



Candidate Pack

**Executive Director of Fundraising
and Poppy Appeal**



Welcome Letter

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in joining the Royal British Legion as our next Executive Director of Fundraising and Poppy Appeal.

For more than a century, the Royal British Legion has stood alongside serving personnel, veterans and their families. That commitment remains constant, but the environment around us is changing. Public expectations are evolving, patterns of giving are shifting, and charities are operating in an increasingly competitive landscape for attention, trust and long-term support. We must adapt and grow if we are to continue delivering for the Armed Forces community for generations to come.

This role sits at the heart of that strategic challenge.

The Royal British Legion is one of the UK's most recognised and trusted charities, and the Poppy Appeal is one of the nation's most iconic charity campaigns. Together, they represent extraordinary foundations for growth – but also an opportunity to evolve.

We are looking for an exceptional fundraising and income leader: someone who understands how to grow and diversify income at scale, who combines strategic ambition with operational discipline, and who can build deeper, more enduring relationships with existing supporters and help us reach new audiences. Someone who can protect what makes the Poppy Appeal so powerful while helping shape what it needs to become for the future.

This is a significant executive leadership role with responsibility not only for delivering sustainable income growth, but for modernising how we engage supporters, strengthening our fundraising capability and ensuring our operating model remains resilient and fit for the future.

Alongside leading fundraising, this role carries stewardship of the Poppy Appeal as a national asset. The Appeal has enormous public recognition and emotional connection, but maintaining its relevance requires careful evolution. We want to continue building understanding of our impact, deepen supporter engagement and create a more insight-led, cause-driven approach that strengthens long-term connection to our purpose.

As a member of our Executive Board, you will help shape how the Royal British Legion delivers its strategy over the long term - balancing immediate performance with investment in capability, transformation and sustainable growth. You will work across the organisation to ensure fundraising, campaigning, supporter engagement and service delivery are aligned behind a clear ambition for the future.

With our Strategy to 2035 centred around our vision to bring society together to recognise, remember and support the Armed Forces community, we have a strong platform and a clear direction.

This role offers the opportunity to lead one of the UK's most important fundraising portfolios and play a defining role in ensuring the Royal British Legion remains relevant, resilient and capable of supporting the Armed Forces community for generations to come.

If you are motivated by the opportunity to grow income at scale, steward one of the country's most powerful charitable campaigns, and help shape the future sustainability of a truly iconic organisation, I very much hope you will apply.

Mark Atkinson
Director General



The Royal British Legion's Story

We employ c 2,000 people across the country campaigning on behalf of the Armed Forces community, delivering support services to them, leading Remembrance on behalf of the nation, raising funds to support our work and developing and running the organisation and our network of membership branches.

The Royal British Legion is at the heart of a national network that supports our Armed Forces community. We're here through thick and thin – ensuring their unique contribution is never forgotten. We've been here since 1921 and we'll be here as long as they need us.

We are the country's largest Armed Forces charity, with over 180,000 members, 70,000 volunteers and a network of partners and charities; helping us give support wherever and whenever it's needed.

We provide lifelong support to serving and ex-serving personnel and their families. Our support starts after one day of service and continues through life, long after service is over. From providing [expert advice and guidance](#), to support for [physical and mental wellbeing](#) through to transitioning to civilian life – we can be by their side every step of the way. And it's not just members of the Armed Forces but their families too.

If there is ever a reason we can't help, our vast network will mean that we know someone who can. Read more [Stories](#) of the support we've given beneficiaries. RBL works with politicians and officials at all levels to represent the interests of the Armed Forces community. Through our [research and campaigning](#), we challenge myths about serving and ex-serving personnel.

Every year we lead the nation in commemorating and honouring those who have served and sacrificed. We remember those who lost their lives on active service in all conflicts; from the beginning of the First World War right up to the present day, as well as all those who have served and their families.

Wearing a poppy is a way of showing appreciation for the service and sacrifice of our Armed Forces, veterans and their families, both past and present. Read ["The Story of the Poppy"](#).



“My service would not have been the same without them”

Liz served in the RAF for 11 years before her diagnosis of fibromyalgia made it difficult for her to continue. She decided she didn't want to give up, and has used sport to help overcome physical and mental health challenges.

Read [Liz's story](#).



Our Strategy to 2035

We have recently launched Our Strategy to 2035. The strategy was created around three core pillars – **Connect, Remember, and Support.**

Connect

Much of our work already revolves around the connections made across our communities and wider society. We will better harness the power of those connections to support our communities in the most effective way possible and promote our important role in bringing people together. These connections create the conditions for our remember and support strategic outcomes.

Strengthening Camaraderie: We will understand how the Armed Forces community seeks to connect and collaborate with one another, and we will support and strengthen these connections.

Building Supportive Communities: We will build supportive communities that have a positive impact for the wider Armed Forces community, including in places and with those who have found it hard to connect

Remember

While we have long established traditions when it comes to Remembrance, we are continuing to evolve our Remembrance activities so that we can bring society together in recognising the contribution of the Armed Forces community. It's important to us that people can choose how they remember.

Celebrating our Story: We will place the story of the poppy and the history of Royal British Legion at the heart of our content, events, and sites to ensure our Remembrance work is well understood and valued by society.

Evolving Remembrance: We will build and adapt our Remembrance activities with a greater focus on the specific needs of the Armed Forces community.

Widening Participation: We will increase the ways of participating in modern Remembrance to make it easier and more accessible to show respect and support.

Support

We know that Service life is changing, as it has done since we were established. We need to adapt our service provision so that we can continue to support people's needs.

Responding to Changing Needs: We will continue to deliver, improve, and evolve our services and partnerships.

Our Strategy to 2035

Introducing Earlier Interventions: We will help more people at an earlier stage by introducing early intervention or preventative services and support.

Modernising our Services: We will transform and modernise our service delivery and accessibility by understanding and embracing technology and digital.

Active Campaigning: We will achieve tangible, positive change for the Armed Forces community by enabling their voices to be heard, challenging disadvantage, and inspiring better provision

Our full Strategy to 2035 can be downloaded [here](#).



Our Values

In September 2025, we introduced our new organisational values, which now sit at the heart of everything we do as individuals and as an organisation. As part of our recruitment process, we use values-based competency assessments to ensure that the people who join us share and demonstrate these principles in action.



Stand Together

We stand with an ever-evolving Armed Forces community, sharing a life-long commitment to support and comradeship. We share knowledge and build connections. Together with a national network of charities and partners, we ensure life during and after service is filled with purpose and community.



Be Respectful

We stand with the Armed Forces community, valuing and respecting all experiences with empathy. We put people first, treating everyone with fairness and kindness, acting with integrity.



Take Pride

We exist to make a positive difference to the Armed Forces community, remembering and honouring service and offering support. We are thoughtful and focus our passion in the right way, taking ownership to ensure every action counts.



Embrace Change

We look ahead to better understand the needs of those we serve, leading with confidence, expertise, and relevance. Guided by evidence and committed to learning, we are responsive and adaptable, empowered to ensure what we do is meaningful and impactful.

Job Description

Job title: Executive Director – Fundraising and Poppy Appeal

Reports to: Director General

Direct reports: Director of Fundraising, Director of Poppy Appeal

Role Purpose:

Lead the development and delivery of RBL's fundraising and income strategy, ensuring sustainable growth, increased supporter engagement and a modern, resilient income model.

The role brings together leadership of fundraising with stewardship of the Poppy Appeal as one of the UK's most recognised national campaigns. It sets the direction for how RBL grows income, strengthens connection to its cause and evolves its approach to remain relevant in a changing fundraising environment.

As a member of the Executive Board, the post holder shapes how RBL funds its strategy over the long term, balancing immediate income delivery with transformation of capability, supporter engagement and operational model.

Accountabilities:

Strategic leadership of income

- Set the long-term fundraising strategy for RBL, aligned to organisational priorities and financial requirements.
- Define the ambition for income growth, the mix of fundraising streams and the shift towards more sustainable, relationship-based supporter models.
- Ensure income strategy is fully integrated with organisational planning, with clear links to service demand, investment decisions and overall financial sustainability.

Leadership of the Poppy Appeal as a national asset

- Hold executive accountability for the Poppy Appeal, ensuring continued strong performance while evolving its model, reach and relevance.
- Lead the transition from a predominantly transactional and product-led approach towards a more cause-led, insight-driven campaign that strengthens understanding of RBL's impact.
- Ensure the Appeal remains operationally robust at scale, while becoming more flexible, modern and supporter-focused.

Income growth and diversification

- Deliver sustained and measurable income growth across fundraising activity, with clear ownership of financial plans and performance.
- Build a more diversified income base that responds to changing demographics, supporter expectations and sector trends.
- Ensure consistent focus on return on investment, prioritisation and disciplined execution.

Job Description

Supporter strategy and engagement

- Lead the development of a coherent supporter strategy across fundraising and the Poppy Appeal.
- Strengthen the use of data, insight and segmentation to improve targeting, engagement and supporter lifetime value.
- Move the organisation towards deeper, longer-term relationships with supporters rather than one-off transactions.

Transformation of fundraising and Poppy Appeal capability

- Lead the Fundraising and Poppy Appeal change programmes, ensuring modern systems, processes and capabilities are delivered.
- Oversee improvements in financial reporting, data capability and performance management.
- Drive operational improvements including digital fundraising, CRM integration, campaign delivery and supply chain resilience.

Poppy Appeal operational and volunteer model

- Ensure the Poppy Appeal delivery model remains viable, scalable and effective.
- Work in partnership with Volunteer Experience, oversee the development of a more structured and sustainable volunteer approach, recognising the scale and criticality of the volunteer base to delivery.
- Working in partnership with Volunteer Experience, drive improvements in supporter and volunteer experience as part of modernising the Appeal.

Working with Marketing, Communications and Remembrance

- Partner at executive level with the Executive Director for Marketing, Communications and Remembrance to ensure alignment between fundraising activity, national campaigns and public messaging.
- Ensure fundraising and the Poppy Appeal are fully supported by brand, content and campaign strategy, while maintaining clear accountability for income delivery.

Governance, risk and assurance

- Own income-related risk, including delivery risk, reputational exposure and external environmental factors affecting fundraising.
- Provide clear and consistent assurance to the Executive Board and Trustees on performance, risk and trajectory.
- Ensure all fundraising activity meets regulatory and ethical standards.

Executive contribution

- Contribute fully as a member of the Executive Board, shaping overall strategy, prioritisation and organisational performance.
- Bring an external, market-aware perspective on fundraising, ensuring RBL is positioned competitively given its scale and complexity.
- Model a leadership approach that combines ambition with delivery discipline, ensuring income growth is both credible and sustainable.

Person specification

Knowledge and experience

- Significant executive-level leadership experience in brand and/or marketing within a large, complex, consumer-facing organisation.
- Proven track record of leading brand transformation – balancing heritage with modernisation and successfully reaching new and more diverse audiences.
- Experience of developing and delivering high-impact, multi-channel marketing strategies with measurable outcomes, including significant media investment.
- Strong understanding of audience insight, segmentation and behaviour, and its application to strategy and campaign development.
- Experience of working with major external partners, agencies and stakeholders in high-profile environments.
- Experience of operating with national profile and credibility, including spokesperson-level engagement with high-scrutiny stakeholders and partners.
- Proven experience of leading reputation, issues and crisis communications, making sound decisions under pressure and protecting organisational trust.
- An appreciation of the role of remembrance in UK public life, and the ability to lead its evolution with sensitivity and ambition.

Skills and abilities

- Outstanding strategic thinking and creative judgement, with the ability to translate vision into compelling and effective execution.
- Strong commercial and analytical capability, with a focus on impact, return on investment and performance.
- Exceptional stakeholder management and influencing skills, with the ability to operate credibly at Executive Board and Trustee level and with national partners, media and senior public stakeholders.
- Ability to lead through complexity, ambiguity and change, bringing clarity, coherence and momentum.
- Confidence and presence to lead externally in moments of controversy or public scrutiny, acting as a calm, authoritative organisational figurehead.

Styles and behaviours

- Creative, curious and ambitious, willing to challenge convention and bring fresh thinking to a heritage organisation.
- Clear commitment to values led, inclusive leadership and to RBL's purpose.
- Credible, confident leadership style with the ability to influence at Executive Board and Trustee level, including advising, challenging and securing decisions in high-stakes settings.

Terms of Appointment

Salary

- The salary for this role is c.£125,000 per annum on a full-time permanent basis.

Location

- UK Based, with regular attendance at Haig House, London and other RBL facilities

Pension

- Up to 14% employer contribution based on 7% employee contribution

Annual Leave

- 28 day's paid holiday per year (plus bank holidays), increasing to 29 days after 2 years and 30 days after 5 years. Plus the ability to buy up to 1 working week of additional leave

Additional Benefits

- Death-in-service Life Assurance, with a benefit of 3x annual salary
- Employee Assistance Programme and Wellbeing Support
- Season Ticket and Rental Deposit Loan Schemes / Cycle to Work Scheme
- Reward Hub online benefits platform with extensive offers and discounts



How to Apply

How to apply

We hope you will consider making an application. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/executive-director-of-fundraising-and-poppy-appeal/> 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. Please kindly indicate in your Supporting Statement if you are able to make the recruitment dates as indicated below.

Closing date:

Monday 3rd August 2026

Initial engagement meetings with RBL:

w/c 17th August 2026 (via MS Teams)

Final Panel interviews:

Friday 28th August 2026 (in person, London)

