



INFORMATION FOR POSITION APPLICANTS

BOWS* Family Support Worker (SEQ)

(*Building on Women's Strengths)

6 Month Maternity Leave Cover with possibility of extension

The following information is to assist you in applying for a position at Sisters Inside Incorporated (SIS). It is important that your application meets the requirements detailed below. The Position Description for the Indigenous Counsellor position is attached.

Background

SIS is a community-based organisation that works with women in the criminal justice system (including women prisoners). SIS is largely funded by the State and Commonwealth governments. The organisation's members include women in prison, ex-prisoners, women's organisations, as well as government, academic and individual members.

SIS's South East Queensland office is situated at 326 Montague Road, West End, close to public transport and parking. Our NQ Office is situated in Townsville.

SIS has been operating since 1992 as a non-profit organisation. In addition to a CEO, SIS currently has 14 staff positions in SEQ and 4 positions in NQ. In SEQ (in addition to this position): Senior Indigenous Practitioner, Sexual Assault Counsellor, (2) youth workers, (2) women & children's workers, parenting worker, mental health support worker, employment and training worker, Supreme Court bail support worker, NDIS transition worker, Policy Officer, Executive Assistant and Bookkeeper. This contingent is frequently increased through contracted projects, student placements and volunteers. NQ has a manager, (2) women & children's workers and a Supreme Court bail worker. A collaborative management model is in place.

Decision to Appoint

A decision to offer an applicant a position is based on a comparative assessment of both written material and interview. The essential aspects are an applicant's demonstrated competency in respect to the specified selection criteria. SIS is an equal opportunity employer.

How to Apply

The application is to include the following:

- A brief letter stating the position title of the vacancy and your name, address, phone number and email address (if applicable).
- A Resume/Curriculum Vitae.
- Your response to each of the Selection Criteria.
- The names, positions and phone numbers of at least two referees who can comment on your competency in regard to the Selection Criteria. Referees will only be contacted after an interview.

Selection Criteria

The selection criteria listed in the Position Description are the main requirements of the position. “Demonstrated” means that you have actually used the particular competency or skill and can give and discuss examples of this use.

The Process

Initial short listing will be based on your written application – specifically, your response to the Selection Criteria. **You *must* address the Selection Criteria. Applications that do not address the Selection Criteria will not be considered.**

Please give examples of how you meet the criteria, not that you only have the knowledge of them. Please keep your application brief and to the point.

Submitting Your Application

Applications must be posted by 5 pm on the closing date.

Personal Interview

If you are shortlisted, you will be requested to attend an interview. This will usually take place within three weeks of the closing date and will be held during normal working hours.

The interview will also address the Selection Criteria and allows you to expand on your written submission. The interview panel will rate your responses to a set of questions and a comparative assessment will be made.

If you have not been shortlisted for interview you will be advised as soon as possible, usually within two weeks. No explanations for this outcome can be given, as we simply do not have the available resources to respond to all applicants.

Selection

If you are selected for the position you will be first contacted by telephone. A formal written offer will then follow detailing the terms and conditions of employment.

If you are not selected following interview, you will be advised of this in writing within one working week of the interview. Post selection feedback for unsuccessful applicants is not a standard procedure. If a written request is received, the provision of brief comments from the panel chairperson will be considered.

Thank you for considering applying for a position with SIS.

Applications for the position should be forwarded to:

**Ms Debbie Kilroy
Sisters Inside Inc
PO Box 3407
South Brisbane 4101**

Applications must be post-marked before 5 p.m. on Monday 12th February 2018

POSITION DESCRIPTION

BOWS* Family Support Worker (SEQ)

(*Building on Women's Strengths)

6 Month Maternity Leave Cover with possibility of extension

Status:	1.0 FTE (38 hours per week) short term contract Maternity Leave Cover position
Classification:	Social and Community Services (SACS) Award
Date of Review:	20 December 2018
Location:	Brisbane (with possible intra-state travel)

Primary Purpose of Position

The BOWS Worker is primarily responsible for providing intensive support to women both before and after released from women's prisons in SEQ and to their children, who are in a statutory system or at risk of entering a statutory system. This position aims to build on women's strengths to minimise children's exposure to out-of-home care, to optimise family reunification and community reintegration, and to reduce intergenerational violence and criminalisation. Ultimately, the position aims to enable women to establish a violence-free life independent of statutory involvement for themselves and their children.

In all their duties, the BOWS Worker is expected to work in accordance with the Mission, *Values & Vision*¹, model of service², policies and procedures³ of SIS.

Key responsibilities of this position are to:

- Model SIS values in practice, including welcoming and engaging with criminalised women, girls and their children.
- Provide face-to-face counselling and support to women both pre- and post-release from women's prisons in SEQ, to increase their parenting confidence and capacity and develop detailed post-release plans.
- Facilitate maintenance and development of family relationships whilst the mother is in prison (e.g. regular mother/child prison visits; negotiation with Department of Child Safety to optimise family reunification post-release).
- Keep children out of out-of-home care or, where this is not possible, focus on minimising their length of stay.
- Secure safe, affordable, post-release housing for women and their children.
- Assist women and children to meet parole conditions and access other services and support (e.g. domestic and family violence, mental health, substance abuse, educational and income support).
- Liaise with other service providers (e.g. prison staff, other NGO's and government departments) on behalf of individual women, as required.
- Provide longer term and/or intensive support to families as required, including addressing historic abuse and its ongoing impact on mothers and children.
- Participate in the planning and evaluation of the BOWS Program, especially in relation to ensuring that the service is more accessible and appropriate to minority women prisoners.
- Participate in weekly *Inclusive Support* meetings and regular external supervision.
- Fulfil all data entry and reporting requirements of SIS and the Department of Communities.
- Undertake other duties as required by the Program Manager (SEQ).

¹ At www.sistersinside.com.au/values.htm

² *Inclusive Support: A responsive alternative to case management* at www.sistersinside.com.au/reports.htm

³ Detailed in the *Sisters Inside Working Guide 2015*.

Organisational Environment

Sisters Inside Inc. (SIS) operates within our Mission: *SIS is an independent, community organisation, which exists to advocate for the human rights of women in the criminal justice system, and to address gaps in the services available to them. We work alongside criminalised women in determining the best way to fulfil these roles.*

SIS is a particularly values-driven organisation. We are committed to involving criminalised women in all facets of the organisation. We are also committed to being culturally appropriate, employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers and maintaining strong linkages with Indigenous Elders, organisations and communities.

The workforce of SIS shrinks and expands with the availability of funding. As at June 2017, SIS employed 24 staff (including 4 in Townsville, North Queensland) providing:

- information, counselling and support assistance to women and child prisoners in Queensland and their children, and,
- a variety of post-release support services to enable women to reunite with their children and families, and reintegrate within their communities (e.g. family reunification, parenting support and education, health support, housing support, Centrelink support and emergency relief).

These services are funded through various State and Commonwealth funding programs, each with their own program boundaries and reporting obligations. An organisational database (ORACLE) is one of the primary tools for sharing of information and ensuring coordinated service delivery.

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There is a clear delineation of advocacy roles within SIS. Program workers are primarily responsible for individual advocacy work (e.g. advocating with government departments or other services with or on behalf individual women, girls or their children). The CEO, guided by the SIS Management Committee, is responsible for the systemic advocacy work of the organisation at a local, state, national and international level.

Reporting Relationships

- **Position title of direct supervisor**

The position reports directly to the Program Manager (SEQ) or her delegate. The BOWS Worker is also required to take the advice of the Senior Indigenous Practitioner on advice on matters relating to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, girls and their children.

- **Titles of position that report to this position – None**

- **Other significant internal relationships**

The 2 BOWS Workers, along with the CaPS Worker, form the SEQ *Mothers and Children's Team*. The Team also has a close working relationship with the Mothers and Children's Team (2 BOWS Workers) in NQ. Wherever possible, all SIS workers with mothers and children will meet for planning and reflection activities.

The position will also work on a day-to-day level with any other SEQ SIS program workers, student internees and volunteers, particularly:

- Youth workers (2 x Reconnect; 1 x DET Work Pathways)
- Health support workers (4 – 2 x Qld Health-funded; 2 x D2DL mental health support)
- Supreme Court Bail Support Worker (1)
- Sexual Assault Counsellors (2)
- Senior Indigenous Practitioner (1)

Key Selection Criteria

KSC1

Understanding of Sisters Inside's (SIS) *Values & Vision* and a commitment to working within the organisation's mission, values, model of service, policies and procedures.

KSC2

Understanding of gender-based criminalisation and DFV, including the particular issues and needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls.

KSC3

Understanding of the impact of mothers' imprisonment on both mothers and their children.

KSC4

Experience in one-to-one counselling, family support work and participant-driven individual planning.

KSC5

Ability to support women and their children in negotiating with statutory systems.

KSC6

Highly developed skills in relating to a wide range of people (including criminalised women and girls; their children; Indigenous Elders, communities and organisations; non-government service providers; and government officials).

Essential Attributes

- Ability to work within funding constraints, whilst remaining women-focused.
- Advocacy, mediation, negotiation and conflict resolution skills.
- Ability to work both independently with minimal supervision, and as part of a team.
- Good verbal and written communication skills.
- Sound problem solving skills, including the ability to critically reflect on practice.
- Enthusiastic and receptive in interaction with women, young people and children.
- Good time management skills, including the ability to prioritise, plan, organise and manage competing demands.

Essential Requirements

- Significant experience in working with criminalised, or other highly disadvantaged and marginalised, women and girls and/or tertiary qualifications within the social or behavioural sciences
- Holder of a current Queensland Class C driver licence. (A Class LR (light rigid) driver licence is desirable.)
- Word processing, email and database entry competencies.
- Suitability Card from the Commission for Children and Young People.

Additional Information

The position is a 6 month Maternity Leave Cover contract position with the possibility of extension, and is subject to a 3 month probationary period.