

# Director of Development

January 2026

BRITISH  
LIBRARY



# Welcome

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Director of Development at the British Library.

The British Library is one of the world's great cultural, intellectual and research institutions, with a collection of over 170 million items and a public purpose that sits at the heart of our national life. We exist to make knowledge accessible to everyone, and to support curiosity, creativity and discovery across the UK and around the world.

We are now entering a defining moment in the Library's history. As the UK's national library, we are reimagining how knowledge is shared, experienced and accessed in the 21st century, ensuring that our collections, expertise and spaces remain relevant, open and inspiring for generations to come. Central to this ambition is a major, once-in-a-generation transformation of our estate and a significant step-change in our fundraising activity.

As Director of Development, you will play a pivotal role in shaping and delivering this future. You will lead a major capital campaign to support the expansion of our St Pancras site, creating an important new public space for London and the UK as part of one of the most ambitious cultural redevelopment projects currently underway. This work is being delivered through an innovative partnership with Stanhope plc and Mitsui Fudosan (SMBL Developments Ltd) and sits alongside our longer-term ambition to establish a new British Library presence in the heart of Leeds.

Alongside these major projects, the Director of Development will be responsible for strengthening and diversifying philanthropic support across the organisation, ensuring that fundraising is positioned as a central driver of our mission and long-term sustainability. Working closely with me, the Executive Team, Trustees and senior stakeholders, you will help shape a cohesive, ambitious and credible fundraising strategy, while building a strong culture of philanthropy across the Library.

This is not business as usual. We are seeking an exceptional fundraising leader; someone with the strategic insight, credibility and personal impact to deliver at scale; someone confident operating at the most senior levels and able to build deep, trusted relationships with leading philanthropists, partners and influencers. Just as importantly, we are looking for a leader who shares our belief in the power of knowledge, culture and access, and who is motivated by the opportunity to help shape a national institution with global significance and public purpose.

This is a rare and exciting opportunity to make a lasting contribution to the British Library at a moment of profound change. If you are motivated by the opportunity to lead fundraising at one of the UK's most respected and globally significant cultural institutions, and by the prospect of enabling philanthropy to support knowledge, culture and access at scale, we would be delighted to hear from you.

With best wishes,

Dr Jeremy Silver,  
Interim Chief Executive

# About us

We are the national library of the UK. Our shelves hold over 170 million items – a living collection that gets bigger every day.

Although our roots extend back centuries, we collect everything written today, tomorrow, and decades into the future.

We have millions of books, but we have so much more. Our London and Yorkshire sites have everything from newspapers to sound recordings, patents, prints and drawings, maps, and manuscripts.

We are free to use and open to everyone.

We work with partners and other libraries to make sure that as many people as possible have the chance to use and explore our collection. From fostering an early love of learning with local schools, to livestreaming events for audiences joining us from across the UK, to helping researchers around the world find the information they need.

Our spaces are open for research and study, to find business support, as a place to meet friends, or to get inspired by visiting our galleries.



British Library – Director of Development

L  
I  
B  
R  
I  
T  
I  
S  
H  
L  
I  
B  
R  
I  
A  
R  
Y

# Our Mission

We make our intellectual heritage accessible to everyone, for research, inspiration and enjoyment.

## Custodianship

We build, curate and preserve the UK's national collection of published, written and digital content.

## Research

We support and stimulate research of all kinds.

## Business

We help businesses to innovate and grow.

## Culture

We engage everyone with memorable cultural experiences.

## Learning

We inspire young people and learners of all ages.

## International

We work with partners around the world to advance knowledge and mutual understanding.

## Our values

- We put users at the heart of everything we do
- We listen, innovate and adapt to a changing world
- We treat everyone with respect and compassion
- We embrace equality, fairness and diversity
- We act with openness and honesty
- We collaborate to do more than we could by ourselves

# Our Strategy, Knowledge Matters 2023 – 2030

The big themes that guide us between now and 2030 are:

## Access, engagement and inclusion

Ensuring that the services we offer, and the collection we hold, are truly 'for everyone'.

## Modernising our library services

Investing in skills, processes, systems and capabilities to deliver the quality of library services our users deserve.

## Deepening our partnerships

Collaborating with libraries and memory institutions of all kinds across the UK and around the world, to achieve more than we ever could by ourselves.

## Sustainability and resilience

Reducing our carbon impact and collaborating with partners to create a more sustainable future.

## New spaces, North and South

In Yorkshire and in London, delivering new, world-class physical spaces designed to welcome future generations of visitors and users.

Explore our full strategy here: [Knowledge Matters Strategy](#).

# Transforming the British Library

Since the British Library was founded, our world has changed dramatically. We believe that Knowledge Matters, and so we're reimagining what it means to be a 21st century national library: forward-looking and fit for the future, bringing knowledge to life to meet the challenges of the century ahead. And we need your help to make this a reality.

## The more we know, the more we make possible

The words and thoughts contained within our collection have long helped people all over the globe to uncover the answers they're looking for. But to keep sparking and sharing ideas we need to transform the Library, supporting new inspiration and innovation.

Our efforts to expand access online and through partner libraries across the UK will empower millions more people to realise new ideas and possibilities, helping both understanding and imaginations to grow. Together we can achieve so much more than any one of us could alone.

## An expanded national library in London

With innovation at our core, we'll be transforming our iconic building through a state-of-the-art, multi-purpose extension and new programmes that will inspire everyone to take the next step on their journey of discovery. [Find out more here](#).

## Revolutionising how we store and share our collection

We're building sustainable, cutting-edge storage facilities in Boston Spa that will allow our collection to keep growing long into the future. [Find out more here](#).

## Growing our presence in the North of England

We're deepening our roots in Yorkshire by creating more opportunities for over 10 million more people in the region, and providing a catalyst for regeneration. [Find out more here](#).



# Job description

## Job title

Director of Development

## Reports to

Chief Executive Officer

## Direct reports

Head of Trusts and Foundations; Head of Individuals and Major Gifts;  
Head of Corporate Relations; Head of Research and Development Operations;  
Development Business Support Officer

## Key responsibilities

You are a British Library leader, with a responsibility to embrace and lead change; be outcome-focussed; and put the BL's users, staff and partners at the very heart of everything you do, and every decision we take.

You are a member of the Senior Leadership Team and the Director of one of the BL's core functional areas. As a member of SLT, you and your peers will hold collective responsibility for the effective delivery of all the BL's core functions, maintaining an inclusive and collaborative environment, and deliver high-impact and continually improving services for staff, users and the wider BL network.

You will lead and advise the Executive Leadership Team, CEO, and the Board on our fundraising, with specific capital and revenue income generating targets to achieve; and work with the Director of Commercial on business development activities.



British Library – Director of Development

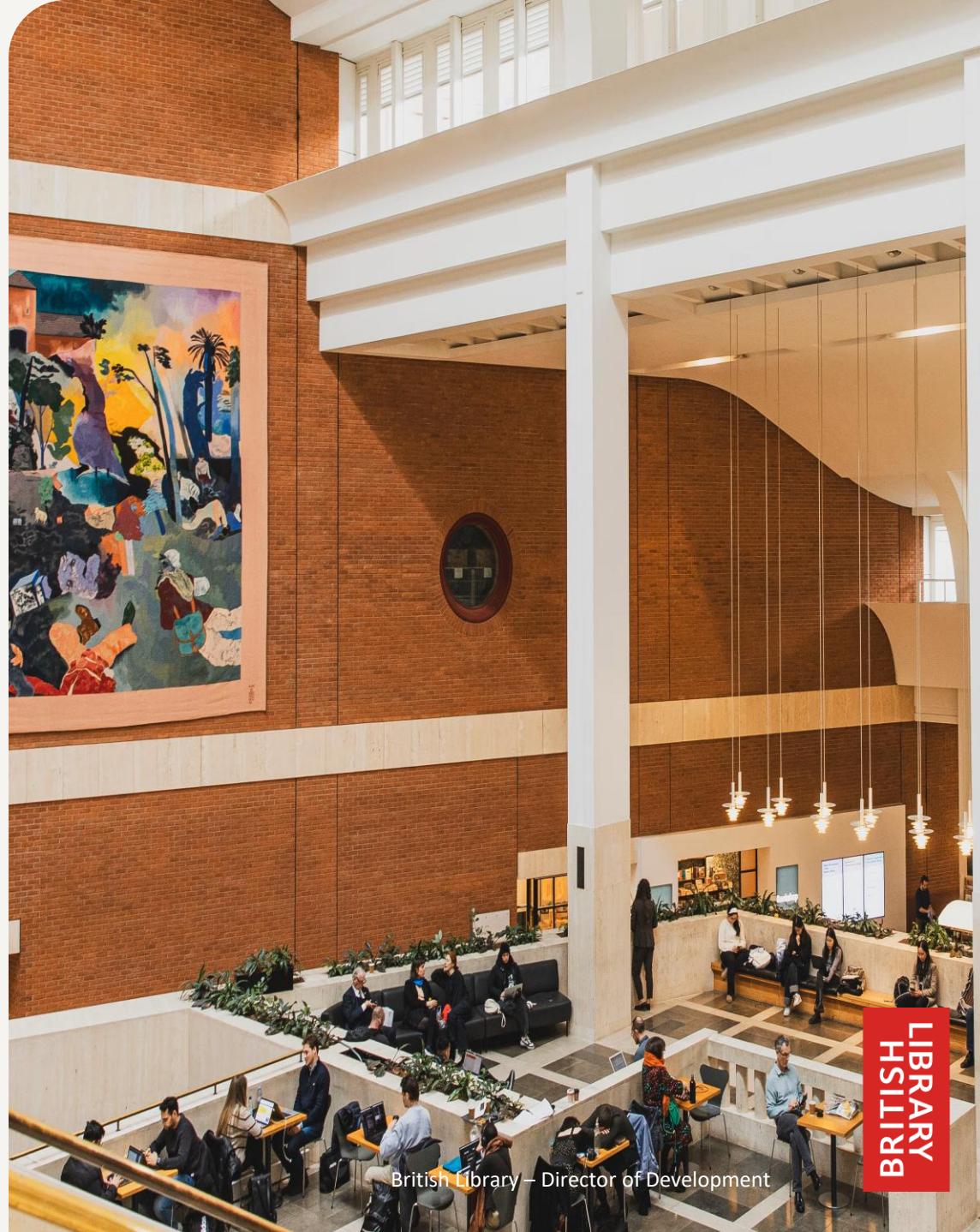
# Main responsibilities

## Strategic Leadership and high-level relationship management

- Lead on fundraising policies and practice to ensure all activities adhere to ethical and legal requirements.
- Develop and lead a clear and ambitious fundraising strategy aligned to the British Library's long-term vision and transformation agenda.
- Operate confidently at the most senior level, navigating complex internal and external relationships with judgement, diplomacy and authority.
- Build, maintain and leverage a strong personal network of senior philanthropists, influencers, cultural leaders and partners in the UK and internationally.
- Position the British Library compellingly within the wider philanthropic, cultural and funding landscape, identifying and securing strategic opportunities.
- Lead and manage the Development team including recruiting, inducting, coaching and mentoring team members as appropriate to deliver targets and objectives.

## Leading a Transformational Capital Campaign

- Lead and help shape a major capital campaign to support the British Library's St Pancras Transformed ambitions.
- Bring proven experience of leading campaigns of comparable scale and complexity, using this expertise to inform strategy, pacing and delivery.
- Personally cultivate, solicit and steward a portfolio of the Library's most significant donors and prospects, including transformational gifts.
- Work closely with the Chair, Trustees, CEO and senior leadership to plan and execute high-level donor approaches.
- Inspire confidence, momentum and shared ownership of the campaign across the organisation.



British Library – Director of Development

# Main responsibilities

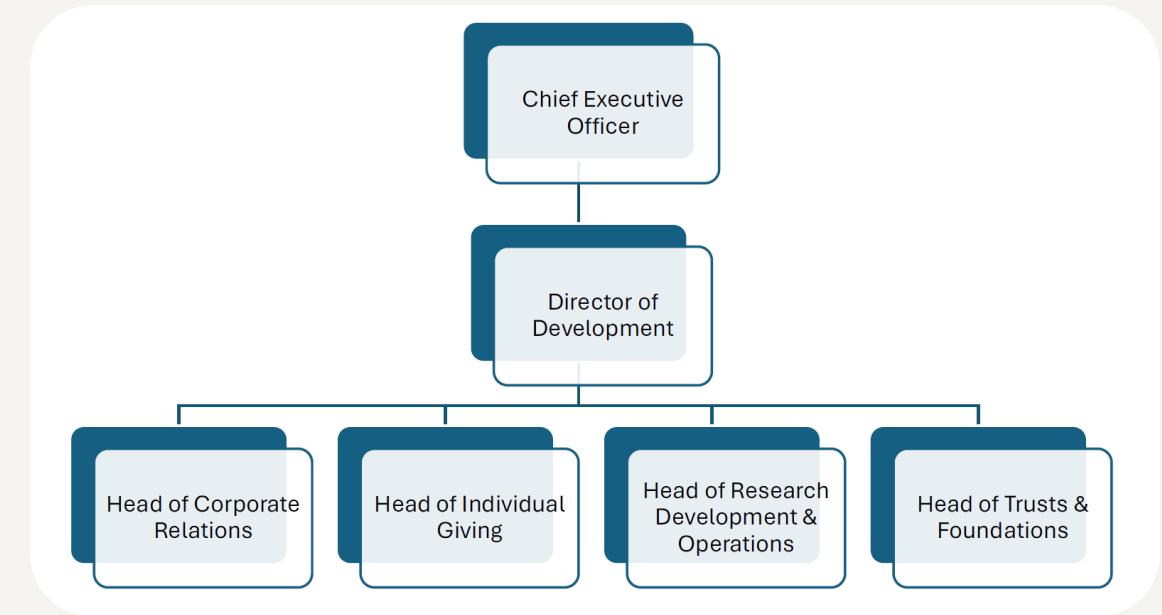
## Driving Fundraising Excellence

- Set and deliver ambitious income targets across individuals, trusts and foundations, corporates and other philanthropic sources.
- Apply strategic insight and market intelligence to anticipate trends, seize opportunity and mitigate risk.
- Encourage creativity, innovation and intelligent risk-taking in fundraising approaches.
- Act as a persuasive and credible external ambassador for the British Library.
- Establish and implement a coherent internal and external communications strategy to maximise awareness of the Library's fundraising activities

You will be at the heart of celebrating the Library's Vision and developing a strong 'One BL' brand and identity, which galvanises communities, attracts people to the library and makes us an influential voice with the cultural sector

## Resources Managed

- Development Office team
- Non-Salary Departmental budget (c.£150k p.a.)
- Capital project fundraising target and an annual fundraising target as agreed with CEO/Board each year.



# Our Expectations

All strategic leaders within the British Library, are expected to exhibit the requirements of our Strategic Leadership Behaviours & Competency Framework.

Director roles are expected to specifically excel in the following, which form part of the role profile and job description and therefore are considered formal performance measures (these competencies are currently under review and will change):

## Personal and professional impact

- aware of individual and team strengths / blind spots.
- uses insights to build effective and productive working relationships
- applies insights knowingly, willingly and intelligently for maximum impact

## Leading change

- effectively leads change and manages organisational transitions.
- manages uncertainty and ambiguity.
- remains calm, focused and communicates difficult messages positively and engagingly.
- shows adaptability, flexibility and ownership for delivering results

## Creativity and innovation

- Creative and innovative in developing services and products based on the needs of customers, users and different stakeholder groups

## Business and commercial acumen

- Expands the organisation's repertoire of business skills, especially fundraising ability and expertise.
- Is aware of the financial impact and implications of decisions and actions on the part of both self and team

## Managing and developing people

- Leads, manages, motivates and develops individuals and teams.
- Focuses on managing performance to create a high-performance working culture

## Sharing knowledge and learning

- Works collaboratively across the organisation to generate, capture and share knowledge, information and learning

## Influencing and persuading

- Influences, persuades and promotes the organisation's work internally
- and externally with a range of stakeholder groups
- Responds carefully and credibly to difficult questions, situations and scenarios

# Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

At the British Library, we believe that diversity of thought, experience and background enriches our work and strengthens our impact. We are committed to creating a culture where every individual is valued, respected and empowered to contribute fully.

Our leaders play a critical role in fostering this environment by:

- Championing equity and fair treatment in all decisions and practices
- Actively promoting diversity of voices, perspectives and lived experiences
- Building inclusive teams where differences are celebrated and collaboration thrives
- Ensuring that colleagues feel a genuine sense of belonging.

We expect all leaders to model these values in their behaviour, decisions and leadership approach, helping to ensure the British Library is a place where everyone can flourish.



British Library – Director of Development

BRITISH  
LIBRARY

# Person specification

## Knowledge and experience

- Educated to degree level in a relevant discipline, or able to demonstrate significant equivalent professional experience and expertise gained through substantial practice in influencing and shaping development strategies.
- A demonstrable track record of leading and delivering successful high-value fundraising or capital campaigns of significant scale and complexity.
- Evidence of operating strategically at senior level, shaping fundraising direction and influencing organisational decision-making.
- A well-developed professional network within philanthropy, culture, business or adjacent sectors, with the confidence to leverage it effectively.
- Proven ability to build and sustain high-level relationships with senior philanthropists, high-net-worth individuals, trusts, corporates and influential stakeholders.
- Experience of meeting significant targets and working on multi-million-pound projects in the UK or internationally, including capital projects.
- Strong understanding of the fundraising marketplace and current trends across individuals, trusts, corporations and major donors.
- A full understanding of the British Library's purposes and the ability to shape fundraising activities across the organisation in a way that ensures buy-in from key stakeholders (Board, staff, donors).
- Experience of navigating complex organisations and stakeholder environments with sensitivity, judgement and impact.

## Personal Qualities

- A strategic thinker with strong judgement and the ability to see the bigger picture.
- Politically astute, emotionally intelligent and adept at reading people and situations.
- Confident, credible and persuasive, with warmth and authenticity.
- Resilient and adaptable, comfortable leading through ambiguity and change.
- Energised by challenge and motivated by delivery at scale.



# Dimensions

## Managing People

You will be the head of the fundraising directorate, leading significant activity, overseeing other senior leaders and managing complex and wide-ranging change. You will be highly visible leader demonstrating a significant presence both physically on our sites, and virtually through regular communications across the British Library

## Accountability

You will be responsible for performance across major functional areas. Your advice and input will be critical to the decisions made by the ELT and other bodies, including into potentially sensitive issues. The activity you oversee is a critical functional area of the British Library's operations.

## Judgement

You will be key decision taker on matters relating to your divisional area and, with SLT, be a member of a leadership team with significant influence over major operations across the British Library. You will deal with some difficult and novel issues and required to use your individual judgement on matters that may impact our strategic priorities and goals

## Influencing

Your role will require influencing of colleagues and partners across the organisation. As a member of SLT, you will have a direct influence on a range of policy areas. You may need to manage external stakeholder relationships to ensure effective delivery of the functions within your division.

## Professional Competence

You are required to hold professional qualifications or evidence of professional development, commensurate with your experience, which you apply personally and daily on complex and sometimes non-routine work and in the management of the professional work of others

# Terms of appointment

## Salary

The salary for this role is up to £120,000 per annum on a full-time permanent basis.

## Location

St Pancras, London - office presence of at least 60% of the week.

## Pension

A **Civil Service pension defined-benefit scheme** with the Library contributing 28.97%.

## Annual leave

25 days holiday plus 2.5 privilege days & bank holidays.

## Additional benefits

Great people deserve great benefits. In addition to competitive salaries, interesting work, and the opportunity to develop in a friendly yet highly professional environment, we also offer an enviable array of incentives.

## Financial support

- Help with study costs
- Interest-free season ticket loan
- Access to a discount platform

## Work life balance

Generous holiday allowance, starting at 25 days (pro rata) plus bank holidays.

Depending on the role, we offer up to 20 days flexible working leave per annum (pro rata), part-time working, compressed hours and a range of start and finish times.

## Family-friendly benefits

- Shared parental/maternity leave and pay.
- Paternity leave.
- Paid adoption leave.
- Leave for caring responsibilities.

## Well-being

- An employer-paid medical cash benefits scheme.
- A comprehensive well-being programme, including yoga and Pilates.
- An employee assistance programme, including on-site counselling.
- Inclusive and social staff networks.

## Other benefits

- Free admission to national and regional museums.
- Access to collection items and Reading Rooms.
- British Library Shop discounts.
- Sports and social clubs.
- A subsidised staff restaurant.
- Shower cabins.
- Meditation/quiet rooms.

# How to apply

We hope you will consider making an application. To make an application, please go to [this page](#) and click on the apply now button with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than two 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 Person Specification. Please also outline your vision for the role and how you propose to approach it if appointed.

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 27<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Preliminary interviews: Weeks commencing 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Final Panel interviews: Weeks commencing 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> April 2026

