



Quaker Peace  
& Social Witness

# Peaceworker scheme: how it works

## The people we are looking for

The Peaceworker scheme is designed for people with a strong commitment to peace, but limited experience of peace work on a national level. We believe that effective peace work is about deep commitment rather than simply a career choice, so the scheme aims to set people on that path for life. The Peaceworker scheme should not be seen as a one-year job contract or conventional internship. We are looking for someone in sympathy with the Quakers who feels a calling to the peace field. Personal qualities of self-discipline, adaptability and patience are essential, with a willingness to lend a hand and be generally helpful and supportive. Preference is given to those who demonstrate

- their commitment to and involvement in peace issues;
- their understanding and sympathy with Quaker values;
- that this opportunity offers experience they have not already had and will be an important step towards their further involvement in peace work.

Such commitment might be demonstrated by previous voluntary work, personal experience of handling conflict situations, or a qualification or training in a relevant subject. Experience of basic administration will be useful. Any other skills, such as public speaking, leading workshops or event organising, are also taken into consideration.

We regret that we are unable to accept applications from candidates without existing permission to work in the UK for the duration of the placement.

## Organisations we are looking for

We have a list of British organisations that we routinely invite to bid for one of our Peaceworkers. We are always looking to add to this list and will consider human rights, development or environmental organisations that can offer a peace aspect of their work to a Peaceworker. We look for national or international organisations that will:

- offer a peace/ conflict transformation related project the Peaceworker can call their own,
- demonstrate that the Peaceworker will significantly enhance its capacity in a specific, area, and enable it to achieve something it would not otherwise be able to;
- recognise in a practical way the distinctive nature of this placement as opposed to regular interns and volunteers;
- provide an adequate level of support and supervision for the Peaceworker.

## Timetable

February	<p>We send formal invitations to interested organisations asking about their priorities for the year and a specific project for the Peaceworker.</p> <p>Advertise for the Peaceworker on our website at <a href="http://www.quaker.org.uk/jobs">www.quaker.org.uk/jobs</a> . We encourage bidding organisations to circulate the advert through their own networks.</p>
April	<p>Deadline for returned bids.</p>
May	<p>Deadline for applications and shortlisting. Interviews at Friends House, Euston Road, London. Successful candidates are those we believe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• show the most potential to gain from the experience</li><li>• are a good match for at least one of the opportunities available, and</li><li>• will make a valuable contribution to the organisation and the peace movement in general.</li></ul>
June	<p>Discuss with the successful candidates 2-3 suitable placements and they make their choice. Visit the organisation. This meeting is the first opportunity the receiving organisation and Peaceworker have to meet each other. Confirm the placement, and agree the job description. Formal agreement made between QPSW and the organisation.</p>
August	<p>2-week preparation period at Friends House, London and the Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, Birmingham. Participation is a condition of employment.</p> <p>For outgoing Peaceworkers, a meeting is held to evaluate the year.</p>
September	<p>Placement starts.</p>

# Peaceworker scheme: frequently asked questions

## **Why don't you just give the organisations the money to recruit someone themselves?**

Quaker Peace & Social Witness is not a grant-giving organisation. We have our own range of domestic and international programmes and the Peaceworker scheme is part of our peace work in Britain. The specific aims of the scheme are to

- Provide for committed people one-year working opportunities in organisations working for peace.
- Provide them with relevant experience and skills to enable them to continue as effective peace workers.
- Help strengthen organisations working for peace by enabling them to do work they might not otherwise be able to do.
- Strengthen relationships between the partnering Quaker organisations and individuals and organisations working on peace and conflict transformation issues.

Naturally, we want new Peaceworkers to demonstrate to us their understanding and sympathy with Quaker aims and values. Quaker approaches to peace work are holistic and emphasise the development of right relationships at all levels. The Peaceworker scheme puts this at its heart, which creates a dimension that funding alone lacks.

## **Why aren't receiving organisations represented on the interview panel?**

Because at the time of interview, we don't know which bids from organisations will be successful. The interview process is unusual in that it puts the person before the job. We seek to appoint someone we believe will continue in peace work after their placement so we look for the personal qualities and interests of the candidate, and identify the best match from the available opportunities. Sometimes this has led to us appointing someone the organisation might not itself have chosen and often this has brought welcomed freshness and new insights. As their employer, we value our relationship with our Peaceworkers and invest a great deal in supporting them. Having receiving organisations at interview would in our view weaken this relationship and tend to diminish our role to that of agents for the organisation. However, the organisation does have the opportunity to interview the proposed Peaceworker after QPSW has appointed them.

## **Why don't you select the placement opportunities first then interview for appropriate candidates to fill them?**

This scheme is not just about finding people to do tasks and functions; it's about starting people on a longer journey of work for peace and justice. We select the general strategic areas we would like to place our Peaceworker in, but to select the specific job first would in our view limit everybody's options. Sometimes during interview and the post-interview selection discussion, the panel identifies a good match between a candidate and job opportunity that may not have been evident at the

start. We value this creative possibility, and encourage it further by giving the successful candidates a choice of 2-3 possible placements. Our method ensures equality of opportunity both for bidding organisations and candidates at the time of interview. A third advantage is that it enables organisations to incorporate some flexibility in their job descriptions for the Peaceworker.

### **Can an organisation identify a person it would like for their project and encourage them to apply?**

Yes, and we encourage all interested organisations to advertise the Peaceworker post through their own networks. However, there are no guarantees that the bid will be successful or that the individual will be selected. An organisation might consider someone ideal for placement with them, but unless that person meets our criteria they will not be appointed. A bid could be successful but with another person placed there, or the person might be successful at interview but placed elsewhere.

### **Can I apply for a particular placement?**

See the answer above. There are many variables and no guarantees. Certainly you could apply, express a preference and get the placement you want. On the other hand you might be successful in interview but placed somewhere else, or someone else may get the placement you wanted. Our advice is to be open to all possibilities.

### **Is the scheme for young people only?**

No, it is open to anyone with a strong interest in, but limited experience of, peace work at national level. Peace beginners can be any age. Most Peaceworkers have been younger people starting out, but we have appointed older people seeking a career or life change.

### **Why can't the placement be longer than one year?**

Our experience is that there are too many talented and committed people chasing too few opportunities in the peace field. To extend the period from one to two or more years would mean reducing the number of opportunities available each year. Since we are able only to recruit a low number of Peaceworkers we have chosen to provide as many opportunities as we can. We acknowledge that this comes at the expense of a potentially deeper and more valuable placement experience. Another consideration for us is the possible negative impact on the organisation once the Peaceworker leaves, which we believe may be less after one year than longer.

### **Why don't you extend the scheme beyond the peace movement?**

Firstly because this scheme is part of our own peace work. Secondly, although we recognise that peace and justice are very broad fields and those working in them need all the support they can get, we believe that the peace movement is particularly under-resourced. Thirdly, we are conscious of our Quaker witness for peace over 350 years and feel a strong sense of responsibility to others doing this work. However, we do define peace within a broader context of justice and sustainability, and organisations not readily associated with peace work can bid for a Peaceworker if their project is directly related to conflict transformation.

**Can an organisation successful in one year bid the next year?**

No. We like to spread our Peaceworkers around as many organisations as we can, so we have a policy of not inviting an organisation to bid if they've just had a Peaceworker. However, we do resume the invitation to them after that year.

**Is it worth an organisation applying again if its bid is unsuccessful?**

Absolutely! An unsuccessful bid is not necessarily a poor bid. It just means that it's not a best match for the Peaceworkers we appoint that year. We have a large number of organisations on our list and a very small number of Peaceworkers. Some organisations have received a Peaceworker only after several unsuccessful bids, so it's well worth keeping going. And we do offer feedback on bids.

**Can an individual apply again next year?**

Yes, if unsuccessful. We offer feedback to all interviewees so we'd encourage unsuccessful candidates to request that before applying again.

For more information please contact  
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