Role description for ALK officer
Post: Education Officer

Education Officer

The Association is administered by a small group of unpaid volunteers based in the UK.

This role’s purpose is to promote the core objective of the Association, set out in its Constitution, which is:

The advancement of education of the general public in Pharology, defined for these purposes as study in the history and current practice of coastal and inland aids to navigation, through the provision of information, education activities and the maintenance of an archive.

Source: ALK Constitution Section C

Whilst all our postholders are busy people with other lives to lead, and it is to a considerable degree up to each postholder to put their own personal stamp on these unpaid, volunteer roles, there are some expectations.

Here are the main ones:

PROMOTING EDUCATION IN PHAROLOGY

- We need a postholder who is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about lifelong education in order to inform anyone with an educational brief (teachers, lecturers, academic researchers, pupils, students) about the work of the ALK and what it can offer, either with guest speakers or with archive access (through our Archivist), and the ability to build relationships with appropriate people to achieve this and to make the ALK an attractive body to potential new recruits, especially from future generations
- A proactive approach is useful, to broaden awareness of the ALK through social media and through links with schools and other educational establishments. Regional Representatives can be encouraged to assist with this. The postholder would be working closely with the Education Team members and the ALK Website Manager in order to maximise the impact and potential of the ALK’s Facebook page to this end and to consider what other social media might be appropriate

DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING RESOURCES

- Apart from our substantial and growing we need to consider how best to develop a resource we can share with the educational community. This is likely to be best achieved online and/or through social media, though written and other media will also come into play. This needs to be a long-term project, reporting to the trustees regularly on progress, and will need to involve input from those active in teaching and learning. The ALK has an educational “team” of two volunteers with an interest or experience in education and we expect the Education Officer to be the team leader in this regard and to work with the team to develop and produce whatever is needed
- In addition to our own learning resources, the postholder needs to be aware of learning resources produced by lighthouse authorities or other maritime/navigational bodies such as the RNLI that might help meet requests for information or help
• From time to time the ALK receives requests from schools and colleges and other organisations for information/resources and for speakers to talk to classes/workshops/groups. The postholder needs to respond to these requests in a timely fashion, to clarify what is needed and to determine the best person or organisation to respond, and to progress it through to completion. This can involve the Education Officer or Education Team members in giving talks to groups of all ages.

EXPENSES POLICY

• The ALK will cover all reasonable expenses incurred by this postholder, but they must be agreed in advance with the Chairman.
• Travelling costs in connection with carrying out ALK duties will be reimbursed, if agreed in advance, from the main account (general admin travel expenses) or from the special events account (event planning travel expenses) provided receipts or retained tickets are supplied along with an expenses claim form. However it is expected that Regional Representatives will carry out local visits, venue inspections, boatmen negotiations etc in order to minimise such costs.
• Communicating with members and officers The main route for communicating with members and officers is by email, and it is a requirement that all postholders will have an email contact address and use this on behalf of the ALK.
• Postage costs where necessary will be reimbursed, if agreed in advance, on submission of the relevant expense claim form provided receipts are attached. Generally use 2nd class mail unless it’s critical to use 1st class. Where a number of letters need to be sent, the Hurst Castle ALK Project Manager has, as at March 2014, the ability to send out franked mail which keeps the costs down significantly. He is normally willing to do mailings for the ALK so liaise with him as required.
• Telephone call costs on behalf of the ALK will be reimbursed if unavoidable but we would ask the postholder to ensure all reasonable steps are taken to have in place mobile/landline contracts that allow free calls to be made, at least at weekends and during evenings. Where reimbursement is to be applied for we ask that postholders call at times when call charges are lowest and that call times are limited to discussion of essential matters. An expense claim form must be submitted together with an itemised listing from the telephone provider. The norm is that most postholders do NOT charge telephone calls to the ALK and we do regard reimbursement as the exception rather than the rule.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO CARRY OUT THIS ROLE?

This is for guidance of members considering applying for this post. Useful skills/experience which a volunteer could bring to this role might include all/some of the following:

• A passion for pharology - a sound general knowledge of lights, beacons, light vessels and other aids to maritime navigation, including the geography of their locations and their history, plus the ability to enthuse others about it
• An awareness of current educational methodologies and an interest in new ones as they emerge
• Access to a network of practising teachers, lecturers or researchers in primary, secondary, further and higher education would be a distinct advantage
• Confidence in public speaking to audiences of all ages and abilities
• Ability to handle media enquiries about lighthouses and related topics
- Knowledge of basic marketing in order to raise awareness of the ALK “brand”
- A grasp of social media and the extent to which young people and adults of all generations now use it as a learning tool
- A strong belief in a team approach, and the ability to work well alongside other team members
- Though serving or ex-teachers would clearly bring major benefits to this role, this is by no means a requirement. Anyone with a training, PR, sales, journalism, coaching, mentoring or similar background will have much to offer

[Version 1 April 2014]