



Position Description - Search and Support Worker (part-time)

Accountable to: Manager
Reports directly to: Search, Support and Counselling Coordinator
Date Reviewed: November 2016

The Organisation

VANISH Inc. is the Victorian Adoption Network for Information and Self Help, a not for profit, community based organisation supporting individuals and families affected primarily by adoption. VANISH is funded by the Victorian government through the Department of Health and Human Services to provide services provided including searches for relatives, support, counselling, advocacy and community education. VANISH also provides search and support services for 'Forgotten Australians' and for the donor conceived community.

VANISH Service users include:

- Adopted people;
- Mothers and Fathers (Natural parents);
- Families (Natural (biological) families);
- Adoptive families;
- Adults affected by state wardship, foster care or institutionalisation as children; and
- Adults affected by fertility treatments involving donors.

The Role

Under the direction of the Manager and the Search, Support and Counselling Coordinator, the Worker is responsible for a range of functions to support the work of VANISH. These primarily involve supporting service users to undertake their searches for relatives, and participating in community education and regional outreach activities. The position involves working as part of a team to ensure the smooth operation of VANISH activities; promoting the philosophy and practice of self-help; and appropriately participating in team projects.

Key Tasks

The main tasks to be undertaken by the Search and Support Worker are:

- To competently provide search assistance, support and information to service users;
- To undertake searches on behalf of service users and organisations;
- To keep records confidentially, competently and precisely, both paper and electronic;
- To undertake community outreach activities including maintaining regional support groups, and presenting at regional seminars, community talks and meetings;
- To facilitate support groups in Melbourne and occasionally cover regional groups as required; and
- To support the manager and team in daily activities and special projects.

Selection Criteria

The following qualifications, experience and attributes are required:

- Demonstrated understanding of issues concerning separation from a child or from family of origin through adoption, state wardship, and reproductive technology;
- Well-developed communication skills including written, verbal and listening, to a range of audiences;
- Skills and experience in dealing with service users who may experience complex and sensitive issues;
- Demonstrated ability to research public records utilising a range of resources and the ability to interpret and collate relevant search information;
- Computer literacy with knowledge of Windows, particularly Excel and Word;
- Highly developed interpersonal skills to interact appropriately with service users, colleagues and other professionals;
- Willingness to co-facilitate of VANISH support groups in Melbourne and regional locations;
- Ability to work collaboratively as part of a small team and to work independently; and
- Willingness to work out of hours when required for example facilitating support groups, running community events, and presenting at information sessions.

The following criteria are desirable:

- A qualification or sound experience social work, community services, human services counselling, or another relevant field;
- A personal experience of adoption and a deep level of understanding of what this experience means; and
- Skills and experience in interpreting genealogical DNA test results and in using family trees.

Terms & Conditions:

- Salary is in accordance with the SCHADS Award (level dependent on experience).
- Two days per week, each day being 7.6 hours
- Four weeks leave pro rata
- Other terms and conditions in accordance with the SCHADS Award
- A performance review will be undertaken annually.
- A three month probationary period will apply.
- A police check will be required prior to employment

How to Apply:

Please send a letter of no more than 3 pages addressing the selection criteria, together with a brief curriculum vitae to: The Manager, VANISH Inc., P O Box 112, Carlton, 3053. Please mark your mail CONFIDENTIAL. Or email to: karen@vanish.org.au

Applications close: Wednesday 7th December 2016. Selection Panel meet 9th December. Interviews prior to Christmas. Employment commences January 2017.

Please Note: Only applicants that respond to the selection criteria will be passed to the selection panel.

Thank you for your interest in VANISH. For more information about the organisation please visit www.vanish.org.au