Combined Cadet Force Association

Army Cadet Charitable Trust UK

Chief Executive Application Pack

Full Time

October 2026



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Welcome from the Chairs of Trustees



Nigel Maddox CBE
Chair

We are delighted you're considering joining us to lead our two nationally respected charities at a pivotal moment in their evolution and at a time when the Government is launching its Cadet Action Plan (CAP) to grow the cadet forces on a sustainable footing. Welcome!

Before we describe our ideal candidate, what is in it for you? We think it is the immense and fulfilling satisfaction of leading two great national charities that are, with your team and the trustees:

- Having a direct impact by helping generations of young people across the UK to go out into adulthood equipped with key skills for life.
- Supporting and developing the amazing band of adult volunteers who deliver that life changing training.
- Providing substantial enabling support to the MOD and single services, without which they could not run their cadet forces.
- Assisting the Government to shape and implement the future of youth development through the UK's cadet forces.



Duncan Capps CBE
Chair

You will work closely with our two independent boards of trustees. Our charities are secure, stable and ambitious. We have a clear vision of the future, strong working relationships with our supported partners in the MOD and single services, and an engaged and enthusiastic workforce. The charities do not intend a radical change of direction.

Our ambition is to be seen as the innovation partner for the cadet forces we support. In support of this ambition, in the past ten years our two charities have developed and evolved significantly under the leadership of Murdo Urquhart, the current Chief Executive. The imminent launch of the Government's CAP will drive modernisation across all of the cadet forces; our team are working hard to ensure we are ready to provide the charitable support that will be needed to make it a reality.

So, who is our ideal candidate? Obviously, somebody who is highly motivated by the points above. We are looking for a calm, credible leader who, with our capable Senior Leadership Team, will continue to shepherd our continuously evolving charities through the coming years.

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It is therefore essential that you have a deep understanding of the MOD and armed forces, will be comfortable working with senior officers at the OF6 and OF7 levels and, in turn, you will have credibility with them; they are key partners and funders of the charities. Your military background and experience of working with military leaders will be from any of the armed forces; it would be a bonus if you also have a good understanding of the MOD sponsored cadet forces. The key attributes we seek are described towards the end of this pack, in the job description.



Your strong interpersonal skills will enable you to lead our well-motivated team who are predominantly non-military (cultural fit is therefore really important to us), but also to engage with the adult volunteer community and also to be an enthusiastic advocate for the charities and the cadet forces, particularly with external audiences.

You will believe in the good the cadet forces do in developing young people. We believe deeply that the pan-UK organisations we support (known as the ACF, VCC[1] and CCF[2]) are tremendous organisations that nurture young people and help them to develop into well rounded adults and good citizens who are engaged in the world around them.

We are very proud of our team. With around 120 people working all over the UK in roles ranging from digital services to adventurous training, HR to fundraising, there is always something interesting happening. We are proud of how long people choose to stay with us and are rigorous about recruiting the right people to strengthen our team and improve our ability to deliver to beneficiaries.

Your contribution to our charities' work will be in your leadership and planning skills, formulating strategic direction and ensuring good governance. Our diverse team are focussed on their various tasks, from bringing in the funds we need to do our work, to delivering charitable programmes. Working alongside your colleagues in the Senior Leadership Team, Richard Walton (Deputy Chief Executive overseeing Operations & HR), Faye Meakin (Director of Development) and Matt Brookes (Director of Finance), you will help us to set the charities up to deliver developmental, positive change in the lives of our beneficiaries.

We look forward to discussing how your talent and enthusiasm will enhance our charities yet further.

[1] Army Cadet Force and Volunteer Cadet Corps, which are community-based organisations
[2] Combined Cadet Force, an organisation of cadets in schools

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About our Charities

Collectively, the two charities directly support three of the MOD's cadet forces: the Army Cadet Force, Combined Cadet Force and Volunteer Cadet Corps. ACCT UK supports the Army Cadets, a community-based organisation. CCFA has a relationship with all of the national cadet HQs, focussing predominately on cadets in schools, but also provides niche support to the VCC.

Our two charities are dedicated to improving the life chances of young people through their respective cadet forces. Together we want to ensure that every young person has the opportunity to learn new skills, build confidence and be inspired through their cadet experience. We do this by helping young people to access cadet activities, which we aspire to achieve through fundraising, grant-making, developing new resources and direct organisation-level support. We work to develop the youth leadership and training abilities of adult volunteers who inspire the cadets to develop.



Our Team

You will enjoy being part of our team who work very happily together. We actively promote a culture of continuous improvement and encourage you to explore ideas that improve all aspects of the charities' work in pursuit of their charitable aims.

To understand the team you would be joining, you need to understand our two key relationships: (1) with our beneficiaries who we support and (2) with our principal partners with whom we work very closely.

(1) Our beneficiaries: The ACF, CCF and VCC are national youth movements run by volunteers who wear uniforms. Neither the cadets nor the volunteers are part of or members of the armed forces. The people in each are beneficiaries of our charities.

(2) Our principal partners. The Ministry of Defence, the Department for Education, the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, the Army and the Royal Air Force. They run the activities of their respective cadet forces. They provide us with funding for charitable activity.

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ACCT UK and CCFA are independent charities. Our relationship with our principal partners is primarily a funder-relationship (they fund us for charitable activity and we govern how we deliver that activity and report back to the funder on the good stewardship of their funds). In this respect we are seen by the chain of command as key trusted partners. These are old and well-established relationships. This is why we are looking for someone with experience of working with senior military leaders.

So, what do we do? The charities are committed to supporting the ideals and activities of the cadet forces. In practical terms, this involves these main strands of activity:

- Providing charitable grants to enable young people, regardless of their backgrounds, to participate in life changing development activities.
- Providing support services for volunteers and young people ranging from free access to a Legal Advice helpline, Personal Accident Insurance and free access to welfare support, through to obtaining non-state national recognition for great civic deeds done by young people and volunteers.
- Supporting the development of policy and provision of planning support for cadet force activity.
- Direct support to improve the stability of CCF Contingents across the UK.
- Delivering digital services to the cadet forces.
- Delivering media and communications for the cadet forces.

To achieve all of this, we have people spread all over the UK, but from your perspective, the central services for both charities are delivered from our head office at Holderness House in London. This is where we would expect you to spend a good proportion of your time. We would also expect you to come into London for each charity's key trustee committee meetings and board meetings, most of which take place quarterly and during the working day in the working week, but with some shorter meetings taking place in evenings, plus one board meeting takes place on a Saturday in November.

Why this role matters now

The charities are currently operating during the fastest paced changes to the cadet forces in a generation. The **Cadet Action Plan** seeks to grow the cadet forces by 30% by 2035. Through expanded cadet opportunities, the Government wants to improve life outcomes, strengthen social mobility and build national resilience within our nation's youth. We want to support the Government in achieving that ambition,



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which so fully aligns with the objectives of both charities.

Driving digital transformation is critical to the future of the cadet forces. We have established a unique in-house digital capability (known as Cadet Digital Services), bringing together specialist knowledge of the cadet forces with software development, cyber security, product management and operational delivery, enabling us to design, build and operate national digital services across traditional single-Service boundaries. Having already demonstrated this capability through four major projects in the last ten years, the charities have the agility and understanding of the volunteer environment to deliver the digital transformation underpinning the CAP, at a pace and scale that the MOD and individual Services would struggle to achieve independently.



Both boards of trustees are committed to **fundraising and strengthening their charities' profiles**. To give more out in grants, the charities need to raise more funds, however until recently they were never charities that were active at fundraising. We want to build momentum in this area. And to achieve that, we must strengthen the profile of both charities nationally, more so externally in order to reach potential donors.

Finally, 2030 will be the **centenary of ACCT UK**. We must celebrate this milestone event. Had not the British National Cadet Association (BNCA) been formed in 1930, it is quite possible that the cadet forces would have disappeared.

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Our Charities' Visions

Each charity has set out a vision for the impact it wants to make in the world. They are distinct yet complementary, reflecting both the independence of each board and their commitment to common aims.

CCFA Vision to 2030



Our Purpose

Is to support cadets in schools.

Our Vision and Strategy

Our vision is to strengthen the CCF to equip the nation's young people with values and experience to become exemplary, capable and rounded adults who will contribute fully to society. To achieve that, our strategy is to:

1 Be available to every CCF contingent

Develop and present a clearer identity for CCFA to internal audiences. Utilise all channels and means to ensure that all cadets and adult volunteers of the CCF are aware that CCFA is their charity. We will develop a clearer identity for CCFA explaining who we are and how we support our beneficiaries.



We will then utilise all channels and means to ensure that our beneficiaries in the CCF, cadets, adult volunteers and contingents, are aware that CCFA is their charity.

2 Support the Government's growth ambitions

We will continue the constructive working relationship that CCFA enjoys with the MOD, DfE and single services in support of the CCF.

This now includes supporting them to achieve the Government's '30 by 35' ambition and its longer-term aim of increasing the number of all cadets to 250,000.

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ACCT UK Vision to 2030



Character, leadership, and good citizenship

Our vision is a future where the Army Cadet Force (ACF) is empowered to develop character, leadership, and good citizenship in young people across the UK. ACCT UK aims to be recognised as the principal charitable partner of the ACF, known for our commitment and contribution. By supporting the ACF, ACCT UK nurtures engaged, responsible, and civic-minded individuals who positively contribute to their communities and society. We will do this through the following lines of activity:

1 *Engaging Our Internal Audience*

Develop and present a clearer identity for ACCT UK to internal audiences. Utilise all channels and means to ensure that all cadets and adult volunteers of the ACF are aware that ACCT UK is their charity.

2 *Building a National Profile*

Develop and present a clearer identity for ACCT UK as a charity and its charitable work. Build and leverage relationships to raise ACCT UK's national profile with potential supporters.



3 *Working with the Army*

Continue the constructive working relationship that ACCT UK enjoys with the Army in support of the ACF.

4 *Supporting our Beneficiaries*

Increase and sustain our charitable output in support of our beneficiaries – cadets and adult volunteers alike – but with continued emphasis on adult volunteers, as without them there would be no ACF.

5 *Advocating for Service*

Continue to actively publicly advocate the benefits of Service as a means of nurturing engaged responsible and civic-minded individuals… and in so doing, celebrate the achievements of cadets and adult volunteers.

6 *Evolving*

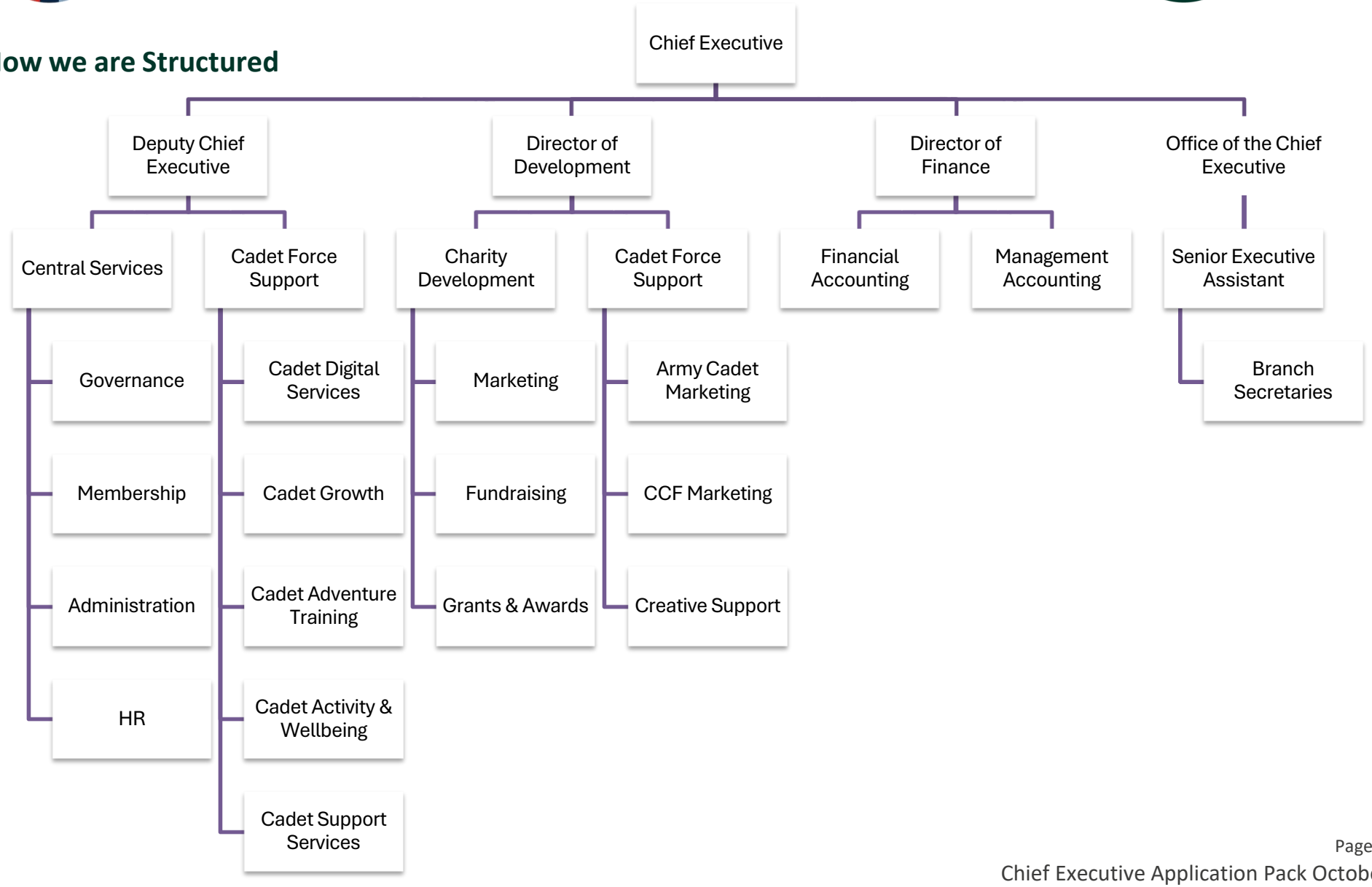
Evolve and modernise the charity as an institution to meet the changing social, economic, legal, regulatory and best practice requirements.

7 *Celebrating Our Centenary*

Celebrate our long partnership with and support for the ACF by planning to mark ACCT UK's Centenary in 2030 and to seek Royal involvement.

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How we are Structured



Job Description

Purpose of the Post

An excellent communicator, you will engage widely with key stakeholders to ensure the charity is seen and understood by beneficiaries, funders and supporters. Your balanced and collaborative leadership style will foster an empowered environment in which your senior team are able to deliver effectively according to their strengths. Your foresight and strategic vision will enable you to see and seize opportunities to make positive changes for the cadet forces we support.

The key aspect of this job is to ensure the effective operation of the two charities: The Army Cadet Charitable Trust UK (ACCT UK) and the Combined Cadet Force Association (CCFA). Specifically:

- Oversee the operations of the charities.
- Recruit and maintain a team to carry out the work.
- Enable the trustees to take timely and informed decisions.
- Maintain key strategic relationships for the good of the charities.
- Collaborate with the fundraising team to secure new income streams, moving the charities toward long-term financial resilience and reduced reliance on a single funding source.

Principal Responsibilities

Leadership

- Provide leadership to support operational development and foster strong relationships with partners.
- Lead the staff team based in central London and across the UK, and work with them on policy, advocacy, reports, publications, events and other membership services.
- Support the cultivation of an ever deeper understanding of the cadet ethos within all parts of society and throughout the Armed Forces with the purpose of increasing support for the cadet forces.

Strategy

- Develop, deliver and keep under review, the charities' strategies in conjunction with the trustees.
- Play a key role in strengthening and supporting the role of the charities as membership bodies, ensuring that they serve the needs of their members, and reflect issues of interest across the cadet community.
- Ensure the charity will be able to operate in good financial health for the foreseeable future.

Governance

- Ensure that the trustees of the charities have the support and information they require to undertake their responsibilities and legal duties.

- Provide oversight of the funding agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) that govern grants to the charities. Act as the accounting officer where this is a requirement of a funding agreement.
- Assist the trustees in identifying suitable replacements for the board on a rolling basis to keep the boards fresh and relevant to the work of the charity.
- Carry out any other duties required by the trustees.

External Relations

- Develop, maintain and strengthen constructive relationships with relevant Government departments in Westminster, Holyrood, Cardiff and Stormont; other significant decision-makers; and partner bodies including the MOD Head Office cadets' team and the cadets' teams in each of the single service national cadet HQs, and also the Council of RFCAs.
- Develop, maintain and strengthen constructive relationships across the cadet communities. Some key people include: the 1* cadet lead in each of the services, senior volunteers such as national advisers, Colonels Cadets in Joint Military Commands (and their regular army commanders); ACF Commandants, CCF Contingent Commanders and RFCA Chief Executives and Deputy Chief Executives.
- Foster productive relationships with other relevant voluntary youth organisations such as: the Cadet Vocational College, the Marine Society and Sea Cadets, the Air Cadet Charity, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, the Council for Cadet Rifle Shooting, and St John Ambulance.

Fundraising and Growth

- Support the general activities of the charities including seeking opportunities for extending reach and effectiveness.

Disqualified Persons

There are rules which disqualify certain people from being a trustee or senior manager of a charity. The trustees have identified this post as falling under the definition of senior manager. Being disqualified means that a person cannot take on a senior manager position, even on an interim basis, unless the Charity Commission has removed (or 'waived') the disqualification.

You would be disqualified from acting as a charity trustee or senior manager if any of the reasons shown in the Charity Commission's disqualifying reasons table[3] apply to you.

[3] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/automatic-disqualification-rules-for-charity-trustees-and-charity-senior-positions

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Key Attributes – Knowledge, Skills, Experience and Behaviours

Essential	Desirable	Methods of assessment
A senior leader with experience of the armed forces ▪ A strong track record of leading a large organisation. ▪ A 'hands on' team player. ▪ A confident delegator, able to multi-task and work through others. ▪ Direct experience as a military officer, recent or not. ▪ Able to respond to changing and challenging priorities calmly.	▪ Leadership experience in a charity context. ▪ Direct experience as a senior military officer. Time as an OF6 is desirable, but the right OF5 will also have a strong chance of competing for the role. RN, RM, Army or RAF.	Cover letter & CV Interview References
We are looking for someone to lead two national charities that have great reputations and are respected, who will be able to lead, manage and motivate a complex and geographically dispersed team that supports UK-wide beneficiaries, who in turn will follow the CEO because they want to.		
A nice person! ▪ Someone with high emotional intelligence and strong inter-personal skills, who is responsive and collaborative at every level. ▪ A good communicator, including being skilled in listening. ▪ Who is also able to be assertive in a patient, diplomatic and tactful way.	▪ Experience of managing a civilian workforce. ▪ Experience of working with volunteers.	Cover letter & CV Interview References* *including from a subordinate
We are looking for someone to work with two boards of trustees, the majority of whom have no military background, and to lead, guide and work with a diverse workforce that is charitable and civilian in its background, and to work collegiately with colleagues in the Senior Leadership Team.		
A networker and advocate ▪ Experience of building and maintaining high value relationships. ▪ A polished presenter. ▪ The ability to speak enthusiastically about a good cause.	▪ Access to existing networks of influential people. Experience of working with institutional, corporate and individual donors.	Cover letter & CV Interview References
As your knowledge of the cadet forces increases, we would want the new Chief Executive to be an advocate for and raise the profiles of both charities and the cadet forces. You will be able to promote our cause with our principal partners and potential donors, thus supporting our fundraising.		

Essential	Desirable	Methods of assessment
A skilled meeting operator ▪ Knowledge and experience of functional governance in the broadest sense (procedures, behaviours, supporting and guiding decision-making).	▪ Experience of Charity governance Understanding of the efficient and effective operation of a 'not-for-profit' organisation	Cover letter & CV Interview References
The Chief Executive is the Secretary to both boards. Supporting the two sets of trustees with their differing approaches and multiple personalities is vital to the success of the charities. Connects to the qualities above listed under 'A nice person!'		
A strategic thinker with a good understanding of Government policy and how business is done in Whitehall ▪ Awareness of the Government's policy for youth. ▪ Able to demonstrate understanding of and empathy with the cadet forces. ▪ Capable of envisioning a better future for an organisation and then able to distil the ideas and vision of the team into coherent and workable direction for teams to implement.	▪ Experience of working in or with Whitehall. ▪ Knowledge and experience of the cadet forces. ▪ Experience of strategic development and implementation	Cover letter & CV Interview References
We are looking for someone who will be at ease and credible with senior officers in the Ministry of Defence and single services. *It is critical that you understand the context the charities will be operating in. You will need to harness the strategic vision of the trustees and the foresight of your team to ensure that the charities remain able to deliver the best possible effect for their beneficiaries.*		
An all-round administrator ▪ A broad experience of financial management, budget planning, resource forecasting and delivering through others.	▪ Detailed understanding of how government finances, particularly grant programmes, work.	Cover letter & CV Interview References
In the charity sector you will find resources tight and staffing lean, meaning that all must carry some of the weight of administration in order to enable people to get on with the work we employ them for.		

Employment Details and Benefits

Employment Details

Location:	Holderness House, 51-61 Clifton Street, LONDON, EC2A 4DW
Salary:	£90k - £100k dependent on experience (plus London weighting)
Contract:	Permanent, full time, 40 hours per week
Start date:	Spring to summer 2027
Probationary Period:	Four months
Notice:	Three months on either side

Staff Benefits

- Flexible working arrangements, you agree a working pattern with the Chairs of the two Boards.
- The ability to work both from home and from our Holderness House office.
- Personal Accident Insurance, including loss of earnings cover and death benefit.
- 15 days of sick pay in any 12-month period[4].
- A contributory pension scheme.
  - If you contribute the minimum legal requirement of 4%, the charities will contribute an additional 3%.
  - If you contribute at least 5% then the charities will contribute 10%.
- Good leave allowances:
  - 20 days annual leave plus Bank Holidays.
  - Additional privilege leave, on set days each year, such as between Christmas and New Year.
  - An additional five days of volunteering leave.
- Support for qualifications and personal development.
- Employee Assistance Programme. We provide a programme offered by Optima Health to help support employee's personal wellbeing. This offers a free confidential telephone counselling service, which is available 24 hours per day, 365 days a year, and a wellbeing portal to support employees.
- Season ticket loan.
- Railcard. If you are eligible for a railcard and use it for work, we will cover the cost.
- Eye Care. Contributions towards eye tests and glasses for employees using computer screens.

[4] after 12 months employment

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How to Apply

Thank you for your interest in working for the benefit of our charities' beneficiaries. To apply, please prepare the following documents:

- A full CV.
- A covering letter of no more than two A4 pages that details how you meet the key attributes (pp.13-14), why you want to work with us and why you are the best person for the role.
- Administrative details:
  - Notice period (if applicable).
  - Any recruitment dates (see below) you cannot make.

If you have any questions about the role, please contact Murdo Urquhart, Chief Executive, on 020 4586 8181 or email murdo.urquhart@acctuk.org.

Interviews will be held at Holderness House, 51-61 Clifton Street, EC2A 4DW.



Application submission email:	recruitment@acctuk.org
Closing date for applications:	10:00 hrs on Thursday 26th November 2026
Notification of shortlisting:	Thursday 10th December 2026
Initial interviews:	Monday 11th January 2027
Second interviews:	Date TBC in Jan/Feb 2027

Please note that as a charity dedicated to improving the lives of young people, we require staff to make a declaration about any relevant convictions, undergo both a Disclosure and Barring Service check and a Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) check[5].

We will follow up references, which will be requested from the successful candidate. We will ask for three references, one from a former manager, one from a former subordinate and a third from someone you have worked with.

[5] one of the requirements being that applicants must have been resident in the UK for 3 years

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