

Activating Lived Experience Leadership (ALEL) Project Advisory Group (PAG) Member

Role title: Activating Lived Experience Leadership (ALEL) Project Advisory Group (PAG) Member

Role type: Voluntary role with honorarium and reimbursements provided unless supported by your workplace to attend

Location: Adelaide, South Australia

Coordinated by: LELAN Executive Director and ALEL Project Team

Date: September 2019 – June 2021

About the Activating Lived Experience Leadership (ALEL) Project:

The Activating Lived Experience Leadership (ALEL) Project is a partnership between the Lived Experience Leadership & Advocacy Network (LELAN) and UniSA's Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Research Group (MHSPRG). The Project is the most significant investment to date in this area of inquiry in South Australia (SA) and has been funded by the Fay Fuller Foundation for two years. The broad purpose of the ALEL Project is to examine and describe how lived experience (LE) advocacy and leadership embedded within the mental health ecosystem can be defined, recognised and utilised in SA.

The questions that underpin the project challenge the status quo in SA, and around Australia more broadly. Change is urgently needed to enable consumers and carers to participate in a leadership future developed *by, for* and *with* the peer community. The crucial need to develop effective strategies and pathways for LE leadership in SA is essential for people experiencing distress and mental health issues being valued differently.

This project will deliver a robust evidence-based understanding of the mechanisms required to do this and to establish training resources and networks that peers themselves believe to be of value and most influential in strategic and targeted ways. The research component of this project will be guided by Participatory Action Research (PAR) methodology; an approach to research grounded in reflection, data collection and action aimed to reduce inequities by directly involving the people who are involved in LE advocacy, representation and leading change at the highest level. All resources and training created from the evidence-base will be co-produced with people with LE and allies.

The ALEL Project Team consists of a Project Lead based within LELAN (Ellie Hodges), as well as a Senior Research Fellow (Mark Loughhead) and a Research Assistant (Heather Eaton) based within UniSA.

About the Lived Experience Leadership & Advocacy Network (LELAN):

The SA Lived Experience Leadership & Advocacy Network (LELAN) was founded in 2017 to provide a way for people with lived experience of mental health issues to have a voice and collectively influence and lead change in South Australia. It became an incorporated association in late 2018.

LELAN is *by, for* and *with* people with personal lived experience (consumers) and values the support of carers, allies, other people and organisations who join us in making a difference for how distress and mental health issues are understood and supported in our state.

LELAN has three areas of focus:

- developing the capability and influence of people with lived experience
- nurturing organisational and sector capacity for engaging with people with lived experience, and
- impacting system improvement agendas to benefit people with lived experience

About the Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Research Group (MHSPRG) – University of South Australia:

Established in partnership with government and non-government sectors, the Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Research Group (MHSPRG) leads numerous initiatives aimed at improving the lives of people in mental distress and their carers. The strategic purpose of the group is to demonstrate through research and practical example how much consumers, carers, clinicians, policy makers and academic faculty can achieve working together in partnership.

The Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Research Group has a national and international reputation for leading research that relates to the real-world problems of people living with mental distress, the needs of carers, and the next generation of health professionals willing and able to support recovery with dignity.

About the Project Advisory Group (PAG):

The ALEL Project Advisory Group (PAG) will provide project oversight and advisory support throughout the life of the project. Membership will include people with lived experience (consumers and carers), key organisational representatives and the ALEL Project Team. Members of the PAG will not be able to be involved in the research components of the project as ‘research participants’ as they play a role in guiding the project.

The PAG will meet monthly between September and December 2019 and will then meet bi-monthly until completion of the project in June 2021. At this stage the first Wednesday of the month 1-3pm has been set as the meeting time.

The first PAG meeting, scheduled for September 4th, will be a longer session allowing time for introductions, project orientation, understanding the research approach and devising literature review questions.

Duties and responsibilities:

- provide project oversight ensuring that people with lived experience are actively and meaningfully involved in all stages of the project
- share knowledge, skills and resources relevant to the project
- provide advice related to research design, implementation and evaluation, including: the directions of research, key research questions and strategies for engaging diverse populations of people with lived experience.
- guide the translation of the research into resources and training to be piloted with the lived experience community and people who work within the sector
- facilitate collaboration and partnership with established, emerging and new lived experience networks as well as with other people in the community who have experience of distress or mental health issues or are allies
- support the engagement of sector leaders in the project

Skill and experience requirements of lived experience members of the PAG:

- lived experience of distress or mental health issues, as a consumer and/or carer
- at least twelve months experience as a lived experience representative, advocate or peer worker
- active involvement with lived experience networks and an interest in developing skills as a leader
- understanding of policy and system level issues in the mental health area and the significance of high-quality research about consumer and carer experience
- experience or significant interest in group facilitation, training and resource development
- commitment to innovation and creating new ways for driving change
- ability to commit to being involved with the ALEL Project until June 2021
- ability to develop supportive, encouraging and engaging relationships with diverse groups
- commitment to the purpose and values of the ALEL Project partnering entities, LELAN and the MHSPRG

Expression of Interest information:

The Expressions of Interest form is available online at www.surveymonkey.com/r/XZSKMCP

Selection of PAG members will be made after review of applications and an interview process with the ALEL Project Team.

Further enquiries can be made by emailing info@lelan.org.au or calling Ellie on 0422 888 157. Additional information about LELAN or the MHSPRG can be accessed at lelan.org.au or unisa.edu.au/research/Health-Research/Research/Mental-Health-and-Suicide-Prevention respectively.

Expressions of Interest close Friday August 16th at 5pm.