**Book-keeper Volunteer Role Description**

**Rate: Volunteer**

**Reporting to: Sarah McCulloch**

**Who we are**

The Autistic Empire is an autistic social organisation built by and for autistic adults to form community based on autism as a civic identity and to provide practical tools and services for all autistic people.

The Empire was founded in the belief that autistic people are a distinct people united by our neurology with common lived experiences, both positive and negative. Due to historical misunderstandings about what it means to be autistic, we have been medicalised by wider society and treated as if there is something wrong with us. We do not believe this to be the case. Autistic people will always be a minority within the societies in which we live, and this means that we will always be seen as something other, even where we are not marginalised, mistreated, or discriminated against.

We are a community dominated by autistic people where minority stress does not exist, where autistic people can have a safe and supportive environment to engage in self-development and express their most authentic selves, and where we can develop solutions to the very real issues we have as a people, such as sensory sensitivities, associated medical conditions such as epilepsy and allergies, and underdeveloped social and empathetic skills, which can then be exported to the wider world for the benefit of the whole autistic people.

The Autistic Empire was founded by Sarah McCulloch and is supported by multiple volunteers, including the Imperial Council. Sarah graduated with a BA in Theology and Religious Studies from the University of Manchester and an MSc in Occupational Therapy from London South Bank University. Sarah’s highly negative experiences of being an adult with autism interacting with the mental health system strongly influenced her career plans and in 2013 she embarked on the path to becoming an occupational therapist in order to change the way our society treats autistic people and how we view ourselves.

1. You can read more about our vision on our website: <http://www.autisticempire.com>. We launched in September 2018 and have completed our first tranche of work on the project, with hundreds of visitors visiting our website, interacting with our social media, and listening to our podcast.

**What we need**

We are looking for someone to take on a book-keeping role in the Autistic Empire. We have too low turnover to hire anyone (in the low thousands) but we want to have a good idea of what we are bringing in and what we are spending. We currently have a shop, membership fees, wages, and various invoices relating to our overhead costs. Our accounts are currently on an Excel spreadsheet.

This is a volunteer role but because it involves having access to our finances and our highest-security areas, we are looking for someone in the UK who we can trust and will stay in contact with us.

This role does not require you to have any contact with other people other than Sarah if you do not want to.

We have monthly Council meetings where we review what we have achieved in the last month and plan our strategy for the next one. You are not required to attend this, although we would ask that you do so in person for the first two meetings after you come on board to familiarise yourself with the team and us with you. Afterwards, we ask you to send us a monthly written report so we can plan our spending and revenue appropriately.

**Who we are looking for**

We’ll shape the exact responsibilities of this role around the time you have available and your skills, so don’t worry about that.

We are not looking for a free accountant (although if you’re willing to do that, please get in touch!) but someone who can track money coming in and out. We’re looking for someone who likes making and keeping accurate records, and likes working with numbers. The differences are available here: https://www.oneaccounting.co.uk/blog/difference-between-bookkeeper-and-accountant

We are keenly aware of high rates of unemployment among autistic people with other experiences and talents so we’re open-minded when we ask for experience (being a voluntary book-keeper/treasurer for another small association or society or a freelancer used to keeping their own accounts would be ideal). But we are looking for someone who can demonstrate to us that they’re going to either know what they’re doing or learn rapidly.

**Essential criteria**

* Understanding and knowledge of what it means to be autistic.
* Comfortable working with numbers and making accurate records.
* Ability to work independently from home without people telling you what to do all the time.
* Demonstrable skills relevant to the role (the nature of this is very flexible given the high rates of unemployment in the autistic community, but essential).

**Desirable criteria**

* Knowledge of HMRC reporting requirements.
* Experience of payroll.

Please email Sarahi@autisticempire.com with CV and covering letter. We will look at the information you have given us and then if we think you’re a good fit, we’ll arrange a meeting with you in person or on Skype, depending on where you are.