

Candidate Pack for Director of Voluntary Income & Engagement



**Medical
Research
Foundation**

Welcome

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in this exciting new role in our team. This is a critical role for us and we are seeking a creative, ambitious and thoughtful leader who can deliver a step change in our voluntary income and our profile.

We've been helping to fund medical research for more than a century and since 2011 we have focused exclusively on funding vital medical research in underfunded areas, giving hope to people with overlooked health conditions. Our purpose is simple but powerful: to fund life-changing research that improves health and transforms lives. As a research-led organisation, we are free to fund the more important medical research questions of our time. Unlike many other funding bodies, we are not restricted to a single disease, condition or institution. Instead, we respond quickly to the emerging health needs of the nation and the wider world, backing the brightest ideas and supporting the scientists whose discoveries can change the future. Inspired by the responsibility and independence that donor support gives us, we remain firmly centred on funding scientists and research.

This new role as our Director of Voluntary Income and Engagement is an exciting step for us, bringing fundraising and communications together so we can tell our story with greater impact, inspire more people to support us, and grow our voluntary income. Our current strategy takes us to 2029, and we have set ourselves an ambitious but realistic target of reaching £8m per annum in voluntary income by 2034. Achieving this won't be easy, but it's a challenge we are ready to embrace.

We're looking for someone who shares our ambition and is excited by the potential. Someone who brings both intellectual rigour and creativity, who can think strategically and offer challenge, and who will enjoy building and developing our talented team. You'll need to be confident working with everyone from individual donors to corporate partners, big pharma and the scientific community. Most of all, we want someone who sees the possibilities in this role and feels energised by the chance to shape something new.

This is a wonderful opportunity to make a real difference — to bring your skills, experience and ideas to a charity with bold ambitions and a clear sense of purpose. If that excites you, we would love to hear from you.

With best wishes,

Dr Angela Hind
Chief Executive



About us

The Medical Research Foundation is an independent charitable organisation dedicated to improving human health through investment in high-quality medical research. Originally established as the charitable arm of the Medical Research Council (MRC) and becoming an independent organisation in 2011, today, we remain deeply connected to the MRC's legacy of excellence, while using our independence to direct funding flexibly, strategically, and in ways that respond to the most pressing health challenges of our time.

Our Vision

Our vision is a world where medical research improves health for everyone. There are still many health conditions which impose a heavy burden on millions of people, in the UK and around the world. History has shown us, time and again, that the best way to achieve better human health is through medical research. We know that by investing now, we will see life-saving advances in the future and improvements in health for everyone.

Our Mission

Our mission is to lay the foundations for ground-breaking new discoveries and life-changing advances. We give hope to people whose health conditions are overlooked, by supporting research in areas that are underfunded. We invest in the brightest and best researchers, ensuring the next generation of scientists can continue to solve the biggest challenges facing human health.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in research and employment

We are committed to embracing diversity, attracting talent from the widest possible pool, and ensuring our research funding and employment processes are fair, transparent and inclusive. Since 2022, we have built sex and gender considerations into grant applications and peer review, and we continue to strengthen equity in our funding both in the UK and internationally. We work with sector partners to promote best practice and support the development of dedicated sex and gender policies in research.

As an employer, we work hard to ensure that all of our people can contribute to the best of their abilities, and that no one is inhibited from making their contribution; we will embed an inclusive, positive and fair culture where opportunities are open to all.

To support this, we have trained two of our people as EDI Advocates and established our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group to review our practices and make recommendations for change. We are already implementing the action plan from our first EDI audit, and we remain committed to continued learning from all our people to help us identify and remove barriers to inclusion and encourage and embrace diversity of thought.



Planetary Health

Climate change poses a growing threat to human health, and we are determined to be part of the solution. We fund research into the health impacts of climate change, while also reducing our own environmental footprint, including divesting from fossil fuels and providing a green employer pension scheme. We are accelerating progress towards Net Zero and embedding sustainability at the heart of our decision-making, influencing the researchers, partners and suppliers we work with.

How We Work

We combine independence with scientific rigour. Our funding decisions are guided by expert advice from the Medical Research Council's boards and panels, as well as the wider scientific and clinical community. We are working hard to bring into the decision making, the views and needs of people with lived experience of the health conditions that we research. This ensures our grants and fellowships go to projects of the highest quality, with the greatest potential for impact.

We also work to support the next generation of researchers, creating opportunities for emerging scientist leaders to build their careers and contribute to global health research. Many of our funding programmes are designed to support early-career researchers, recognising that today's students and fellows will become tomorrow's leaders in medical science.

As a broad-based medical research funder, our remit is wide, and the need is great. We therefore focus on funding research that will have the greatest possible impact on people's lives, prioritising new research between 2024–2029 that aligns with one or more of our strategic research themes:

- **High-need, low research investment**
There are too many health conditions which continue to devastate lives. As a broad funder of medical research, we will identify and fund in areas that are overlooked by other funders.
- **Emerging research leaders**
The health problems of the future will be solved by the researchers we invest in today. We will award funding to keep the brightest minds in science, for the benefit of us all.
- **Changing policy and practice**
Few funding opportunities exist for scientists to ensure that policymakers and practitioners are aware of their research. By funding in this way, we will ensure healthcare policy and practice is based on the latest evidence.

To learn more about our current strategy, please [click here](#).

And for our most recent annual report, please [click here](#).

And our latest five-year impact report, please [click here](#).

Since 2019, we have committed £23 million to transformative research, and our ambition is to more than double that to £50 million by 2029.

We prioritise neglected areas of health that need attention and research, including:

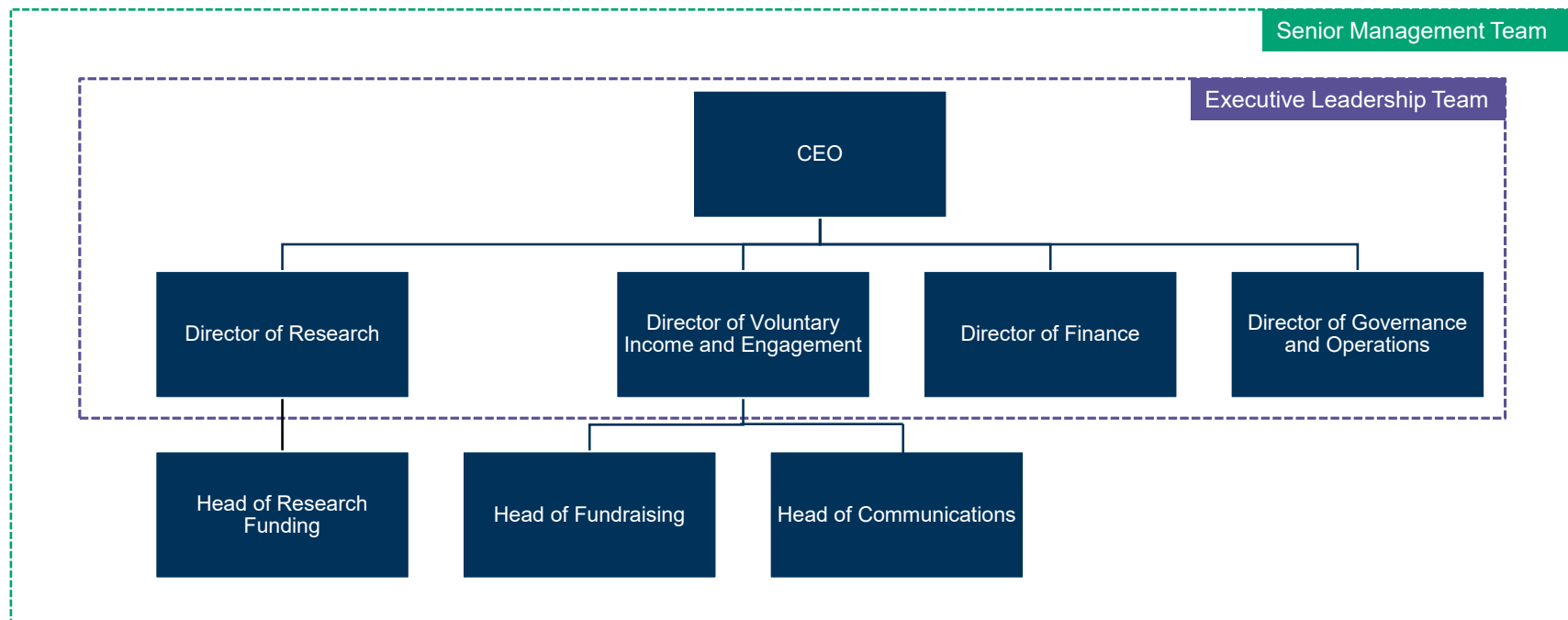
- Improving the lives of children and young people.
- Addressing neglected areas of mental health
- Tackling the health impacts of climate change
- Responding to emerging health threats and research opportunities

Through this focus, we ensure that medical research has the greatest possible impact, not just in labs, but at bedsides and in communities for people worldwide.



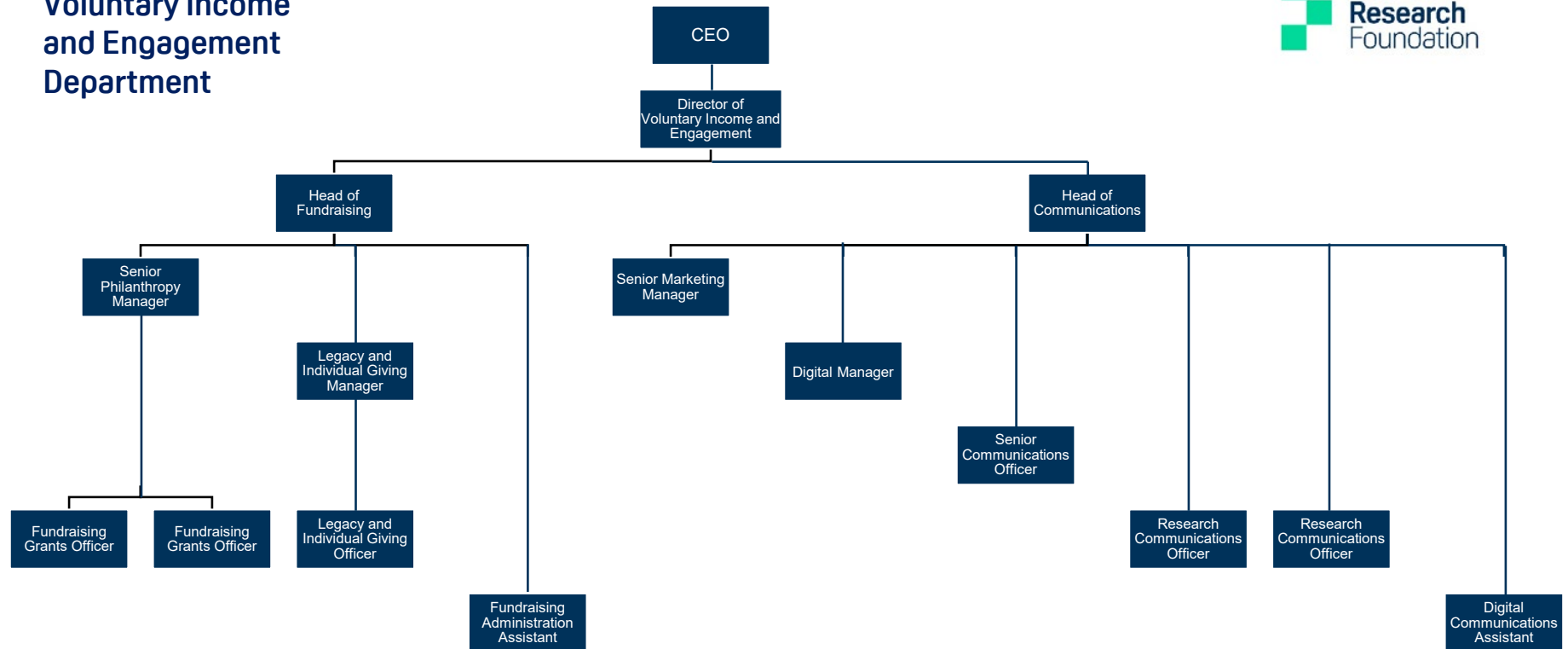
Organisation Structure

Executive Leadership Team and Senior Management Team



Organisation Structure

Voluntary Income and Engagement Department



Job description

Job title: Director of Voluntary Income and Engagement

Reports to: Chief Executive

Direct reports: Head of Fundraising; Head of Communications

Role purpose:

The Director of Voluntary Income and Engagement is responsible for the strategic direction and delivery of voluntary income, supporter engagement communications and activities, brand awareness, corporate and other communications, and marketing.

Main responsibilities:

- Inspire and lead a new, integrated fundraising, communications and marketing department providing team members with support and challenge.
- Lead the development, implementation and evaluation of our fundraising, communications and marketing strategies to raise our profile, grow supporter numbers and achieve transformational voluntary income targets.
- Drive the idea-generation, strategic development and change needed to secure at least £8m per annum voluntary income by 2034, including creating opportunities, following leads and making the ask.
- With our Head of Communications, move our communications function towards maturity, improve brand positioning, engage with more supporters and ensure that we communicate clearly and consistently across the whole organisation on the impact that our research is having on the world.
- With our Head of Fundraising, ensure a long-term and sustainable pipeline of supporters through the development and implementation of segmented solicitation and stewardship plans.
- Manage the department budget and control for financial and management risk.
- Be responsible for supporter and donor data protection and data management.
- Be an active and effective member of the Executive Leadership Team contributing to the delivery of the organisational strategy.



Person specification

Knowledge and experience

- A proven track record in developing and delivering ambitious voluntary income growth strategies and creating transformational growth from a low base.
- Experience developing and delivering ambitious strategic plans in marketing and/or communications to drive brand awareness, engage more supporters and retain existing supporters.
- Evidence of contributing towards the strategic direction of the whole organisation beyond their functional area.
- Expertise in at least three voluntary income streams and a track record of personally securing six-figure donations or grants.
- Evidence of building an established network of funding partners.
- Prior experience in a medical research or health charity, or a science background would be beneficial, but not essential.

Skills and abilities

- Strong team leadership with proven experience of inspiring and leading a team of experts and driving improvements in performance.
- Confidence and credibility at a senior level with scientists, clinicians, corporate partners and the science-literate public.
- An ability to build rapport and relationships quickly.
- Exceptionally clear communication skills with the ability to persuade, influence and negotiate.
- An aptitude for using evidence and data to drive solutions.

Styles and behaviours

- A continuous business improvement mindset geared to driving efficiency and effectiveness.
- A strong understanding of, and commitment to, environmental sustainability and equity, diversity and inclusion.



Terms of appointment

Salary

The salary for this role is £71,000 to £74,000 per annum on a full-time permanent basis.

Location

Central London

Hybrid working

We all come together to work in our office for two days each week (Monday and Tuesday) and work additional office days according to the needs of our role. Those of us who work full-time are office based at least three days per week in total. Other days of the week may be worked remotely at a UK address

Pension

We double-match your pension contributions and offer up to 12% employer contributions through a salary sacrifice scheme. We have reviewed our workplace pension scheme recently and are satisfied that it offers a good balance between performance, fees and support for the health of the planet.

Additional benefits

- Competitive pay: we aim to ensure that our pay is appealing to retain our talented and committed people. We strive to remain competitive in the market, and so we seek an independent salary benchmark on each of our jobs every two years.
- Generous leave: we offer a generous annual leave allowance of 30 days plus bank holidays per year (pro rata). Some of our bank holiday allowance is flexible and can be transferred to another date that is more suitable for you. There is additional paid leave available for volunteering, plus generous maternity, paternity and adoption pay to support your family.
- Flexible working: A full-time working week is 36 hours with core working hours from 10:00 to 16:00 Monday to Friday. Hours may be worked flexibly around the core time to meet business needs and to achieve your own work-life balance.
- Health and wellbeing: As a charity dedicated to advancing human health through research, particularly in areas such as mental health, we place a strong emphasis on the wellbeing of our staff. We offer annual health checks, flu vaccinations, mental health consultations, and time off for medical appointments - all reflecting our belief that supporting the health of our team is integral to what we do.
- Learning and growth: We provide tailored learning and development opportunities, ensuring that staff are equipped to grow and succeed in their roles.
- Financial security: we provide interest-free loans for travel and other significant one-off expenses, participate in the cycle to work scheme, and provide a life assurance scheme (4x your salary)

Culture

We value our open, transparent and inclusive culture where staff work closely across teams at all levels of the organisation. Our team is known for its kindness, support for each other, and dedication to our mission to lay the foundations for ground-breaking new discoveries and life-changing advances.

Social connection is also an important part of life here. We host regular all-staff lunches, team building activities and celebration events, and our active Social Committee organises lunchtime and post-work events and activities throughout the year.

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 chris.milo@starfishsearch.com and we will be happy to arrange a call. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/mrf-dir-vol-eng/> 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 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 10th October 2025
Preliminary interviews:	w/c Monday 27th October 2025
Final Panel First Stage interviews:	Wednesday 19th or Thursday 20th November 2025
Final Panel Second Stage interviews:	Monday 24th November 2025

