



The voice of specialist further education

Assistive Technologist - TechAbility

Job Description and Person Specification

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Introduction

This post has been created as a partnership role between Natspec, the membership organisation for specialist post 16 provision for students with disabilities, and the Ian Karten Charitable Trust (IKCT), committed to improving life outcomes for disabled people through the use of assistive technology.

The Natspec service, TechAbility, exists to improve outcomes for learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in mainstream and specialist further education provision, through improving AT and IT systems enabling access to technology.

Natspec and IKCT are initiating a new role to provide an assistive technology (AT) function which:

- provides training, support and guidance to the Karten Centres and their users, to extend and improve the uptake of technologies available in the centres
- will work collaboratively to fulfil a shared function with Natspec, through its TechAbility service, to deliver support and benefits across the FE sector.

Job Purpose

The overall purpose of the job is to provide training, advice, guidance and support to the Karten Centres, to maximise the use of existing technology and AT equipment, improving the return on IKCT investment by increasing the impact, outcomes and benefits for users.

This role is also responsible for extending good practice, advice and guidance across the FE sector by providing training, briefings and delivering events for Natspec's TechAbility service.

As a collaborative role, fulfilling a dual function, you will have significant knowledge, skills and experience in AT and a sharing ethos that benefits both organisations through knowledge transfer and communicating good practice.

This role is therefore suitable for an experienced Assistive Technologist who is looking to make the move from a role focussed on a single working context to a role with a national reach.



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Terms and conditions

The post holder will be employed by Natspec and will report to the Natspec CEO. Close working with the Karten Network coordinator and Karten Network board members is expected and attendance at Karten Network board meetings (held quarterly in central London) would be useful.

- **Location:** Flexible (see below), with significant travel required.
- **Salary:** circa £32,000 dependent on experience
- **Duration:** Full time to January 2019 in the first instance, with a project plan and three years funding in place to extend to 2020/21, dependent on passing probation and meeting targets set by IKCT and Natspec.

Applications to techability@natspec.org.uk should include a CV with covering letter to include:

- specific examples of the extent to which you meet the requirements within the job description and person specification
- details of your existing remuneration and length of notice required
- proposed percentage of the working week as a job-share, if applicable

Closing date: Sunday 07th January 2018

Interview date: Monday 15th January 2018

The successful applicant(s) will require a Disclosure and Barring Service certificate

Please note that all applicants must have the right to work in the UK to be considered for this role and will be expected to provide proof of this if invited for interview.

The location of the role is flexible and can be based at home, at a partner organisation or at the Natspec office in Nottingham, depending on the location of the successful applicant. Extensive travel is required and the post holder will be required to attend occasional staff meetings in Nottingham or London.

Note that depending on the location of suitable applicants it may be possible to operate this role as a 'job-share' with the support of employing organisations. It is expected that this would reduce the need to travel for the successful applicant(s), both due to the 'job-share' and also due to the potential geographical spread of the successful applicants.

Secondments from Natspec Colleges and existing Karten host-organisations will be considered, with the agreement of senior management at the employing organisation.

If you wish to have an informal discussion regarding the role, please contact Clare Howard on 07775665138 or by email clare.howard@natspec.org.uk

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Key Accountabilities: To:

1. conduct face to face visits with Karten Centre staff, supporting staff development needs in the use and potential impact and benefits of Assistive Technologies for centre users and identifying good practice to share
2. develop and deliver the TechAbility training and on-line support service, including events at national and regional level, to develop staff skills and confidence in the use of AT
3. Work collaboratively with centre / college staff (inclusive of SLT/OT/PT/AT and specialist teachers) to undertake complex needs based assessments and provide training that equips centres to conduct their own user assessments effectively, improving user life outcomes
4. help centres extend their potential by demonstrating and evidencing how they can maximise effective use from their AT kit, enhancing the return on investment
5. To work collaboratively with Karten Centres, Natspec Colleges and other partners around the development of new assistive technology solutions as appropriate.
6. develop resources and guidance in applying AT in context of centre users and the FE sector
7. deliver synergy across the collaborative partnership by championing and promoting best practice with other centres, Natspec members and TechAbility service users, through the sharing of expertise
8. keep abreast and maintain currency with AT and IT developments that offer AT opportunities to develop improved outcomes for users and to ensure that the Karten Network coordinator and Natspec CEO are informed of relevant developments
9. liaise with TechAbility and Karten Network Development Co-ordinator to ensure priorities are agreed, outcomes evaluated and the reporting process is followed
10. represent and promote Natspec and Karten centres at national events and meetings, with a range of stakeholders and partner organisations, speaking with authority on AT
11. contribute to Natspec company development through staff meetings with the CEO and policy officer, and AT/IT submissions to the Natspec briefings and newsletters
12. maintain and respect confidentiality with respect to users'/learners' environments
13. uphold host organisation safeguarding procedures for their users/learners



Person Specification

Please use specific examples of the extent to which you meet the requirements of the job description and person specification in your covering letter.

Area	Essential	Desirable
Education and Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to degree level with a relevant professional qualification, preferably in related AT/IT fields • Ability to undertake national travel, with access to own transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainer/facilitation qualification or equivalent skills • Qualified teacher status or equivalent
Skills, Knowledge, Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant experience of using AT to benefit individuals with a wide range of disabilities • Excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to work confidently with senior staff and stakeholders • Strong communication skills both verbally and in writing • Skills in planning, running and facilitating both face to face and on-line workshops • Ability to teach a range of professionals, people with disabilities and other partners, to use mainstream and assistive technology solutions • Knowledge of current 'best practice' in the assessment of, provisioning of and support of assistive technology solutions, inclusive of computer access and Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) systems. • Knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities policies and commitment to implementation • Direct experience of current assistive / access technology and AAC Technology • Outstanding IT skills inclusive of functional software and hardware troubleshooting skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and experience of Environmental Control Systems and preferably Smart Home and Home Automation technology
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working in a role delivering education and assistive technology support • Experience of supporting staff and students to use software, ICT resources and assistive technology equipment • Experience of working with people with learning and physical disabilities • Experience of working in or with specialist colleges, or specialist adult provision using technology • Experience of delivering against targets and preparing reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working at national level, with regular travel • Experience of presenting at national conferences



Attributes and competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A positive attitude with a high level of personal motivation and pride in work• Ability to work on own initiative and self-manage• Good attention to detail• Understands need for confidentiality as required• Demonstrates commitment to own learning and continuous improvement through training and development• Passionate about how AT/IT can change lives and support learning and independence• Ability to work under pressure, organise and prioritise a varied workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An understanding of the challenges of remote working
Personal circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The role requires flexibility and extensive travel. The post holder will need to make their own travel arrangements, have the use of a car for business and the ability to stay overnight when required. (Mileage expenses will apply for use of own transport)	