

We're looking for a Senior Architect

Join a team creating a better world!

Down to Earth is an award-winning group of social enterprises based on the Gower peninsula, Swansea.

Since 2005 we have been offering life-changing experiences to some of the most disadvantaged communities in Wales through creating stunning buildings and outdoor spaces with natural materials and renewable technologies.

By creating these inspiring facilities with our groups, we deliver health care and education in new and internationally recognised ways – whilst also showing how it is possible to create a better world: one that is good for people and good for the planet.

Who are we looking for?

We are looking for an experienced architect to grow our architectural practice and be part of a dynamic team which designs the very best venues that can be built by the groups we work with.

Someone who...

- is creative, ambitious and optimistic;
- dreams of creating beautiful buildings.
- shares our values of creating a better world;
- embraces new ways of working; and
- thrives on exploring ways to reduce our impact on the planet

We embrace Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and manufacture many of our buildings off-site (OSM) so we are looking for an architect who is excited about blending the best of traditional and natural construction with the best of cutting-edge construction techniques.

It is our mission to offer the very best to those who have the very least, so the Senior Architect will be key to ensuring we continue to achieve this as we grow.

Be the Change

The buildings and sites we create tell the stories of the people we have worked with over the last 17 years. They communicate our values and inspire hope with the thousands of people who use them every year.

As a social enterprise, we operate on a non-profit distributing model but strive to make a profit to further our impact.

This is an exciting time for Down to Earth and the position will appeal to someone who is energetic and open to thinking differently.

What does the role involve?

The main responsibility will be to lead and coordinate a small design team, designing buildings that blend natural construction with contemporary design, for clients or for our own use including:

- Social rent homes for housing associations and CLTs
- Health care infrastructure at major hospitals
- Education infrastructure at schools
- Office and Manufacturing facilities

We will also be making our designs and “ways of working” available on-line under an open source license, to enable scale, replication and impact across the UK. This role will be central to enabling that to happen.

Working hours and location

Based on our beautiful sites on Gower, Swansea, this is a full-time position. Our normal working hours are 8:30am-4:30pm, although we are a flexible team. We value our staff team development and cross pollination of ideas, so this is a site/office-based role, mainly located at our Gower sites but will also involve occasionally spending time at our construction sites across south Wales.

Although we are looking for a 5 day a week role, we are open to applicants looking for a 4 day week as well as some remote working in either 4 or 5 day week. Please let us know in your application form if this is your preference.

Salary

£37,500 to £40,000 (subject to experience) based on 37.5 hours per week (5 days a week).

Benefits

- Having a positive impact on people and the planet
- Pension contributions
- Extensive training and team development, including annual team away days
- Generous Annual leave and long term commitment rewards
- Free access to our stunning sites for personal events
- Subsidised EV charging
- Flexible working hours

Responsibilities

- Guiding company growth and development in our architectural work
- Management of a small in-house design team
- Project work through all RIBA stages, including lead consultant role
- Preparation and submission of planning applications, liaison with planning departments
- Compliance with building regulations and other elective standards such as structural warranty
- Co-development of off-site manufactured panel system with existing team
- Co-development of open-source designs and methods
- Working collaboratively with the in-house construction team to quality assure manufacturing and construction work
- Principal designer role on own projects
- Tendering for work
- Maintaining strong client relationships and representing the client throughout a project

- Project management of budget and programme through design phase
- Overall responsibility for office management including PI cover and ARB Code

Person specification

Essential Skills + Experience:

- 5 years post RIBA Part 3 experience in practice
- detailed understanding of natural, energy efficient and sustainable design
- significant experience of either healthcare or education sector projects
- project team co-ordination of medium size projects including budget control
- significant experience of architectural office management including project resourcing
- construction tender management
- contract administration for a variety of contract forms
- principal designer
- great interpersonal skills and client engagement
- networking and design presentation skills
- leadership capabilities
- efficient time management
- flexible and responsive attitude to work
- comprehensive use of 3D CAD software
- comprehensive use of digital platforms and other IT software

Desirable Skills + Experience:

- research and development projects
- community engagement + consultation
- interest or experience of inclusive design
- experience of Project Partnering contracts
- experience of BIM Level 2 and 3 workflows
- comprehensive use of ArchiCAD
- hand-sketching and graphic communication
- working knowledge of ‘conventional’ construction materials, methods, their applications, drawbacks and cost/programme implications
- PHPP, AECB or other building performance certification
- Welsh language ability

Are you interested?

Please go to our website to find out more about our work and download an application form.

Submission:

- application form & current CV
- sample portfolio of at least 5 recent projects (please communicate your role in each project)

Deadline: Open recruitment

We are looking to appoint over summer/autumn 2022. The position is available immediately for the right person!

Thanks for reading!