



# Candidate Pack for Chief Executive Officer

**akt**



# Welcome

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Thank you for your interest in becoming the new Chief Executive Officer of akt.

Today, 1 in 4 young people who are homeless or facing homelessness also identify as LGBTQ+. The issue of homelessness disproportionately impacts LGBTQ+ youth and the young people we work with have experienced hostility, rejection, fear and abuse alongside homelessness. We support in-crisis youth with financial aid, pathways into housing, healthcare access, education, training, and more. With service centres in London, Manchester, Bristol, and Newcastle – as well as a digital service – we are there when young people need us most. In 35 years, we have provided over 250,000 nights off the streets and supported 50,000+ people to survive and thrive.

This is a pivotal time for akt as demand for our services continues to grow. Following the departure of our long-standing chief executive we are seeking a new chief executive who will lead a highly motivated and committed team to deliver a step change in our services and impact to meet the rising demand for our support. This is a time of transformation for us, and we are looking to our new chief executive to provide stability as well as growth – critically, to build a strong organisational infrastructure which will support our continued expansion.

You will be a proven chief executive or executive director who brings a strong appreciation of the opportunities and challenges of leading a charity in today's political and economic context. You will be a strategic leader with the demonstrable ability to set a clear vision and direction and to inspire and empower high-performing teams to deliver impact. Transformation and growth are the key items on our agenda. You may come from a fundraising background or a services background – critically, whichever the roots of your experience you will have the leadership agility and experience to straddle both.

Our external relationships and partnerships are critical for our continued ability to signpost those young people who need our support to trusted partners. You will be comfortable on an external platform and used to working with policy makers, funders and other service providers. Your exceptional communication skills and high emotional intelligence will be assets to you in this role. Fundamentally we are looking for a leader who brings a strong sense of social justice and the knowledge and experience to deliver outstanding outcomes through developing high-performing teams.

It is unacceptable for young people to find themselves homeless, or at risk of homelessness, as a result of who they are. We are here to transform their lives and to enable them to find the safety and security they need at such a crucial time. If you are motivated by our mission and can provide us with the leadership we seek, we'd love to hear from you.

Best wishes,

**Rob Malcolmson, MBE**  
Chair



# About Us

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Founded in 1989 in Manchester in memory of Albert Kennedy, akt is the national LGBTQ+ youth homelessness charity, providing safe homes and better futures for LGBTQ+ young people. We exist to give LGBTQ+ young people aged 16-25 at risk of or experiencing homelessness or a hostile living environment the support they need to thrive. In 35 years, akt has provided more than 250,000 nights off the street and supported over 50,000 LGBTQ+ young people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

We currently work with over 800 vulnerable young people a year, providing both face-to-face and online assistance. We help young people to access safe accommodation and provide support to access education, training or skills to ensure a successful transition to independent living. We have regional centres in London, Manchester, Newcastle and Bristol and offer a fully online service nationwide to ensure our services are available when and where young people need us most.

1 in 4 young people who face, or experience homelessness identify as LGBTQ+ (National Scoping of LGBT Youth Homelessness, akt, 2015). 78% of the youth we work with have experienced rejection or abuse from their families (The LGBTQ+ Youth Homelessness Report, akt, 2021).

We believe that no one should be made homeless because of who they are.

## Our Mission

To work nationally with LGBTQ+ young people aged 16-25 who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or living in hostile environments.

## Our Values

Our four key values are:

- Inclusivity
- Community
- Courage
- Accountability

Find out more about our values [here](#).

We provide a range of support services to our LGBTQ+ young people. We help through:

- Emergency housing and support
- Finding safe and secure long-term homes
- Financial support (deposit and rent)
- Independent living costs
- Support with accessing benefits
- Access to mental health support
- Long-term case work
- Self-advocacy
- Support finding your community
- Live chat and digital resources

## Our Impact

Across 2022/23, the akt services team carried out a total of 15,053 interventions:

- 9,892 interventions relating to housing and housing management
- 2,099 providing support with finances
- 1,662 support sessions related to mental health
- 884 interventions related to education, employment and training
- 4,609 more interventions, including those relating to social care and physical health

Between 2022 and 2023, akt supported 817 young people facing homelessness, at risk of homelessness, or living in hostile environments. This number includes young people who had been referred in previous years and were receiving ongoing casework.

Of the young people akt supported during this timeframe:

- 11% were under the age of 18 when they started casework
- 62% identified as trans or non-binary or questioning their gender identity
- 46% were Black, Brown and People of Colour (BBPOC)

## Support Packs & Independent Living Funds

akt also provide independent living funds, which provide young people with support around education, training and employment.

In 2022–23 akt's services team provided:

- 203 emergency support packs
- 81 emergency accommodation packs
- 76 rainbow starter packs
- 234 independent living funds

Emergency packs can include funds to cover an electric or gas top up, emergency travel, food and somewhere to stay.

Rainbow packs can provide financial help with a deposit, essential home items and funds towards moving costs.

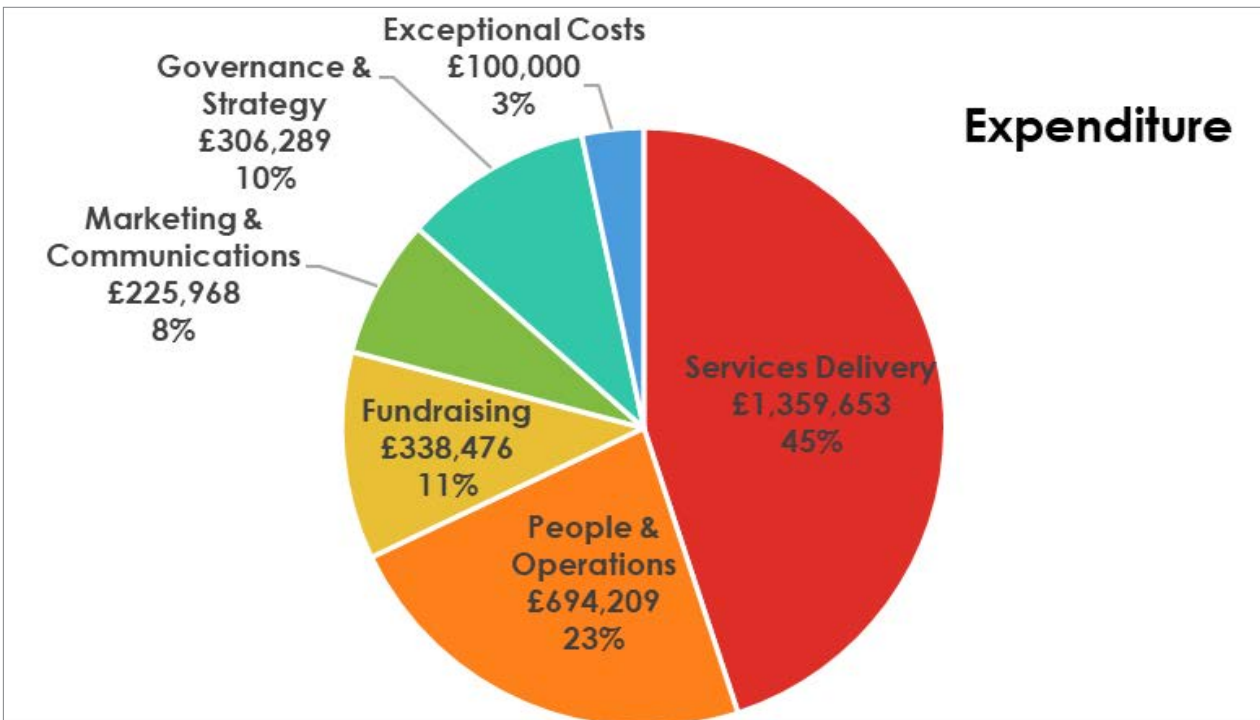
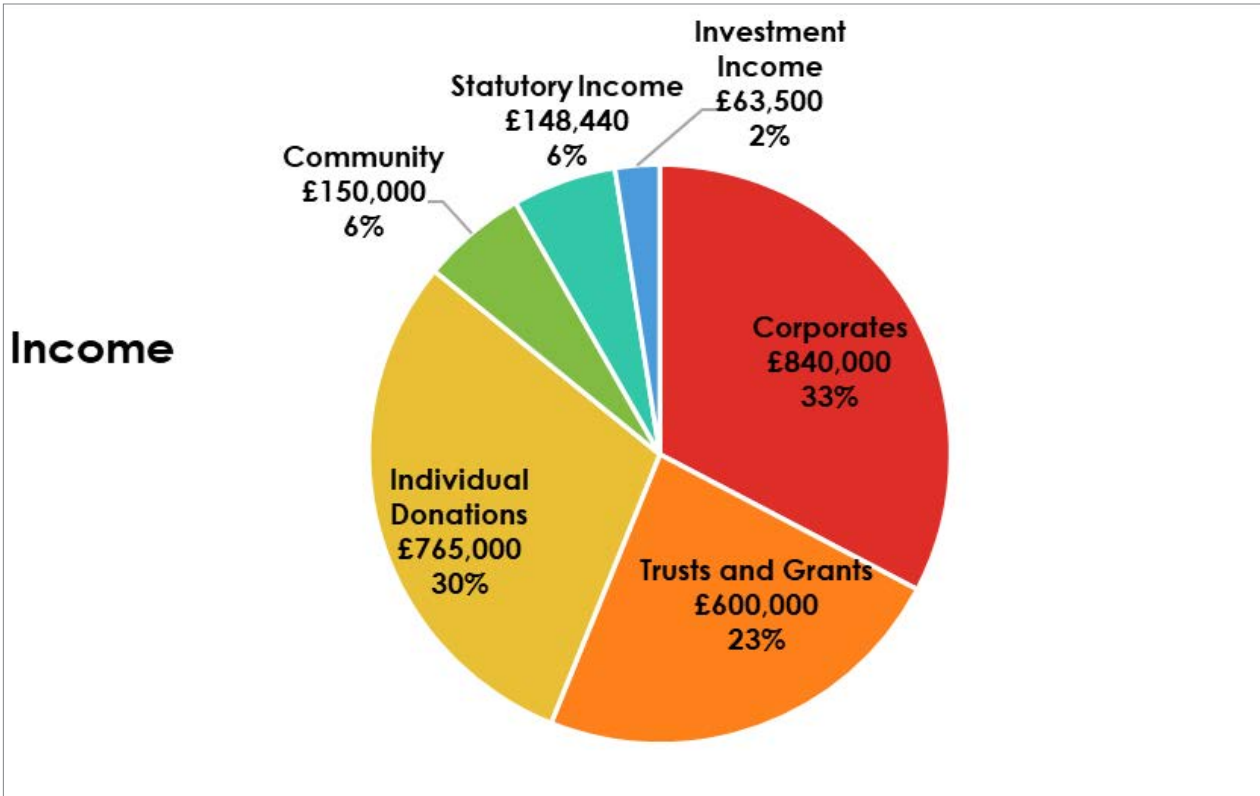
## Youth Engagement Programme

The youth engagement team at akt expanded between 2022 and 2023. The service offers a community space and activities in Bristol and the South West, London, Manchester, Newcastle, and online. From October 2022 to April 2023 there were:

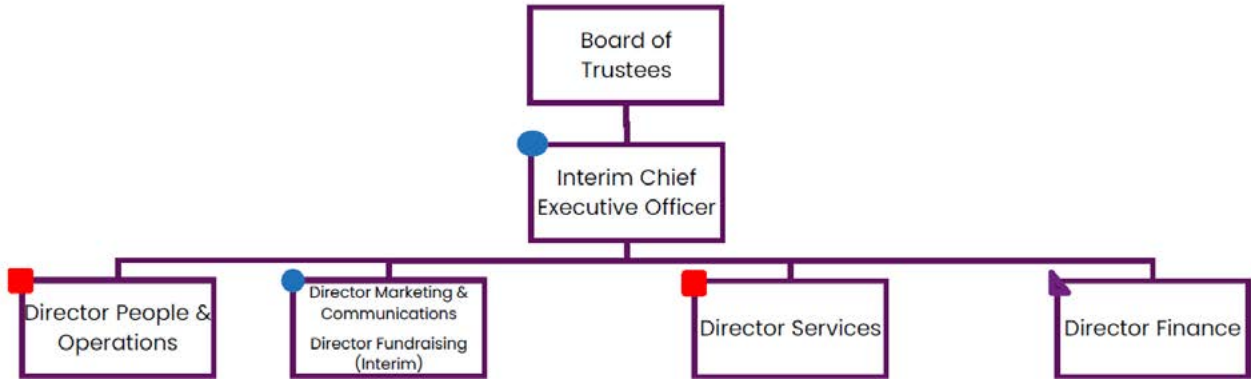
- 55 youth engagement sessions across the country
- 41 young people who attended a youth engagement programme

Find out more about our impact [here](#).

## Our Income and Expenditure



## Our Leadership and Management Team



Locations:

- Manchester
- London
- Bristol
- Newcastle



# Job description

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**Job title:** Chief Executive Officer

**Reports to:** Chair of the Board of Trustees

**Direct reports:** Director of Finance, Director of Marketing & Communications, Director of People and Operations, Director of Services

## Role profile

- Provide visible, inspiring and effective senior leadership, direction and oversight to akt and its staff in the development of the organisation's vision, strategic direction and implementation of clearly prioritised plans
- Manage the organisation in such a way that its resources are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and create and sustain a high-performing professional environment with an inspired leadership culture at its heart
- Be responsible for the overall financial health and sustainability of the organisation, through the development and continuation of diverse income streams including a range of partnership opportunities
- Strengthen partnerships with a range of other providers to ensure comprehensive referral pathways are in place to provide wider support to the young people akt supports
- Generate, explore and implement new opportunities for akt that harness innovation, deliver impact and align with its mission and overarching objectives. This includes engaging with new partners and other interested parties where there is a common agenda or shared interest
- Communicate akt's vision and strategy internally and with external stakeholders, policymakers and funders
- Build an effective partnership with the Chair and, by extension, the Board, leveraging the experiences of a diverse Trustee team in order to achieve development, growth and longer-term sustainability for akt



# Person specification

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## Knowledge and Experience

- A credible, senior leader with demonstrable experience of strategic and operational leadership within an organisation operating within a comparable context
- Demonstrable experience of leading an organisation through a period of transformation to then help build, develop, and sustain high-quality services
- Excellent track record of effective and sustainable organisational growth alongside the ability to anticipate strategic needs
- Demonstrable financial leadership experience with budgetary accountability and evidence of understanding management accounts and annual accounts, and making decisions using financial information preferably within the charitable sector
- Experience working closely with a Board in a voluntary, public, or private sector organisation
- Experience of leading, inspiring and maintaining a positive, values led working culture that delivers high performance
- Track record of success as an alliance-builder, ideally with a range of partners and funders, and with experience of having persuaded and influenced stakeholders to see issues differently or adopt a different viewpoint
- Appreciation of akt's role and priorities in the context of a complex stakeholder landscape

## Desirable

- Values youth leadership, welcoming and facilitating the involvement of young people in akt decision making and service design
- Knowledge of and either lived experience or work experience in the homelessness sector
- Understanding of LGBTQ+ issues or lived experience of being LGBTQ+

## Skills and abilities

- An effective and credible partnership builder and negotiator with the ability to build support around common goals
- An engaging leader within the organisation with the ability to develop and implement organisational vision and strategic plans and inspire cultural and behavioural change where needed
- Highly effective communication, interpersonal and influencing skills with the ability to secure trust and confidence quickly
- Sharp strategic planning skills with the financial awareness needed to translate strategy into performance
- Visionary: high capacity for innovation and fresh thinking

## Leadership Styles and Personal Attributes

- Present, positive and resilient driving force within and outside akt
- Coaching style of leadership and is comfortable leading a senior team
- Consistently championing and modelling equity, diversity and inclusion principles across all areas of work
- An advocate for collaboration, with a commitment to an open, participative and empowering style of leadership
- Sound commercial instincts with a balanced risk appetite
- Strong personal commitment to the mission, values and priorities of akt



# Terms of appointment

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## Salary

The salary for this role is c.£90,000 per annum on a full-time permanent basis.

## Location

London, Manchester, Newcastle or Bristol (Hybrid working between home and office, some travel may be required)

## Pension

Contributory Pension (7%)

## Annual leave

28 days holiday rising to 30 days after 5 years' service, plus 8 bank holidays

## Additional benefits

BUPA employee assistance programme



# How to apply

We hope you will consider expressing an interest in becoming akt's next Chief Executive Officer. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/akt-ceo> 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.

akt is committed to being an inclusive place to work and volunteer that represents the diverse communities we serve. We encourage applications from candidates from all backgrounds and applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability or age. We are happy to discuss any reasonable adjustments individuals may require in the recruitment process, on commencement, or once in post.

We would also be grateful if you would 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.

<b>Closing date:</b>	Friday 7th June 2024
<b>Preliminary interviews:</b>	w/c 17th June 2024
<b>Final Panel interviews:</b>	w/c 8th July and w/c 15th July 2024

