

Get involved

Projects, research and volunteering in the drugs field

This page lists projects and activities that are looking for assistance. Please contact the project involved if you are interested in helping. If your organisation would like to advertise a project here please email the [website manager](#). If you would like to become a volunteer in the drugs field please see the section on [volunteering](#) below.

Projects, activities and opportunities

Post-graduate dissertation project on the effectiveness of the UK drug classification system

Nathaniel Pickering is a post-graduate student completing a dissertation research project. The project will focus on the effectiveness of the UK drug classification system in reducing drugs use, and will form part of an MA Social Research degree at The University of Leeds. The purpose of the study is to gather information on peoples' understanding of the UK drug classification system and whether they think it impacts on a person's decision not to take drugs.

Please help Nathaniel by completing his anonymous questionnaire [here](#)

Black and minority ethnic lesbian, gay and bisexual people wanted to complete an anonymous survey

The Lesbian & Gay Foundation, Manchester, in partnership with The International School for Communities, Rights and Inclusion at the University of Central Lancashire have secured funding to carry out research into drug and alcohol use among lesbian, gay and bisexual communities in England. This, of course, includes trans people who are not heterosexual.

The survey takes 15 minutes, and a lot less if the respondent's drug and alcohol use is low (or non-existent).

Our sample is currently under-representative of Black and minority ethnic people, so please pass on this link <http://www.lgf.org.uk/part-of-the-picture> to whoever and wherever you can think of.

Alternatively, a self-completion postal version of the survey is available from sara.ashworth@lgf.org.uk

Please note that respondents must live in England and must be lesbian, gay or bisexual. However, they need not have ever used any drugs or alcohol to take part.

Further details

The project will take place over the next five years and will consist of a confidential survey to find out the levels of drug and alcohol use among our diverse lesbian, gay and bisexual communities. Over the course of the project Pride events across the country will be attended to begin to talk to people about their drug and alcohol use.

It is envisaged that this research will shape the future provision of drug and alcohol services to ensure that they are inclusive of the needs of LGB people, as well as developing a national evidence database of drug and alcohol usage amongst LGB communities.

It is known that the most common mix of drug use amongst the LGB community involves ecstasy, cocaine, amphetamine, poppers and cannabis. It is also widely known that most people are not aware of the dangers involved in mixing their drugs.

Key findings from research carried out at Manchester Pride in 2007 by the LGF and UCLAN partnership, which involved 431 LGB people found that:

- * 95% of people had used alcohol in the last four weeks
- * 35% reported being dependent on drugs or alcohol
- * 29% reported some problems with drugs or alcohol

Chief Executive of the Lesbian and Gay Foundation Paul Martin said:

"The LGF is delighted to be able to have secured funding for this vital project. The research that we have already carried out indicates high rates of substance misuse amongst our communities. There is clearly a need for much more to be done to support both individuals and agencies in their understanding of how substance misuse affects our lives. We also need to help mainstream providers develop gay affirmative services. We are particularly pleased to carry on our partnership work with the University of Central Lancashire and look forward to developing closer links with other LGB agencies across England."

This research is being funded by the Big Lottery Fund's Big Research Programme.

Youth Health talk Project

The Health Experiences Research Group, Department of Primary Healthcare, at Oxford University are working on a project about 'Young People Drugs and Alcohol'. They are looking for any young people aged 16 and older to talk about their experiences and views of drinking and/or drugs. They are not only after those who are "heavy users", bingeing or addicts but interested in ALL experiences.

The results of the study will be presented on www.youthhealthtalk.org. The website is designed for young people in their teens to late twenties where they can see other young people talking about their life health experiences, illness and lifestyles. The website has extensive forums and many videos clips of young people talking about their experiences. The site will be very useful to young drug users/drinkers, their families and friends. If you would like more information please contact Maria Salinas at: maria.salinas@dphpc.ox.ac.uk or phone 01865 289326 or text 07805 828792 or e-mail Pedro at peto.fuentes@gmail.com

Griffins Society Visiting Research Fellowship Programme

Would you like to contribute to practice and policy debates about women offenders by undertaking pioneering research?

The Griffins Society Visiting Research Fellowship Programme offers a unique opportunity to explore your own interests or concerns about the treatment of women in the criminal justice system. Candidates must have inquiring minds but previous research experience is not necessary as the Programme supervisors provide comprehensive supervision and support. We are looking for research proposals that explore the resettlement needs of women at any stage of the justice system or related fields (e.g. housing or drug and alcohol support). We welcome community-based proposals and prison-based research that has a resettlement focus.

Find out more here - <http://www.thegriffinsociety.org/fell.html>

Cannabis classification thesis

Jenepher Parry Davies invites feedback on her thesis on cannabis classification, completed as part of a Master's degree in Law at Southampton Solent University in November 2008. The paper focuses on the classification of cannabis, fitness for purpose of the Misuse of Drugs Act and criminal justice and public health response to drugs-related offending in England and Wales. It is based on the hypothesis that a strong positive correlation is found between the status/classification of cannabis and the level of harm to both a problem drug user and the 'hidden victims' of their use. The dissertation also explores treatment modalities available to courts when sentencing an offender convicted of a drugs-related offence, identifies gaps in regulation and treatment provisions, draws conclusions and makes recommendations accordingly. The research was undertaken in light of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) review of cannabis last year.

You can download a copy of the thesis [here](#): (PDF 1.9MB)

You can get in touch with any comments on the work to by emailing Jenepher Parry Davies at: sineadnicdaihi@yahoo.co.uk

DrugScope needs your help to bring good practice to light

The achievements of drug services and projects are rarely reported in the mainstream media and unfortunately bad press can have a negative impact both on those who may need to access services and those who work in the sector. But there is good practice going on across the country that makes a positive difference to users, families and local communities. Unfortunately, we don't often get the opportunity to share what we are doing or learn from one another's successes.

DrugScope is working with the Home Office to highlight good practice. We are building up a collection of case studies that will provide an information-sharing resource for the sector. We're interested to know about the things that worked or are working - but we'd also like to hear about the learning experiences.

We are especially interested in projects working in the following areas:

- providing assistance to drug misusing parents and their children;
- family-based interventions (i.e. 'whole family' approaches, support for those affected by a family member's drug misuse; drug prevention work involving families);
- providing measures to support social reintegration (i.e. access to jobs, training, housing);
- supporting drug misusing offenders (for those currently in the criminal justice system or in the community);
- community engagement (i.e. communicating and engaging the local community around your work).

If you would like to submit any case studies, please email Harry Shapiro at harrys@drugscope.org.uk with brief details of the project you are putting forward and we will be in touch.

Volunteering in the drugs field.

Voluntary work in a practice setting is a useful starting point for any career working with drug users and is a good way of gaining experience and testing your ability and motivation for the work. To get a voluntary position you can either contact individual drugs projects in your locality directly, or contact a national umbrella organisation such as the National Centre for Volunteering.

Telephone numbers for local treatment centers can be found in our [Helpfinder](#) Database. Helpfinder is DrugScope's database of drug treatment services and provides contact information and basic service provision details for drug treatment and care services in England. It can be used to search for organisations in your area.

Other useful organisations:

Vinspired

Vinspired aims to make it easy for young people (16-25 yr olds) to find volunteering opportunities in their area.

National Centre for Volunteering

Volunteering England works to support and increase in the quality, quantity, impact and accessibility of volunteering throughout England.

Do It

This site provides details of volunteering opportunities throughout the UK and is powered by a large on-line database of current vacancies. Do-It allows users to search by postcode, type of organisation and type of work. The site has a section on volunteering in the drugs field.

Timebank

This BBC supported campaign gives you the opportunity to share your time and skills with your community. The site allows you to register your details in order to receive a list of organisations in your area that need help, and which match your interests.

National Association of Voluntary Service Managers

NAVSM is the national association for Voluntary Service Managers in the fields of health and social care. It has a section on opportunities for volunteers.

Society Guardian – Volunteering section

Up to date news coverage on volunteering issues from the on-line version of The Guardian newspaper.

Do you have a project or activity you'd like help with? Contact [Jackie Buckle](#) to advertise it here.