



WorKingOptions

IN EDUCATION

Chief Executive



Welcome

Dear Candidate,

Working Options in Education is an employability and life skills charity that has been helping young people to aim high and fulfil their potential since 2010. We are a not for profit organisation providing advice and guidance to young people, giving them the skills they need to move confidently from education to employment.

We are now searching for an outstanding, self-motivated and inspiring new Chief Executive to lead the next phase in our development. It is an exciting and varied role with the opportunity to manage a small, ambitious organisation focused on growing our impact and reach in the UK.

This is a pivotal time for us – it's clear that the pandemic has disproportionately affected the employment prospects of young people, and we know that the disruption to their education has had a massive impact on students' mental health and self-esteem. We particularly focus on engaging underserved young people, to bridge the opportunity gap in employment prospects that continues to widen, by targeting social mobility cold spots to level the playing field. We are focused on the long-term change in addressing social mobility issues, by inspiring young people to break the glass ceiling regardless of their background. We believe that when young people can be inspired to have aspirations, our job is to help them break down barriers, build their skills and their resilience, so that they can then create their own success.

You will be an experienced leader, ambitious for our growth and impact, with a deep commitment to social change. You will bring a strong track record of business development and income generation, able to work directly with senior business leaders to secure strong partnerships. Self aware, you will be a natural collaborator and alliance-builder with exceptional skills in influencing and engaging complex and diverse stakeholders. A leader of people, strategic and pragmatic, you will bring experience of building and developing high performing teams and equipping them with the resources they need to be able to deliver.

At such a critical time for us, our new CEO will champion positive change and will be a passionate advocate for inspiring the next generation of diverse talent to break down the barriers and help fuel a new economy and a fairer, more open society. We therefore welcome applications from all sectors and backgrounds.

If you are looking for a role to build a strong platform for young people and help them to take ownership of their opportunities, and you bring the leadership experience we are looking for, we'd love to hear from you.

Julie Sneddon
Chair of the Board of Trustees



What we do

Working Options in Education helps young people fulfil their potential by developing employability and life skills. Since 2010, we have worked in close partnership with more than 150 schools and colleges in England and Wales to deliver our Career Pathways Programme, prioritising those from disadvantaged regions.

We aim to transform the life chances of young people (14-19), by helping them to take early control of their education or career journey, so they can overcome barriers, develop a clear picture of their future, find motivation, and negotiate each step along the way.

Our **Career Pathways programme** is delivered free in state schools, colleges and online by industry volunteers and helps students to identify and pursue their career options. Our programme includes self-directed online learning, employability and skills masterclasses, talks from industry volunteers, mentoring, business challenge sessions, and access to work experience, apprenticeships and entry level jobs.

How we help

Improving employability

We've developed our employability and life skills programme to offer young people multiple interactions with employers, because we know there is a direct correlation to improved academic attainment and future employability. The widening opportunity gap in employment prospects means that we particularly focus on engaging underserved young people.

Building confidence

We want young people to feel inspired, informed and have the skills they need for their future. Young people consistently tell us that participating in our employability and life skills programme has a positive impact on their self-esteem and confidence.

Supporting education

Our Career Pathways Programme supports schools and colleges to deliver many of the employer engagement elements of the 'Gatsby Benchmarks' for their students.

Connecting industry

We act as a link between students and employers. We've developed strong links with companies in multiple industry sectors, such as Google, Newton, GP Bullhound (Investor Allstars), Tesco, and ITV.



Our impact highlights – 2020/2021



Find out more in our [Annual Review Report 2020 – 2021](#).

Job Description

Job title: Chief Executive

Reports to: Board of Trustees

Direct reports: Head of Programme
Development Manager
Communications and Engagement Manager
Trust & Foundations Freelancer

Role Overview

The Chief Executive is responsible for the strategic leadership and management of Working Options, building the network and the capacity of the organisation. The postholder will focus on driving social change and enhancing workplace culture based on principles of fairness and equality.

They will ensure robust strategic development, driving the operational plan, setting the budget and managing risk, ensuring Working Options is a financially sustainable organisation, relevant to the needs of the people we serve. They will be the senior external representative for the charity, overseeing engagement with young people, educators, and businesses, and engaging in collaborative relationships with government, stakeholders and the media.

Main Responsibilities

- To position Working Options as an influential voice and create meaningful and successful lives on an individual level, and to be a force for increasing social mobility.
- To strategically determine key campaigns and engage in collaborative relationships with government, stakeholders and the media to progress them.
- To oversee and manage relationships with a range of senior stakeholders, including supporters, governmental partners, school leaders, and key business partners like Google, Newton, GP Bullhound (Investor Allstars), Tesco, and ITV.
- To develop, pursue and embed strategic aims, including developing a robust financial strategy and operational plan. To hold accountability for delivery.
- To act as change agent and deliver organisational change as required to make sure the organisation is healthy, effective and efficient. To involve Working Option's staff in developing an organisation that is equipped with the skills to deliver, and is empowered, and held to account for delivery of its aims.
- To deliver income targets agreed with the Board with a mix of income streams. Review return on investment with regard to Working Options' services to provide for long-term financial sustainability.
- To establish a results-oriented culture which encourages quality in all that we do.
- To ensure that the organisation has effective governance systems and processes in place to meet member requirements and enable the Board to fulfil its formal responsibilities.
- To lead, manage and motivate the organisation's staff.



Person Specification

Knowledge and Experience

- Demonstrable experience of strategic leadership – setting a strategy and turning broad aims and direction into practical plans for delivery.
- Experience of successfully leading or managing a healthy organisation, including staff engagement, stewardship of resources, skills development, and the policies, systems and processes needed for sustainable delivery.
- Experience of successful financial management including sustaining and growing income generation. The Chief Executive will work closely with the Trustees and especially the Founder and The President on specific fundraising and partnership initiatives.
- Evidence of developing and maintaining innovative partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders and a track record of success in persuading, influencing and galvanising change.
- Experience of successfully maintaining and raising the vision, reputation and profile of a business and being its spokesperson.
- Change management and leadership will be essential. The successful candidate will bring recent experience of creating performance and results-oriented cultures.
- Experience of working with Boards and bringing knowledge and understanding of legal, regulatory, social and ethical responsibilities and corporate governance.
- Experience of building an influential service delivery organisation that is universally credible and well regarded would be an asset.

Skills and Abilities

- Natural ability to provide inspirational and inclusive leadership to develop high-performing teams.
- Ability to relate to and empathise with young people (14-19s), and be cognisant of their thoughts, dilemmas, and issues.
- Exceptional interpersonal skills with the ability to quickly establish personal credibility.
- Ability to communicate relevantly with young people and evangelise effectively with business audiences.
- Able to work collaboratively and influence effectively across departments and externally to achieve organisational goals.
- Commercially astute with entrepreneurial flair and excellent planning, financial management and budgeting skills.
- Highly self-motivated to drive fundraising and partnership efforts to increase the financial resources at the disposal of the charity.
- Strong capabilities working with digital channels and platforms, able to give guidance to our Communications Manager.

Styles and Behaviours

- Be a champion of the potential for change at an individual and societal level.
- Open minded and a flexible approach to working with colleagues.
- A positive and enthusiastic role model.

Terms of appointment

Salary:

The salary for this role is £70,000 - £80,000 per annum on a permanent full-time basis.

Work Pattern:

40 hours per week but can be flexible for the right person.

Location:

Home based working with the ability to travel to London or UK locations for meetings as needed.

Annual Leave:

25 days annual leave.

Pension:

Basic auto enrolment with National Employment Savings Trust.



How to Apply

We hope you will consider making an application. If you have questions about the appointment and would find it helpful to have an informal conversation, please contact Juliet Brown on juliet.brown@starfishsearch.com and we will be happy to arrange a call.

To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/working-options-ce/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A supporting statement (no more than two sides) that sets out why you think this role is the right move for you and how you meet the knowledge and experience criteria.

We would also be grateful if you would also complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Closing date: Friday 6th May 2022

Preliminary interviews: w/c 23rd May 2022

Interviews with Working Options: w/c 6th June 2022

