

Position Description

Position	Senior Project Lead - Research, Training and Peer Participation
Reports to	Chief Executive Officer
Direct Reports	Nil
Stakeholders	Internal - CEO, managers, staff, peer contributors, members and Governance Committee as required External - sex workers and community members, NSW Ministry of Health, Local Health Districts, research institutions, sector organisations, funding bodies, community partners and specialist consultants.

Position Objective

The Senior Project Lead - Research, Training and Peer Participation provides specialist contribution and oversight across three defined areas of organisational development funded through SWOP NSW's rollover program.

The position is responsible for

- building and sustaining the partnerships, governance arrangements, evidence base and funding readiness required to progress a future LASH research program;
- ensuring the Sex Worker Inclusion Training program is completed, quality assured and positioned for sustainable business-as-usual delivery; and,
- developing a structured and safe organisational approach to peer participation.

The role operates with a high degree of independence within approved priorities, budgets, delegations and project governance arrangements. It is responsible for translating strategic objectives into well-governed work programs, maintaining strong stakeholder relationships, ensuring appropriate quality and evidence standards, and providing clear, decision-ready advice to the CEO.

The three areas of responsibility are deliberately prioritised. LASH partnership and external funding development is the first priority, SWIT completion is the second priority, and the peer participation project is a third priority to be progressed only where capacity permits and the first two areas remain on track.

Key Accountabilities

The Senior Project Lead is accountable for the following Key Accountability Areas. Performance will be assessed against an agreed performance development plan, approved project plans, funding conditions, organisational priorities and defined project outcomes.

1. Research Partnership and Funding Development

The Senior Project Lead is responsible for positioning SWOP NSW to progress a contemporary LASH research program through credible partnerships, sound research development and external funding readiness.

- Build and maintain productive research, health, community and funding relationships that support development of the LASH research program.

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- Provide strategic coordination of SWOP NSW's role in research partnership formation, concept development and funding readiness.
- Ensure sex worker leadership, lived experience and community accountability are embedded in research development and governance.
- Support the development of a rigorous, feasible and fundable research proposition aligned with SWOP NSW's strategic priorities and relevant public health objectives.
- Identify and progress appropriate external research funding opportunities in collaboration with research partners and the CEO.
- Ensure SWOP NSW's interests, intellectual contribution, community relationships and governance requirements are appropriately represented in partnership arrangements.
- Provide high-quality advice to the CEO on research opportunities, partnership issues, funding pathways, risks and decisions requiring organisational approval.

2. Training Program Quality and Sustainability

The Senior Project Lead is responsible for bringing the Sex Worker Inclusion Training program to completion as a coherent, quality-assured and sustainable organisational training product in consultation with the Policy and Advocacy Manager.

- Ensure the completion and consolidation of the SWIT program within the approved scope, timing and funding requirements.
- Ensure training content, learning design and evaluation arrangements are coherent, evidence-informed, accessible and appropriate for intended audiences.
- Maintain clear quality assurance, review, version control and approval arrangements for training products in accordance with SWOP NSW policies.
- Ensure peer expertise and lived experience remain central to training content while maintaining appropriate clinical, legal, policy and instructional-design standards.
- Consult with the Policy and Advocacy Manager to establish sustainable operating arrangements for the ongoing delivery, maintenance and evaluation of SWIT as a business-as-usual program.
- Ensure the program is completed with clear organisational ownership, governance, documentation and accountability.

3. Peer Participation Framework Development

Subject to available capacity and the continuing progress of the first two priority areas, the Senior Project Lead is responsible for developing a structured, safe and sustainable approach to peer participation within SWOP NSW.

- Consult with the Community Support Manager to develop an organisational framework that supports meaningful, ethical and non-extractive participation by sex workers.
- Ensure peer participation approaches are consistent with SWOP NSW's peer-led model, organisational values and commitment to lived-experience leadership.
- Establish clear principles, role boundaries, governance, support, safety and accountability arrangements for participation.

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- Ensure any proposed participation model appropriately distinguishes paid work, volunteering, consultation, advisory participation and other forms of contribution.
- Ensure legal, industrial, Work Health and Safety, privacy, safeguarding and reputational considerations are identified and appropriately managed.
- Provide recommendations to the CEO on whether and how peer participation arrangements should be implemented, tested or further developed.
- Ensure this responsibility does not displace or delay delivery of the LASH and SWIT priorities.

4. Project Governance, Planning and Accountability

The Senior Project Lead is responsible for ensuring that work within the role's portfolio is well planned, governed, monitored and documented, and that delivery risks are identified and managed early.

- Maintain effective project governance, including clear scope, accountabilities, milestones, dependencies, risks, issues, decisions and approval points.
- Monitor progress against agreed priorities and advise the CEO promptly where delivery, scope, budget or capacity risks arise.
- Ensure project documentation and records are accurate, current and maintained in approved organisational systems.
- Operate within SWOP NSW delegations, financial controls, approval pathways, external communications requirements and information-management standards.
- Coordinate specialist contributors and external expertise within approved scope, budget and authority.
- Provide concise, decision-ready reporting and recommendations to the CEO and other approved decision-makers.
- Support appropriate project closure, handover, evaluation and transition to ongoing organisational ownership.

5. Stakeholder and Community Engagement

The Senior Project Lead is responsible for maintaining strong, respectful and productive relationships with sex workers, research partners, health services, government stakeholders and other contributors relevant to the role.

- Engage sex workers and peer contributors in ways that are respectful, safe, transparent and proportionate to the purpose of the work.
- Build and maintain collaborative relationships within SWOP NSW and with research institutions, NSW Health services, government agencies, sector organisations and community partners.
- Ensure stakeholder engagement supports rather than substitutes for clear organisational decision-making and accountability.
- Represent SWOP NSW professionally in approved project and partnership settings.

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- Ensure consultation findings and stakeholder views are accurately represented and distinguished from evidence, organisational positions and formal decisions.

6. Research, Evidence and Quality

The Senior Project Lead is responsible for maintaining high standards of evidence, analysis, quality and credibility across the role's portfolio.

- Ensure research (including quantitative and qualitative insights), training and organisational outputs are evidence-informed, representative of peer voices and experiences, appropriately qualified and suitable for external scrutiny.
- Apply sound research and analytical judgement when interpreting evidence, consultation findings, stakeholder perspectives and lived experience.
- Recommend when specialist advice is required for legal, clinical, research, instructional-design or other expertise.
- Support evaluation and continuous improvement across the role's workstreams.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality, ethical practice, data stewardship and community accountability.

7. Organisational Contribution and Other Duties

The Senior Project Lead contributes specialist capability to SWOP NSW and supports a culture of accountability, collaboration, inclusion and continuous improvement.

- Work collaboratively with managers and staff while maintaining clear accountability for responsibilities assigned to the role.
- Model professional, ethical and values-based behaviour consistent with SWOP NSW's peer-led purpose.
- Contribute specialist research, training and project-development expertise to organisational planning where relevant.
- Undertake other duties consistent with the scope, classification and purpose of the position as reasonably directed by the CEO.

Key Performance Measures

- LASH partnership and funding-development work progresses in accordance with agreed strategic milestones and maintains active partner engagement.
- SWIT reaches an approved, quality-assured and sustainable business-as-usual position within the fixed-term period.
- Peer participation work is appropriately sequenced and does not displace or delay the LASH or SWIT priorities.
- Project governance, reporting, risk management and documentation are timely, accurate and reliable.
- Material delivery, budget, stakeholder and scope risks are identified and escalated early.
- Written advice and project outputs are evidence-informed, concise, decision-ready and appropriate for external scrutiny.

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- Sex worker leadership, community accountability and non-extractive practice are evident across all relevant workstreams.
- The role operates with appropriate independence and within delegated authority.

Qualifications

- A completed PhD in a relevant field.

Selection Criteria

Essential

- Lived experience of sex work and the capacity to apply that lived experience within a professional, peer-led organisational context.
- Demonstrated advanced research capability, including research design, evidence appraisal, analysis and the preparation of high-quality written outputs.
- Demonstrated experience developing research partnerships and progressing complex research or funding opportunities with academic, health, government and community stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to lead complex projects with a high degree of independence, including setting priorities, maintaining governance and accountability, managing risk and providing clear advice to senior decision-makers.
- Demonstrated understanding of sex worker rights, health, safety, stigma and discrimination, structural determinants of health and peer-led practice.
- Demonstrated capability in training, education or knowledge translation, including quality assurance, evaluation and the development of sustainable delivery approaches.
- Strong stakeholder engagement, consultation, facilitation and communication skills, with the ability to work respectfully and effectively with internal team members, diverse sex worker communities and external partners.

Desirable

- Experience contributing to NHMRC or other competitive research grant applications and/or research governance and ethics processes.
- Experience with community-based participatory research, peer-led research, or the design of safe and meaningful peer/community participation frameworks.
- Established knowledge of NSW Health, relevant research institutions, sex worker sector organisations or other networks relevant to the role.