

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Role: Chief Executive

Contract type: Permanent, subject to probationary period

Payment: £60,000

Reports to: President

Location: London SW8, hybrid working available

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The British Interplanetary Society is the world's oldest continuously operating space society, formed in 1933, before space flight became a reality. A registered charity and learned society, our Honorary Fellows include astronauts Helen Sharman and Tim Peake, and we work with representatives of international space agencies and leaders in the British space exploration industry. We are governed by a Council of twelve, made up of Fellows of the organisation. The Council forms the Trustees and Directors of the Society.

We are seeking a new Chief Executive who is able to continue to develop the Society. This varied role will give you the opportunity to work with our Council to run the organisation at every level. You must be as confident and happy handling strategic work and budget development, through to handling HR and administrative tasks. This is a perfect role for a hands-on leader who can be across every element of running a small but prestigious charitable body. You will have the support of a team of four staff, as well as loyal volunteers who have supported the Society for decades.

The role has both a strategic and operational element. You will need to be confident in developing and implementing a strategy, generating new proposals to Council to tackle organisational needs, such as novel ways to increase income, and attracting new members. You must be confident in creating new partnerships and taking forward existing relationships alongside the Council Members. You will also work with Committees and our magazine Editors to agree implementation of new projects.

Operationally, the role is very hands-on. You will handle governance, finance, IT, digital, building management, managing staff and HR, running events (including hybrid events) and fundraising. You will work alongside the team in providing customer service to members, responding to public queries, and you will need to undertake administrative functions yourself. A willingness to muck in and work as part of the team is therefore essential.

You will also have the opportunity to travel twice a year, to attend the International Astronautical Congress (IAC), and the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) Spring Forum. The former takes place in a different host nation each year, the latter takes place in Paris each spring. You will also have oversight, alongside a designated Council Member, for all arrangements related to our flagship Reinventing Space conference which is held in London.

Role & responsibilities

Strategic

- Prepare a strategic plan and annual budget for approval by the Council.
- Operate within the annual budget and ensure management and HR policies are reviewed.
- Build relationships with politicians, the media and government officials in order to advance the organisation's aims.
- Establish and monitor key indicators of the organisation's impact and financial health.



- Represent the organisation at external events and publicity opportunities.
- Maintain awareness of risks and changes in the external environment that affect the organisation.
- Build an effective working relationship with the President.
- Supply regular reports to the Council and attend Council and committee meetings.
- Ensure the organisation's staff and volunteers are focused on achieving its mission and aims.
- Follow the new performance management procedures for all staff; this role will be performance managed by a member of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
- Ensure the organisation fulfils its legal, statutory and regulatory responsibilities.
- Run the annual membership survey and listen to the views of beneficiaries on the organisation's performance.
- Deliver the organisation's business plan and, if necessary, help the organisation to win contracts from public bodies or develop social enterprise 'spin offs'.
- Help to ensure a sustainable income from individual, corporate, legacy and trust donations.
- Represent the organisation to the media and give interviews.

Operational

- Undertake all the tasks, roles and responsibilities of the Executive Secretary as defined in the Society's Articles and Bye Laws.
- Oversee all governance arrangements for the Society, including preparing papers and taking minutes at the Council and to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Oversight of secretariat provision to other Committees.
- Write the annual report and organising the AGM.
- Manage all HR processes, including working with the outsourced payroll provider, handling salary payments, payslips and pension payments.
- Work with the outsourced accountancy firm and separate auditors, supplying invoices to them and responding to book-keeping queries. Authorising all invoice payments and creating sales invoices using Xero.
- Run the ecommerce offer and membership access system. Promote the BIS merchandise offer, and follow the new merchandise strategy. Monitoring and ordering merchandise stock, and despatch of ordered items.
- Respond to member queries, contact forms and other communications.
- Support events, including the hybrid element and managing the on-site presence for events.
- Lead arrangements for the Reinventing Space conference, as well as for the UK's presence at the International Astronautical Congress. Sit as a member of the IAF Space Societies Committee.
- Act as the Data Protection Officer for the organisation, and continue to develop the data protection approach of the Society.
- Supporting existing and new branches, with monthly catch-ups to develop projects, events and ways of working.
- Overall responsibility for the building, including its security, and be on-call for alarms or other emergencies.

Skills, experience and attributes

All are essential unless highlighted D (Desirable)

- Experience of senior leadership within a membership body or other charitable institution
- Accustomed to working with a highly involved governing body
- Skilled in developing and implementing strategy, including influencing and negotiating within Committees
- Used to handling difficult conversations and working in a political environment

- Excellent written communication skills and presentation skills for a range of audiences
- Proven skills in working with others, prioritising and organising yourself and others
- Experience managing a small staff team
- Demonstrated skills in HR, IT, governance and finance.
- Commercial awareness and resourcefulness
- Willingness to work at all levels within the organisation
- Willingness to undertake travel and attend events outside working hours, including occasional weekends
- An interest in space exploration (D)
- A relevant qualification in management, finance, governance, data protection and/or business (D)
- Experience delivering events, publications, digital services and/or regional and international working (D)
- Experience in running venue hire propositions, including licenced premises (D)
- Holder of a Personal Licence (for regulated activity such as serving of alcohol) (D)
- Qualified First Aider (D) or willingness to undertake the qualification (essential)

This role description will be subject to review in the light of changing circumstances and may include other duties and responsibilities as may be determined. It is not intended to be rigid or inflexible but should be regarded as providing guidelines within which the individual works.

The British Interplanetary Society is an Equal Opportunities Employer and welcomes applications from diverse communities for this position.

All Society employees and contractors are responsible for records held, created or used as part of their work for the Society including corporate and administrative records whether paper-based or electronic, which also includes emails. Records should be managed and stored appropriately and should in all cases comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

Employees and contractors must at all times follow the policies and procedures of the organisation, including ensuring that they take an active responsibility for their own health and safety and do not expose themselves or others to risks to their health and safety.

The successful applicant will be required to provide at least two referees who the Society may contact, copies of relevant academic or professional qualifications, and may be subject to a background check through a partner organisation before a contract can be finalised. As the post will likely in future involve working with children, at a later stage a DBS check may be required.

September 2021