**Content Editor 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 content editor role to oversee our new content stream. We have now built many of the tools that we had in mind on launch and are now looking to systemise the information autistic people need to navigate their way through life. We are looking to produce blogposts, how-tos, and templates on a range of topics.

This role should not require you to do all of the research yourself – research is a fundamental autistic strength and we’ve got a lot of volunteers who are interested in helping out. What we are looking for is someone who can hold this area of work, organise it, schedule it, and liaise with the Council and other volunteers around who is doing what so everything moves forward smoothly.

This is a volunteer role and we’re not expecting you to prioritise this role over your own life. However, we do need someone who is committed to our vision and can spend at least six months on it. As it is unpaid, we do not expect to keep you indefinitely but see this role as an opportunity to develop skills, build a CV and generally be a fulfilling, interesting experience.

We will be making some of our content available for all aspies on our website and some will be reserved in our Vault for the use of Citizens only.

We have a Communications Officer who will be able to promote the content you produce on our social media channels – it is meant to be read and to help. You will be directly contributing to autistic self-knowledge and well-being through your efforts.

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 if you live near London or via teleconference if not) 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 know what you’re doing and we can work with you to make sure the work you do is fully integrated with what else we’re planning to do.

**Who we are looking for**

The Autistic Empire is being run on dreams, goodwill and someone who works a full-time job to pay for it all. To make this possible, you need to be able to work by yourself with support and direction to execute a strategy and not require validation of every decision – equally, you must be aware of the limits of your role and the way in which it coordinates with the programme of work for the Empire.

We’ll shape the exact responsibilities of this role around the time you have available and your skills, so don’t worry about that. You’ll be able to talk to Sarah regularly if you have any queries or a vague idea that you would like to develop into something. We are autistic, and that means that we are very good at designing effective systems and we’re always looking how to solve problems and redesign systems to work better. Mistakes are learning opportunities to prevent them from happening again.

We’re not looking for someone who has “Content Editor” on their CV – we are keenly aware of high rates of unemployment among autistic people with other experiences and talents so we’re open-minded. 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.
* Ability to work independently from home without people telling you what to do all the time.
* Ability to work with other volunteers to produce content but also hear and meet their needs for what they want to get out of the project.
* Our organisation is organised through Basecamp and Whatsapp, and you have to be able and willing to learn to use this.
* 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**

* Writing skills.
* Previously published work.
* [Octopus mind](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z0iUlWnon9Y) (being given an idea and thinking it over looking for the flaws/how to make it better)
* Experience with graphic design software.

Please email Sarahi@autisticempire.com with CV and covering letter. The Autistic Empire is organised through online forms of communication and the ability to express yourself through text is essential. 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.