

Job description

**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

● Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Our Society

The Royal Geographical Society is the learned society for geography and professional body for geographers as well as being a registered charity with a global reach and membership of around 15,000.

The Society was founded in 1830 to advance geographical science, and this remains our core purpose. We achieve this through supporting geographical research, education, professional practice, and fieldwork and expeditions, as well as by advocating on behalf of the discipline and promoting geography to public audiences.

We support 32 specialist research and professional practice groups, 10 regional branches in the UK and two overseas, and a programme of activities that engages audiences far beyond our membership. Over 200 events are organised each year including a major four-day academic conference, a programme of lectures featuring renowned speakers, professional development sessions, and topical discussions. Our scholarly journals disseminate cutting edge research findings, while our popular magazine explores some of the biggest issues of the day in an accessible way.

The Society is based in an exceptional listed building in our own grounds in Kensington, which houses our historical Collections of maps, artefacts, photographs, and publications. We employ approximately 60 staff and benefit from the commitment and contribution of many volunteers.

Applicants are strongly recommended to familiarise themselves with the current work of the Society set out on our website: www.rgs.org

Purpose of post

As the Society approaches its 200th anniversary in 2030, with ambitious associated goals, we are looking to strengthen our executive team with an exceptional, entrepreneurial leader with proven ability to balance strategic and operational impact.

To mark our bicentenary, we want our building, which is at the heart of London's Exhibition Road Cultural Quarter, to be a gathering point of global significance and influence for people intent on making a positive difference to the world. In achieving this, we will be able to support many more people, from leading experts to the simply curious, as they develop their skills, share their knowledge, and travel with purpose.

This new role is a vital appointment during a critical period of opportunity and challenge for the Society.

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We foresee the role to be a blend of three principal elements:

- (i) **Deputising for the CEO** - Partnering with the CEO, in a cross departmental brief, acting as his deputy, taking a lead role in the shaping, implementation and reporting of the Society's wider strategy, and accepting such delegated responsibilities as the CEO may request. The focus will be on interdisciplinary activities and initiatives, e.g. those outlined below in points (ii) and (iii); deputising in specialist areas will remain the responsibility of the appropriate Senior Management Team (SMT) member.
- (ii) **Optimising revenue** - Leading the development of the Society's fundraising and commercial capabilities, coordinating operations across current and potential income streams to ensure an optimised, diverse and sustainable body of revenue.
- (iii) **Strategic programme delivery** - Leading the delivery of complex programmes that ensure the Society's future potential is fully realised, initially focussing on: The House Project, to reimagine how our building can most effectively work for all users; the Society's programme of bicentenary activities; the Society's sustainability performance; and developing effective strategic impact reporting.

Salary and application details

This is a permanent post. We welcome requests for flexible working arrangements, including hybrid and part time working. This is looked at on a case-by-case basis, balancing the Society's needs with the successful candidate's other commitments, to support a good work-life balance. The salary range for this post is c. £100,000+ (FTE) per annum, depending on experience and qualifications. The post is based in Kensington, London.

There are a range of benefits at the Society which include the following:

- 35-hour working week with core working hours between 10.00am and 4.00pm.
- 25 days annual leave per annum plus public bank holidays.
- Society closure between Christmas and New Year, in addition to the basic annual leave allowance.
- Generous pension scheme - 3% employee, 7.5% employer.
- Group Life Assurance at four-times basic annual salary.
- Corporate eye care vouchers.
- Cycle to work scheme.
- 24-hour Employee Assistance helpline with available counselling support.

The Society aims to be an equal opportunities employer.

Please apply via the vacancies page on our website: [Current vacancies - RGS](#), where you can find further details including our Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form.

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Applications should be sent by email to director@rgs.org with a copy of your CV, and a covering letter explaining your suitability for the post and how you fulfil the selection criteria, along with the monitoring form.

Applications must be received by 5.30pm, 14 February 2025.

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Job description for the post of Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Post: Deputy CEO
Department: Office of The Director / Commercial and Fundraising
Responsible to: The CEO (also styled 'The Director' of the Society, Professor Joe Smith)
Reports: Includes: Development and Fundraising Executive, Venue Hire Manager, Licensing and Commercial Partnerships Manager plus the opportunity to make a further fundraising appointment (budgeted/in plan)

Location: Hybrid (remote/South Kensington, London)
Status: Permanent (flexible and part-time working options would be considered)
Salary: £100K+ (FTE) depending on experience and qualifications

Key internal contacts

- Senior Management Team and members of the Office of the CEO.
- President, CEO, and relevant Trustees and sub-committees (notably the Enterprise Board).
- Commercial and Fundraising teams (to include new appointment/s).
- All departments in support of major expansion of our fundraising and delivery of the bicentenary programme.

Key external contacts

- Existing and prospective clients across the Society's commercial activities.
- Major individual, organisational and corporate donors and supporters.
- Key influencers and decision makers within corporate partners, trusts, foundations, governmental, and other grant making organisations.
- Strategic partners, including other organisations related to geography, environmental matters, expeditions and the outdoors.

Key responsibilities and deliverables

Deputy to the CEO

- Deputise for the CEO in a range of leadership, management, publicity, and stakeholder relationship functions, both to internal and external audiences.
- Partner with the CEO in ensuring that the mission, purpose, and priorities of the organization are fit for the times.
- Support the CEO, working as part of and with the Senior Leadership Team, to operationalise and deliver against the Society's strategic objectives.
- Catalyse a performance culture across the Society that focusses on prioritising activities which maximise positive impact.

Optimising revenue

- Represent the Society as the senior figure responsible for commercial activities and revenue generation across all its operations.
- Be accountable for the effective management of the Society's commercial businesses and fundraising activities to achieve a consistent, sustainable contribution to the Society's income, in line with annual budget.



- Lead the strategic development and enhancement of the Society's commercial enterprise income (including from venue hire, the Collections, licensing, general publishing, rights and brand management, membership, and other commercial returns from the Society's building).
- Spot synergies and identify new and novel revenue streams.
- Drive a substantial expansion of our fundraising effort, leading the function at the Society, working with senior professionals to shape our one year, five year and longer-term fundraising strategies.
- Direct the stewardship of the Society's corporate relationships (including long-standing Corporate Benefactor relationships with the Ordnance Survey, Jaguar Land Rover, ESRI UK, Trailfinders and Rolex UK).
- Manage commercial relationships which support the Society's charitable aims, including with Stanfords, *Geographical* magazine, and the Society's caterers, Lodge Catering.
- Drive prospecting for new partners and explore potentially new forms of corporate relationship.
- Lead a strategic review, partnering with others across the Society, to ensure our membership activities, pricing, and associated benefits, grow and diversify membership in line with the Society's strategic goals.
- Create and maintain a commercial business plan, preparing strategic business papers, reviews and projections, in partnership with the Director of Finance and Services.
- Across all of our commercial activities, energise and equip our teams to adopt a structured and proactive approach to building new business pipelines, improving control and transparency of future revenue streams.
- Support the generation of appropriately regular, accurate and reliable sales and income data for reporting to the Society's Enterprise Board and Finance Committee.
- Hold accountability for the effective management of the Society's commercial businesses to achieve a consistent, sustainable contribution to the Society's income, in line with annual budget.
- Lead, manage and develop the Commercial and Fundraising teams, encouraging a commercially driven and entrepreneurial culture which allows us to set ambitious revenue targets and achieve them.
- Actively manage reputational and other risks related to the commercial business.

Strategic programme delivery

- Inform and shape preparations for the Society's bicentenary activities; collaboratively developing, owning and programme managing a structured plan for fundraising and delivery.
- Lead business planning, fundraising, and commercially linked tendering for the House Project, to radically improve our exceptional building, by improving access and enhancing

the sustainability performance of the site while improving revenues. (The Society has a strategic plan for its building, commissioned from the renowned architectural practice Caruso St John).

- Develop, embed and maintain an approach to measuring the impact of the Society as a whole. Establish an evaluation approach that enables the achievement of the strategy and business plan to be assessed appropriately.
- Develop, manage and deliver integrated, cross-Society business planning processes that will support delivery of the Society's strategy. Establish, communicate and manage the process by which ideas and recommendations for projects are evaluated against the strategy, and mobilised if supported.

Person specification

We recognise that this role has a broad brief and expect it to attract candidates from varied backgrounds. You will already be a proven C-level/director level or equivalent leader, likely having gained experience within: membership organisations, learned societies, cultural or heritage organisations, hospitality or entertainment venues, higher education institutions, or other relevant private or public sector bodies.

Qualifications and experience

The successful applicant will show evidence or bring experience of:

- Being a highly influential and effective part of senior leadership teams, having worked collaboratively to shape and deliver organisation-wide strategic development plans.
- Managing and delivering complex change programmes, incorporating multiple project streams requiring interdisciplinary involvement.
- Demonstrating their profound impact on the enterprise-wide commercialisation of one or more organisations at which they have worked.
- Major capital generation and/or grant funding.
- Designing effective commercial and fundraising strategies and propositions.
- Working in a commercial environment where demanding sales targets have been set and achieved.
- Developing the systems and processes required to effectively manage all key departmental activities (relationships, pipeline, income, budgetary performance etc.).
- Developing and monitoring workplans that are strategically informed and managing of income and expenditure budgets.
- Developing and leading a high-performing commercial team, creating a culture of high standards and collaboration.
- Building a fundraising strategy (potentially with senior expert input) including e.g. legacy, core funding (e.g. grants; engagement and education initiatives) and/or special projects.
- Understanding the charity fundraising market, methodologies and approaches to building and increasing income, including familiarity with the associated regulations.
- Either through their own experience or having partnered with specialist fundraisers, understanding how to optimise pitch presentations, documents and funding proposals to secure the very best outcomes.



Knowledge, skills and personal attributes

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- High intellect, creativity, and strategic acumen.
- A talent for generating and maintaining momentum to 'get things done'.
- Gravitas, calmness, and self-awareness.
- Excellent relationship building and networking skills.
- An eye for detail within a balanced view of the bigger picture.
- Equally at ease with finessing strategy and implementing initiatives.
- Comfortable in supporting others outside their portfolio, getting involved in practical delivery, as well as task-setting when required.
- Highly effective change management skills, with sound emotional intelligence and organisational planning skills.
- Exceptional communication and negotiation skills with the ability to communicate compellingly and persuasively with a range of audiences.
- Up-to-date knowledge of commercial and/or fundraising trends and best practice.
- A strategic and analytical approach to working with data and market trends in pursuit of enhanced profitability.
- Proven ability in relation to selling and closing deals.
- Ability to work constructively as part of a team along with a desire to learn from colleagues and non-executive advisors.
- Persistence, determination and a solution/results-oriented approach.
- High standards of written and verbal communication and ICT skills.
- Commitment to the values reflected in the Society's equality, diversity and inclusion, and sustainability objectives, and an enthusiasm to champion them.
- Passion for the mission and purpose of the Society's varied work.