



CANDIDATE PACK FOR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

WELCOME

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Chief Executive of Air Ambulances UK. This is an exciting role with the opportunity to achieve significant impact across a critically important and complex sector.

We are the national charity and membership body supporting and championing the lifesaving work of the UK's 21 air ambulance charities. Every day, air ambulance crews across the country deliver critical care to people when they need it most, and our role is to ensure that these services continue to thrive and grow for the benefit of patients.

Air Ambulances UK is unique. We bring together independent charities with a shared mission: to save lives. We act as their national voice, building partnerships, securing significant income, and advocating with government and other stakeholders to ensure the sector is recognised, supported and sustainable. Our role is one of leadership and service, championing the sector while ensuring the voice of every member is heard.

We are now looking for an experienced charity leader who understands the dynamics of membership organisations and the balance between leading and serving. You will be strategic and collaborative, able to influence at the highest levels while also building trusted relationships across a diverse community of stakeholders.

You will join a strong and committed team dedicated to delivering our mission. Low-ego and highly relational, you will place consultation and engagement at the heart of your approach, both internally and externally. Alongside this, you will bring an understanding of income generation, not necessarily as a fundraiser yourself, but as someone who knows how to secure national partnerships that deliver real value to our members and the patients they serve.

This role will suit a leader who listens as well as leads, who is motivated by making a difference for the sector rather than personal profile, and who can represent Air Ambulances UK with credibility and confidence. If you share our passion for saving lives and believe you can help us strengthen and champion this extraordinary sector, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Thewlis, Chair



ABOUT US

Air Ambulances UK (AAUK) is the national charity supporting the lifesaving work of the UK's air ambulance charities, enabling them to save even more lives every day.

Air ambulance crews bring the Emergency Department to patients who have suffered a life threatening or life changing trauma or medical emergency; providing advanced critical care to save lives.

On average an air ambulance can reach someone in urgent need within 15 minutes. Anyone, anywhere in the UK can become a patient at any time. Air ambulance charities are collectively dispatched to over 107 lifesaving missions each day across the UK; each mission is funded almost entirely by the generosity of local communities.

AAUK raises national funds to invest in the air ambulance community and acts as the voice on issues of national significance. Our vision is that together we will ensure the best possible chance of survival and patient outcome for everyone in need of lifesaving pre-hospital care. We do this by supporting and championing the invaluable work of the air ambulance community at a national level.

We offer a broad range of membership services and fundraising partnerships, including opportunities to become involved in our fundraising, communication, risk, governance, environmental sustainability, and development programs, good practice, and knowledge sharing forums and committees, government lobbying on key issues affecting the sector, raising vital funding, commercial investment, national PR activities, campaigns, and events.

Our Vision

Together we will ensure the best possible chance of survival and patient outcomes for everyone in need of lifesaving pre-hospital care.

Our Purpose

Champion and support the vital work of air ambulance charities, enabling them to save even more lives and improve patient outcomes every day across the UK.

Our Values

Service: We exist to support the work of the 21 air ambulances across the UK.

Trust: We foster integrity in all we do, in order to be a trusted charity.

Collaboration: We bring people, organisations and ideas together to maximise impact.

Innovation: We focus on innovation in order to continually improve the services we deliver and enable improvements in patient outcomes.

Excellence: We aspire for excellence in everything we do.

Our Goals

To Inspire National Engagement & Support

We will inspire commitment to the sector through raising funds, generating support and increasing national awareness of our cause.

To Advance Patient Care

We will support and champion research and good practice in the sector by the delivery of projects and sharing of learning to improve patient outcomes.

To Be a Collective Voice

We will become the trusted, national collective voice of the sector among central government, peer organisations, media and the public.

To Maximise Sector Impact & Income Generation

We will deliver funding which enables air ambulance charity development and become the leading central hub of mutual information exchange, support and advice for the community.

To Achieve Organisational Excellence

We will achieve the highest standards of governance and compliance, ensure financial sustainability and will nurture our team, as well as demonstrate our impact.

Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Air Ambulances UK is an equal opportunities employer, committed to equal opportunities policies. We welcome applications from all backgrounds so that our board mirrors the communities we serve.

We welcome applications from anyone regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexuality, religion, socio-economic background or other difference.

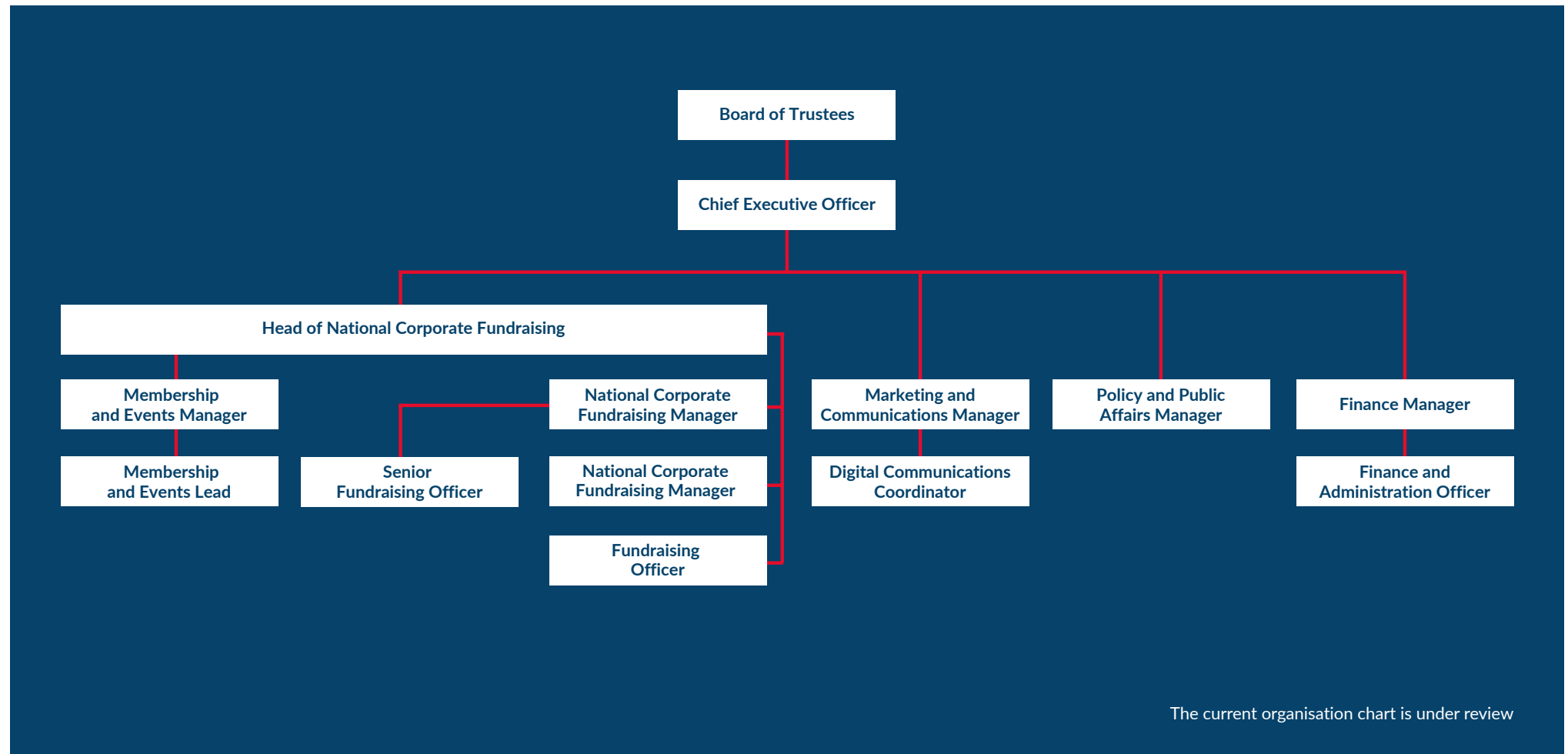
Air Ambulances UK is deeply committed to inclusive working practices, so during the application process we commit to:

- Paying for care and childcare whilst you are at interviews.
- Paying for your travel costs to the office and back for interviews held in person.
- Making any reasonable adjustments – for example ensuring we have a sign language interpreter organised in advance if you'd like them.
- Providing this document in a Word document format readily available to download.
- Offering a guaranteed first stage interview with Starfish Search for disabled candidates who meet the minimum requirements for the role.

If there is anything else you are concerned about or think we could provide, please let us know.



OUR TEAM



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title: Chief Executive Officer

Reports to: The Chair

This is an exciting opportunity to make strategic contributions to an organisation that is dedicated to supporting the 21 air ambulance charities in our network. AAUK is looking for a candidate:

- with significant charity CEO experience, preferably gained within membership organisations.
- who will lead the staff team in working with the Chair and trustees and with the independent regional air ambulance charities to make a positive difference to patients in the immediate and the long term.

The successful candidate will:

- have consultation, communication and engagement as their highest priority,
- understand the relationship between AAUK and the regional air ambulance charities,
- develop strategies to maintain and expand collaboration within the team and across the sector,
- be able to foster a mutually trusting relationship between AAUK and the independent air ambulance charities,
- demonstrate skill in listening, understanding, recommending and implementing decisions and strategies to AAUK's Chair and trustees,
- think strategically, whilst not losing focus on people, and help in the development of a long-term plan both for AAUK and for the sector as a whole.

Strategic Leadership and Governance

- Lead and support the Board on the formulation of strategic and business plans that will determine the overall direction of AAUK and allow it to meet the diverse and changing needs of the sector.
- Work with the Board and staff to ensure the development and maintenance of a strategic and operational risk framework.
- Maintain awareness of risks and changes in the external environment as they may affect the charity and its strategic direction.
- Enable AAUK's engagement with the wider Air Ambulance community through involvement, consultation, understanding and representing their mutual interests.

- Work with the Board to ensure that the charity is fully compliant with its governance, employment, legal and regulatory obligations.
- Understand and differentiate between opportunities to serve the autonomous regions and initiatives that will help AAUK to lead the sector when appropriate and necessary.

Financial, Operational and Performance

- Lead the staff in the delivery of the strategic plan.
- Oversee the AAUK's financial health and ensure that appropriate financial planning, controls and risk-monitoring are in place.
- Ensure that appropriate information is given the trustees to enable them to make well-informed decisions.
- Take personal responsibility and accountability for generating high-profile national corporate partnerships that generate significant and meaningful income that can be distributed to and benefit the air ambulance Charities.
- Lead, develop and manage a first-class staff team and be a positive role model for the organisation.
- Apply a leadership style and engagement that motivates volunteers, so they feel valued and supported
- Set clear measurable aims and objectives for all staff, support and develop them with the intention that AAUK will be viewed as an employer of choice
- Ensure that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is reflected in AAUK's work.

Stakeholders and External Communication

- Engage with, consult and thoroughly understand the Air Ambulance community and represent AAUK's interests in the sector.
- Ensure that the Board, the wider Air Ambulance community and other stakeholders are appropriately informed and, where appropriate, involved.
- Represent the Air Ambulance sector with a wide a range of audiences.
- Protect, enhance and promote the profile, brand identity and reputation both of AAUK and the wider sector.
- Represent AAUK and the wider sector at relevant events and make use of publicity and media opportunities.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Knowledge and experience

Essential

- Significant senior leadership experience in one or more UK charities or membership bodies.
- Experience of working in support of a wider sector and of understanding the balance between the interests of the sector and of the individual elements within it.
- Experience of developing strategy through consultation and collaboration.
- Experience of representing organisational interests at a national level.
- Experience of representing an organisation to senior stakeholders at a national level.
- Evidence of leading, motivating and developing a high performing team.
- Clear evidence of building national strategic partnerships which deliver financial outcomes.

Desirable

- Knowledge of governance and compliance in membership charities.
- Understanding of the air ambulance sector, or related fields.

Skills and abilities

- Outstanding leadership and team management skills with the ability to develop and implement vision and strategic plans.
- The ability to strategically position and represent the organisation on a national stage and at the same time be a hands-on member of the team internally.
- Demonstrable ability to assimilate core issues and concerns from complex information and to move at pace.
- Interpersonal and influencing skills that secure trust and confidence across diverse stakeholders including government.
- The ability to work with diverse member interests, taking satisfaction in their achievements and impact rather than seeking personal recognition.
- Sharp strategic planning abilities, with financial awareness and acumen.

Essential attributes

- Committed to AAUK's vision, purpose and values with a core focus on service to the sector.
- Self-disciplined: equally comfortable working alone from home and being able to motivate and inspire your team.
- Credible: confident, articulate and able to influence and to negotiate effectively with the leadership of the regional Air Ambulances, with large corporate organisations, major donors and levels of Government.
- Resilient: able to develop collaborative relationships with members and also manage expectations.
- Mobile: willing to travel regularly for meetings throughout the UK.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Salary

The salary for this role is £95,000-£100,000 per annum on a full-time permanent basis.

Location

Home-based but with regular travel to London and across the UK

Pension

Defined contribution workplace pension with employer's contribution of 6% and employee's contribution of 4%

Annual leave

25 days plus Bank Holidays pro rata

A day off for your birthday

Additional benefits

Group life assurance cover of 3x salary

Healthshield health cash plan.



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 erin.fuller@starfishsearch.com and we will be happy to arrange a call. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/aauk-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.

AAUK is an inclusive organisation that strives to take on board different perspectives. We encourage applications from communities that are underrepresented in the UK charity sector. We are committed to treating all candidates equally, regardless of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, political beliefs or membership or non-membership of a Trade Union. We look forward to receiving applications from across our communities. What is most important to us is that you will have a demonstrable enthusiasm for the work of the Air Ambulance community.

We would 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 17th October 2025

Preliminary interviews: w/c 3rd November 2025

Final Panel interviews: w/c 24th November 2025

