to prioritise and financial literacy
- Experience of delivering several funded projects at the same time

Ability and Commitment

- Commitment to antiracism and engaging diverse communities in community food growing.

- Commitment to holistic food sovereignty and working at the intersect of food growing and food insecurity concerns.
- Ability and willingness to be 'out-and-about' building relationships with residents and community groups
- Ability to communicate and collaborate with funders, partners and the statutory sector
- An understanding of, and commitment to, organic food growing in urban environments and an ability to translate this into communication relevant to a range of cultures and educational needs
- Ability to develop the work strategically and take initiative to generate funding
- An ability to work under own supervision, to manage and prioritise own workload and to meet deadlines, but also work as part of a team in a cooperative and sensitive manner
- Commitment to working within a cooperative structure and decision-making ability rooted in consensus
- Commitment to environmental sustainability in all aspects of the work

The detail:

- **Hours:** The role is for 3 days – 4 days per week, with some flexibility around working days. There is likely to be occasional weekend work involved with the Community Food Growing projects and the option to take on additional hours
- **Salary:** £27,664 per annum pro rata (based on a 35 hour week), with a 5%+ pay rise pending
- **Contract length:** This is a permanent contract subject to a 7 month probationary period for coop membership.
- **Responsible to:** OrganicLea Workers' Cooperative
- **Location:** The base for project administration will be between Hawkwood Community Plant Nursery and our office at the Hornbeam Centre in Walthamstow, with local site visits and delivery

Successful appointment to the role will be subject to satisfactory references and will require proof of eligibility to work in the UK, self-declaration of unspent convictions and an enhanced Disclosure and Barring service (DBS) check.

Organiclea is committed to equity and representation, and we particularly welcome applications from people who are from Black and Minoritised communities, have disabilities, are LGBTQIA+ or don't have university degrees, so as to better reflect the communities in which we live and work.

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 use the application form to let us know if this is relevant to you (you do not need to share any details about your disability at this stage). If you meet the minimum requirements for the role we will offer a guaranteed interview.

We seek to offer an open and supportive workplace which supports colleagues' mental health and wellbeing. We are committed to ensuring that colleagues feel able to disclose any mental health conditions and to supporting them and offering reasonable adjustments when required.

How to apply:

- Please read the above role responsibilities and person specification carefully
- Please use the separate [Application document](#) to make your application. This can also be found on the website at <https://www.organiclea.org.uk/>.

You can contact Sunniva Taylor about the application process by email on sunniva@organiclea.org.uk

Please send completed applications to sunniva@organiclea.org.uk

Deadline for applications is **9am Monday 10th June**

Interviews are expected to take place on **Wednesday 19th June**. If you will find it hard to make a daytime interview on this date please let us know.

Start date: As soon as possible.