

## SDF Member of the Year - Lisette Whittaker

Please tell us your name

Sally Porter

Please tell us your job title

Organisational Development Assistant Administration Manager

Please tell us your institution

University of Sussex

Who is the person you would like to nominate?

Lisette Whittaker

What is their job title?

Organisational Development Administrator

What is the institution of the person you would like to nominate?

University of Sussex

What are three words you would choose to describe the person you would like to nominate?

passionate, supportive, proactive

## SDF Member of the Year - Lisette Whittaker

Please explain what made you submit this nomination, and give us examples to illustrate how your nominee has met the award criteria. Word count 300-500 words.

Lisette's work has made a huge impact on the wellbeing of colleagues across the University.

Given her evident passion for supporting others and for self-development, she was asked if she would like to attend a Train the Trainer session for Menopause Awareness. As an administrator, this was not expected of her role, but she stepped up into this space and has been an integral driving force in ensuring knowledge, awareness and understanding around menopause is becoming embedded in our organisation.

She organises and runs support sessions, training workshops, wellbeing events and continually seeks opportunities for the institution to improve and develop further in this space. She has just finished a report to be shared with senior leaders, advocating in the work that can be done here and the great impact that this has already begun to have. Colleagues around the University have given feedback that they are grateful for Lisette's work which has made them feel supported, heard and that they have a safe space during an otherwise turbulent personal time.

To organise the events, Lisette collaborates with external agencies, including specialist professionals, and internal colleagues from across the University. She has created a networking channel for colleagues to support one another and is looking to create menopause ambassadors and champions, sharing good practice with them and developing the menopause community of support. She researches to find out what else she could be doing and is always looking for innovative and effective ways to develop the menopause space and herself.

This is only part of Lisette's workload and responsibilities, but she has (mostly independently) created an evolving support system which has already had an incredible, positive impact of staff across the institution.

Lisette also supports in our mentoring space. Her main responsibility is to provide administrative support to the mentoring lead, but she does much more than that. She cares about each mentoring relationship formed, carefully partnering up mentors and mentees to create the best possible chance of effective connection and support in the relationship. She factors in a wide number of qualities and criteria in her matches, viewing each person as a whole.

She advocates for partnerships with mentors of lived experiences which can support the mentee, takes protected characteristics of each individual into account and listens to the preferences of those involved.

Overall, Lisette's work in these spaces brings colleagues together, to share their expertise and connect, and also builds a more inclusive and supportive community.

We're very grateful to Lisette and would love for her to be considered for the Developing Excellent Practice Award.