Royal Historical Society

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Recruitment Pack
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1. Introduction

Following the recent departure of our longstanding Executive Secretary, the Royal Historical Society (RHS) has decided that now is the right time to recruit our first Chief Executive Officer. The RHS is a successful learned society, membership organisation and charity with a 150-year history. We are looking for a creative and dynamic individual to help us better equip our organisation for today’s challenges and build resilience for those of the future. As the Society’s first CEO, you will take charge of our finances and our staff, and also work closely with our Trustees in order to shape and implement the aims and ambitions of the Society.

The Royal Historical Society (RHS) is at an exciting moment in its development. The higher education and publishing contexts, within which much of our work is situated, have changed rapidly over the past decade. At the same time, broader interest in and scrutiny of the past — from family historians to museum curators to government and the civil service — has never been greater. The need for historians to be supported, and History to be understood and practised well, is more important than ever.

Thanks to the leadership of several exceptionally dedicated and talented Presidents, the Society has recently expanded its scope: from supporting academic historians and historical research solely in a university setting to also intervening in wider policy debates and broadening the membership into new sectors beyond higher education. As we look to develop the RHS in the coming decade, we are recruiting a Chief Executive Officer to expand and modernise our structures and ensure effective collaboration across the Society’s central team, Trustees, and wider membership. As CEO you will work closely with a range of key stakeholders and have responsibility for allocating and prioritising resources so that the Society can continue to extend its remit as the nation’s foremost authority and advocate for the discipline: working for History and historians of all kinds.

Professor Emma Griffin
President of the Royal Historical Society
2. About the Royal Historical Society

The Society was founded in 1868 with the purpose of facilitating the sharing of historical research and ideas through lectures and publications. During the twentieth century, as the study of History professionalised and moved into universities, the Society successfully adapted to serve the needs of its changing constituency within a university setting.

In recent years, the Society has been led by a series of Presidents who have widened the scope of our activity. While continuing to support a diverse and active core of Members and Fellows engaged in historical research, we now also play an active role in shaping wider debates on policy relating to History and higher education. Today the RHS is a learned society and membership organisation, comprising nearly 4500 fellows, members and early career historians, active in the UK and worldwide. This makes the RHS the UK’s largest membership organisation for professional historians of all kinds, and from all walks of life — held in high regard by historians internationally, and a partner to many similar organisations overseas. These national and international connections are led by the academics who make up the RHS Council (Trustees) and the small central team based at University College London (UCL), which is the home of the Society.
Looking to the Society’s future, we seek to develop our membership in several key ways: by making the RHS more relevant to the lives of historians and those interested in the past; by better connecting members to share ideas and establish creative partnerships; and by growing our membership and attracting to the Society a wider range of people with an interest in the past.

In tandem, the Society seeks to strengthen and diversify our financial base so as to provide a more solid and sustainable footing for our advocacy, and other work. As a senior member of our Management Team, the CEO will bring ideas and vision, along with organisational and financial expertise to ensure that the Society’s strategic development, operations and central office best serve our work and future ambitions.
3. The Values and Work of the Royal Historical Society

As the UK’s largest membership organisation for History, the RHS exists to serve those with an interest in History, and to champion the importance of the discipline, in its many forms. Its activities are informed by a commitment to:

- **REPRESENT** History as a discipline and historians as a group.
- **PROMOTE** the vitality of historical scholarship through support for research and publication.
- **SUPPORT** and encourage early career historians.
- **PROVIDE** a forum for all historians to meet and exchange ideas.
- **ENCOURAGE** facilitate and support work towards greater equality, inclusion and representation in historical practice, research and teaching.
- **ADVOCATE** best practice in History teaching in universities and schools.

The scope of RHS activities ranges across the following six areas.

**Advocacy**
- The Royal Historical Society represents the interests of History and historians in relation to a wide range of issues. We maintain close contacts with research councils, funding providers and government, and liaise directly with other learned societies in History and the Humanities.
The remit of our advocacy work is constantly changing in response to a rapidly evolving agenda. We have recently intervened in national policy debates concerning Open Access publishing, published influential and highly respected reports into gender, sexual identity and race equality within the profession, and defended History in post-92 institutions.

Events
➢ The Society runs an annual cycle of lectures, symposia and training workshops for historians at every stage of their career. Events traditionally take place at University College London and at universities across the UK, as well as now online for an international audience.
Publications
➢ In collaboration with a range of partners, we publish our own suite of publications, including the Transactions of the Royal Historical Society — an academic journal of international standing; scholarly editions of historical sources; an Open Access book series for early career authors; and the online ‘Bibliography of British and Irish History’. We also provide advocacy and support for historians in the sphere of academic publishing.

Grants and Career Support
➢ Each year, the Society aims to support around 200 UK-based researchers at early stages of their career through a variety of grants and fellowships for research trips, conferences and living costs.
Prizes
The Royal Historical Society awards a number of prizes each year to recognise outstanding historical scholarship and achievement in the fields of teaching, research and publishing.

RHS Library & Archive
➢ The Library of the Royal Historical Society, housed at University College London, holds more than 1000 works of historical scholarship published from the mid-sixteenth century to the present day, along with a small archive collection of historians’ papers. The RHS Library and Archive are open to the Society’s membership and interested members of the public.
4. The Role of Chief Executive Officer, RHS

We now seek a talented and experienced individual who — working closely with the RHS President, Council and Academic Director — will provide the leadership we require for the Society to realise its goals in the 2020s.

Our new Chief Executive Officer will bring expertise in strategic planning, operational management and financial development within a membership organisation, to ensure the Society’s programme and ambitions are achieved and sustainable.

The Royal Historical Society is an influential learned society devoted to the study and defence of History and operating on a national stage. This is an exciting opportunity to be a lead advocate for the Society, and work closely with the President, Council and other members of the RHS Senior Management Team to shape and implement the Society’s vision.

With others, the Chief Executive Officer will oversee the Society’s strategic development, and be responsible for ensuring this is realisable and attained. The CEO will also take charge of day-to-day management of the Society and its small central team, based at the Society’s office in University College London.

The CEO will be responsible for the operational side of the RHS, and will work closely with the Society’s Academic Director who oversees the Society’s research, events, publishing and awards programmes, as well as its communications and digital development. The CEO will have primary responsibility for budget setting, financial and membership management, as well as the development of new funding opportunities and engagement with prospective supporters to make the RHS a more diverse, inclusive and vibrant members organisation.

The CEO will also lead on matters of governance, represent the RHS to external bodies, and ensure that people within the Society are appropriately managed to further its influence and reach. Compared with many national learned societies, the RHS employs a very small central team, so the CEO must be prepared to be actively ‘hands on’ and pragmatic in their approach, and to undertake daily tasks, especially in relation to the Society’s operations and organisation. The role will achieve a responsive and forward-looking Society, widely respected for its support for History and historians of all kinds.
The CEO will report directly to the President and will be based at the Society’s UCL office. The role is being offered on a full-time basis. However, for an exceptional candidate, a part-time role and/or a significant degree of homeworking may be negotiated.
5. Responsibilities of the CEO

The RHS Chief Executive Officer will be responsible for the following six areas of the Society’s work:

Developing and Implementing the Society’s Strategic Vision

- Plan and lead the implementation of the RHS’s Strategic Vision, Plan and Business Plan, working with the President, Council, Staff and other relevant parties.
- Develop annual operation plans and associated budgets.
- Manage a suitable delivery infrastructure (policies, processes, staff, committees, volunteers, contractors, technology etc.) and manage any necessary change required in the implementation of plans.
- Monitor and evaluate progress towards delivering the plans and the overall health of the Society, reporting to the Council on a regular basis.

Financial Planning and Management

- Take overall responsibility for all aspects of financial planning and control and — working with the President, Council and Academic Director — develop annual budgets and ensure the Society’s ongoing and long-term financial security and growth.
- Be accountable to the Council (as trustees) for the overall financial health of the organisation, ensuring that income and expenditure remain within financial plans and targets.
- Implement and review the Society’s income generation strategy to identify and diversify income streams, maximising opportunities for income generation.
- With the President and Academic Director, grow the Society’s membership and income from membership subscriptions, donations and legacies.
- Deliver a diversified income portfolio from statutory, charitable and earned sources through the fundraising strategy.
- Contribute to bidding for project funds, either individually or collaboratively with other organisations.
- Establish strong relationships with current and potential funders and stakeholders.

Membership

- Review membership categories and structures to ensure their effectiveness for the Society’s ambitions and income generation.
- Develop the structure of the RHS membership to further these ends.
- Working with others, extend and diversify the membership of the RHS to create a more sizeable and better-connected members organisation through recruitment and technical solutions.
Governance and Compliance

- Ensure that all operations and administration comply with Company Law, Charity Commission and Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) best practice, tax and employment law etc. both in the UK and Ireland.
- Lead on the development of compliant and best-practice policies and actions, including those arising from the RHS’s strategy and governance work — ensuring that lines of responsibilities for RHS Staff and Council members are clear and are followed.
- Work closely with nominated Officers — e.g. RHS President, Vice-Presidents, and other Councillors — and oversee the servicing and support of the Society’s committee structure.
- Implement Council decisions, through the work of RHS Staff, committees and volunteers, and assist in communicating these to the wider membership, where appropriate.
- Ensure that major risks to which the Society is exposed are reviewed regularly by the Council, systems are established and actions taken to mitigate these risks and a risk analysis is automatically carried out when taking on or proposing new work.

Leading and Managing People

- Lead and develop a skilled and motivated central Staff team, embedding a culture of high performance and continuous improvement, and ensuring that recruitment, management, training and retention embody the principles of a diverse and inclusive culture.
- Take responsibility for all HR matters within the Society. Ensure compliance with appropriate practices and procedures in accordance with employment law and with any relevant legislation including equal opportunities and health and safety regulations.
- Line manage RHS staff, delegating tasks where appropriate and ensuring appropriate line management of others, including appropriate task setting and appraisal.
- Liaise with the RHS’s networks of committees and promote delivery of the Strategy.
External Relationships

- With others, build relationships with key stakeholders including not-for-profit and private bodies to ensure that the benefits of RHS work are understood and position the Society to allow effective partnerships to develop.
- Help create strategies for increasing publicity and outreach, both personally and for delivery through other elements of the Society, using a variety of media.
- Listen to the views of current and future stakeholders on the performance of the Society, as well as on areas for future development.
- Establish a strong external profile through dealings with the Society's accountants, legal advisors, and other contractors.

This is a description of the responsibilities of the role as it is presently constituted. It is the practice of the Society to examine job descriptions from time to time and to update them to ensure they relate to the job as then being performed, or to incorporate whatever changes are being proposed. All changes will be conducted in consultation with the post-holder.
6. Person Specification

We are looking for someone with considerable experience of running or helping to run a membership organisation or close equivalent. As the person responsible for RHS operations, you will be highly accomplished and confident in financial management, budget-setting and delivery, creative revenue generation, and the structures and development of a successful, active and high-profile membership organisation.

The RHS is a people organisation, and you will be skilled in working effectively and confidently across the Society: with academics, staff, RHS members outside higher education, partners, and suppliers and contractors in the HE and commercial sectors. You will be keen to develop the RHS as a membership organisation, committed to supporting History and historians through advocacy, training, and the development of a sustainable strategy for the Society’s coming decade. As a key member in a small central team, you will also be distinctly ‘hands-on’ in your approach, and prepared to perform regular tasks to ensure the Society’s daily running.

These operational requirements mean we are not primarily seeking an academic or a trained historian for this role. Rather, the CEO will bring new skills and competencies that complement and enhance the Society’s existing academic expertise. At the same time, we do seek someone with a demonstrable interest in and understanding of History and its value, and of the important role played by those who study and communicate the past — as lecturers, curators, archivists, broadcasters, community campaigners and others.

Preference will be given to those who can demonstrate a track record of financial management, running and growing a membership organisation, fundraising, innovative thinking, working with stakeholders, inspiring and influencing those they work with and an ability to communicate with a variety of audiences.
**Job Title:** Chief Executive Officer, RHS  
**Responsible to:** President of the Royal Historical Society

### Experience, Skills and Competencies

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<th>EXPERIENCE</th>
<th>ESSENTIAL</th>
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| **Leadership**              | **●** Significant leadership experience in a CEO, or CEO support, role or other public-facing or senior management position, with responsibility across a range of functions.  
**●** Experience of developing and delivering medium and long-term strategic plans for a small or medium scale charity, or equivalent organisation. |
| **Finance and Revenue Development** | **●** Successful experience of financial management and sustained income generation.  
**●** Significant experience of developing and monitoring income and expenditure budgets.  
**●** Budget-setting and responsibility across an entire organisation. |
| **Governance**              | **●** In-depth knowledge of corporate governance and performance management principles.  
**●** Experience of working in the charity sector with knowledge of statutory obligations. |
| **Management**              | **●** Significant experience of recruiting, retaining, managing and developing core staff.  
**●** Experience of running an office, with responsibility for contractor relations, with internal and external suppliers.  
**●** Excellent communication and listening skills and the ability to present complex subjects to a wide range of audiences.  
**●** Experience of productive line-management of a core team. |
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<th>EXPERIENCE: DESIRABLE</th>
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<td>● Experience of successful revenue diversification and development.</td>
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<td>● Working with external financial contractors, including accountants.</td>
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<td>● Grant writing and funding applications.</td>
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<td>● Experience of successful outward-facing campaigns to raise organisational profile.</td>
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<td>● Working in Higher Education or the GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums) sector.</td>
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<td>● Public speaking and conveying the organisational vision to a broad range of audiences.</td>
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<td>● Working with a membership organisation or equivalent.</td>
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<th>SKILLS &amp; KNOWLEDGE</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership</strong></td>
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<td>● Knowledge of legislation and regulations applying to the management of charities, human resources and GDPR.</td>
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<td>● Knowledge of data management and data use.</td>
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<td>● Excellent team building skills with proven ability to lead, build strong relationships and influence others at all levels.</td>
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<td>● Evidence of ability to inspire and influence others.</td>
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<td>● Inspiring and motivating teams to drive high quality services</td>
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<td>● Able to represent the organisation’s interests, inspiring confidence and trust.</td>
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<td>● Capacity to develop and maintain strong partnerships with a range of external stakeholders.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Finance and Revenue Development</strong></td>
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<td>● Strong financial acumen, business planning, budget setting and management.</td>
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<td>● At ease with financial information as a tool in order to deliver long-term financial sustainability.</td>
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<td>● Excellent organisational and time management skills with the ability to plan at both an institutional and individual level.</td>
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<td>● Excellent written and communication skills with proven ability to write and present clear, concise and comprehensive reports to Boards / Committees / Councils.</td>
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<td>● Ability to produce and manipulate spreadsheets and interrogate databases.</td>
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<td>● Excellent project and general management skills.</td>
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| Education | ● Educated to a minimum of degree level or equivalent experience.  
|           | ● Evidence of an interest in and commitment to History as a discipline and of its value in civic life. |
| SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE: DESIRABLE | ● Understanding of the higher education sector, and / or equivalents (e.g. Museums, Galleries, Libraries and Archives).  
| | ● Awareness of current debates affecting History in Higher Education and other sectors. |
| PERSONAL COMPETENCIES | ● Pragmatic and flexible approach to work required to maintain the Society.  
| | ● Readiness to be ‘hands-on’ with a range of routine tasks in a small office.  
| | ● Collaborative approach to work and to working collectively with Staff colleagues and RHS Council members.  
| | ● Resilience and confidence to respond to, and take responsibility for, unforeseen challenges and priorities within a high-profile membership organisation.  
| | ● Calmness and courtesy under pressure, especially when communicating with RHS members’ enquiries. |
7. Terms and Conditions of the Post

Salary and Benefits

Salary: UCL Non-clinical pay scale: spine point 42-49 currently £51,325 - £62,346 gross per annum, depending on experience.

Benefits: include an employer’s pension contribution of 12%, 25 days annual leave plus bank holidays, flexible working subject to the agreement of the RHS President.

Hours
The position of CEO is advertised as a full-time, permanent position, 37.5hrs / week. For an exceptional candidate, we will consider a flexible, part-time role (e.g. 0.7 or 0.8 FTE). RHS office hours: 9am to 5.30pm with an unpaid lunch break of one hour. The CEO will be expected to work additional hours as reasonably necessary with some out of hours work as required, for example at events or external meetings.

Location
The place of work will be the RHS office at University College London, Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT. Again, for exceptional candidates, an option for a proportion of remote working will be considered. The successful applicant will be expected to travel to occasional meetings and events in the UK as required by the President.

8. How to Apply

To apply please submit a CV along with covering letter (of no more than 3 sides of A4) outlining why you are interested in this post, how you meet the job specification, and what relevant skills and experience you can offer, particularly against the person specification. Please also provide a statement, in no more than 500 words, on how you would seek to grow the Society’s membership and income over the next 2-3 years.

Please apply via the Royal Historical Society Jobs Portal.

The closing date for applications is 11:59 PM, Wednesday 11 August 2021.

Notification of applicants shortlisted for interview will take place in the week commencing 6 September 2021, with interviews provisionally scheduled for Tuesday 28 September 2021.
Additional Information
If you want to talk to someone informally about the role or have queries on any aspect of the role or need more information please contact: Professor Emma Griffin, President of the Royal Historical Society at president@royalhistsoc.org.

Selection process
All candidates will receive an acknowledgement of receipt of applications. Only those shortlisted for interview will be contacted subsequently. Details of the interview process will be provided with the invitation.

Equal opportunities
The Royal Historical Society is an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications from everyone and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees.

Subject to statutory provisions, no applicant or member of staff will be treated less favourably than another because of his or her age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, or maternity. In all cases, ability to perform the job will be the primary consideration.