



Royal Life Saving Society UK

Director of Membership and Education

Candidate pack
August 2025



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ROYAL
LIFE SAVING
SOCIETY UK

Enjoy Water **Safely**



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Welcome

I am delighted that you are considering applying for the role of Director of Membership and Education at the Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS UK).

RLSS UK is the national charity supporting communities of all backgrounds to enjoy water safely and be free from drowning.

We have a proud history of helping to reduce the number of lives lost to drowning. Our Impact Report 2024 details the fantastic work undertaken last year and is a testament to the commitment of our volunteers, staff, trustees, and members who advocate for and promote water safety in our communities. Please do take the time to read this - [RLSS UK Charity Impact Report 2024](#)

Following years of campaigning for change, the Department of Education announced in July 2025 that statutory guidance will introduce the Water Safety Code in schools. The statutory inclusion of this vital education marks a key step towards equipping young individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate water environments safely. Read more [here](#).

RLSS UK also has a thriving Commercial Directorate, which is recognised as a leader in our field. Last year alone, we awarded over 43,000 lifeguard qualifications to pool, beach and open water lifeguards together with 46,000 Rookie Lifeguard awards being presented in communities throughout the UK and Ireland, reflecting the commitment of our lifesaving instructors to develop the next generation of lifesavers.

We have recently launched our Strategic Framework 2025-2030 and consequently it is an exciting time to join the Society as we look to build on our work to save even more lives together.



This is a pivotal role for our future, and we are seeking a collaborative and empowering Director of Membership and Education with the ability to strengthen and grow our membership offering and deepen engagement, as well as developing our educational provision. The new director will have an eye for detail, monitoring data and ensuring strong evaluation frameworks are in place for mapping opportunities and measuring impact. As a member of the Senior Leadership Team your work will influence and deliver against the organisational strategy, helping us mitigate risk and build sustainable growth for our future.

I hope this candidate pack provides you with a useful insight into our wonderful organisation and the requirements for this position. If you feel this role is right for you, I look forward to receiving your application.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Simmy".

Simmy Akhtar
Chief Executive Officer

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About us



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About Us

Royal Life Saving Society UK

Our roots were established in 1891 as the Life Saving Society, and, in the early 1900s, with support from the Royal Family, we were granted permission to adopt the 'Royal' to our title – a honour that we are immensely proud of. Today, the charity and trading companies currently turnover more than £6 million with circa 85 staff, with the majority of our income currently generated from our commercial activities.

We have used our extensive, world-leading knowledge of water safety and training to develop a comprehensive range of [award-winning](#) vocational qualifications, awards and educational programmes and campaigns, which have the ultimate aim of preventing drowning and stopping unnecessary loss of life. Our portfolio includes the [National Pool Lifeguard Qualification \(NPLQ\)](#) - the premier lifeguard training programme.

Strategy 2025-2030

We have recently launched our new Strategic Framework for 2025-2030, with the ambition to save lives by leading in lifesaving, lifeguarding, and water safety education to prevent drownings. We launched our new strategy during our flagship campaign, Drowning Prevention Week, and premiered it in Westminster to MPs and key partners.

This new strategy marks a new era for RLSS UK, and a key aspect of the strategy is an update to the charity's strapline, 'Enjoy Water Safely', with the addition of 'Free from Drowning' emphasising the charity's purpose, mission, and vision together, with the overall aim of saving more lives.

Our work will focus on three key pillars: Engagement, Education, and Expertise. These pillars aim to prevent drownings and enable everyone to enjoy water safely. There will also be a strong emphasis on culture and collaboration to ensure everyone can access water safety education, regardless of their background.

Our strategic framework can be viewed [here](#).

"RLSS UK is fortunate to have an exceptional network of dedicated and passionate stakeholders, including members, volunteers, partners, lifesavers, lifeguards, the leisure industry, and our committed staff and trustees. We hope the new framework inspires and motivates our new and existing supporters and guides our operations as we enter this new phase in the Society's impressive history, which spans over 130 years."

Simmy Akhtar, CEO of RLSS UK

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About Us



RLSS UK Enterprise Limited, t/a RLSS UK Shop

Our trading outfit, RLSS UK Shop, stocks and fulfils a range of products to help support the delivery of our vocational and non-vocational awards and qualifications. The suppliers we use are carefully selected and vetted by experts for their safety and durability. We will continue to ensure we concentrate our efforts on making sure we provide our lifesaving community with the best service and materials to perform activities safely and to the best of their ability.

Our current commercial offering is based on the delivery of the highest quality of both OFQUAL-regulated and non-regulated vocational training programmes, tailored to our customers' needs – whether that is within the aquatic environment or beyond. The approach we take is innovative and robust, ensuring we provide excellent training programmes, support materials for the delivery of our courses and ongoing training and development to ensure the highest standards across our range of lifeguarding, lifesaving, first aid and consultancy services.

RLSS UK Governance

The Royal Life Saving Society UK is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. Our Board of Trustees, who are also registered as directors at Companies House, ensure the sound governance of RLSS UK. Our Board comprises:

- President - elected by RLSS UK membership
- Deputy President - elected by RLSS UK membership
- Treasurer - ex officio
- Up to six Trustees elected by RLSS UK membership
- Three appointed Trustees

Compliance

Our current Regulatory bodies are:

- The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation, Ofqual in England.
- The Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment, CCEA in Northern Ireland.
- Qualifications Wales, QW in Wales.

Maintaining and exceeding the standards, policies and procedures of these bodies are essential for ensuring our Awarding Organisation and Awarding Body status with the respective Regulators, enabling us to offer regulated qualifications. Compliance sits in our Corporate Directorate. We also maintain compliance with the Charity Commission, Companies House and the Fundraising Regulator.

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Job description





Role details

Role title:	Director of Membership and Education
Directorate:	Membership and Education
Reports to:	Chief Executive Officer
Responsible for:	4 direct reports: Head of Membership, Education Manager, Volunteer and Events Manager, and Safeguarding Executive
Salary:	£68,000 - £73,000 salary package (£60,000 - £65,000, plus £8,000 car allowance per annum)
Contract:	Permanent
Hours:	Full-time
Location:	Worcester Headquarters / Hybrid - 3 days in the office per week
Annual leave:	27 days, plus bank holidays, and a discretionary day off for birthday.
Pension:	Automatic enrolment into a pension scheme on commencement, or the chance to opt-in should you choose.
Benefits:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Car allowance equivalent of c. £666 per month (£8,000 per annum)• Free RLSS UK Membership• Enhanced Society Sick Pay (following a successful 6-month probation/service)• Employee Assistance Programme• Private Health and Eye Care (following a successful 6-month probation/service)• Life Assurance Scheme• Free on-site car parking while based at our Worcester Head Office• Regular Staff Socials and Events organised by our 'Culture Club' team, including a Christmas Party and Summer Social.

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Job description



Role purpose

The Director of Membership and Education will be responsible for strengthening, developing and growing the RLSS UK membership offering, deepening engagement with existing and prospective members and developing, implementing, and evaluating educational programmes, courses, and resources. To achieve this, the Director of Membership and Education will develop and implement an organisation wide membership and education strategy, which is aligned with organisational goals and aimed at enhancing RLSS UK member experience, retention and growth, and driving and developing educational initiatives, including current and potential qualifications and training programmes. Monitoring membership data, identifying trends, and reporting back on insights at CEO, Senior Leadership Team and Board level to inform organisational strategy and manage and mitigate risks, will be key.

The Director of Membership and Education will also be an empowering leader, managing a team of 13 with 4 direct reports, ensuring the effective delivery of member initiatives and lifesaving and lifeguarding training, and water safety education. The Director of Membership and Education will be accountable to the CEO and be responsible for building and maintaining strong relationships with members, the volunteer network, partners, and wider stakeholders, including regulatory bodies.

Key tasks

- Provide strategic leadership and guidance to improve RLSS UK lifesaving qualifications, awards and training uptake, outcomes and standards and the member journey and experience.
- Work in collaboration with the Commercial Services Directorate and provide lifesaving and lifeguarding qualifications insight where appropriate.
- Develop and implement a new strategy focused on developing membership pathways from qualifications, awards and training, as well as volunteers, branches, and clubs, through to membership, focusing on amplifying the current offer and introducing new initiatives and benefits.
- Work alongside the CEO, Senior Leadership Team and the RLSS UK Board of Trustees to agree key performance indicators aligned to strategy, regularly reviewing and reporting on performance and progress.
- Develop and support the Membership and Education Directorate team, ensuring clear objectives are set and provide guidance and support to achieve strategic goals.
- Oversee the Directorate's budget, managing the budget for membership activities and education programmes.
- Ensure the effective delivery of events including the annual conference and Honours Awards.
- Be the organisational lead for safeguarding.

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Job description



Membership and education leadership

- Identify membership recruitment and retention opportunities and threats within the sector, maintaining an overview of best practice and innovation in member services, as well as identifying new opportunities to develop and diversify our offer.
- Ensure the analysis of membership data and trends are available and that insights on member views are regularly obtained, analysed and fed into the membership and education strategy.
- Ensure that high-quality, tailored member services and communications are delivered to all parts of the membership and to those across the education programme, including engagement across our whole volunteer, branches, clubs and member networks as part of our core service.
- Attend meetings to engage with members and highlight the work of RLSS UK such as education initiatives, events, membership benefits, etc. Ensure a strong pipeline of qualified RLSS UK non-vocational Trainer Assessors and Lifesaving Instructors, are attracted and retained to deliver RLSS UK non-vocational qualifications, awards and training.
- Hold responsibility for key stakeholder relationships, working closely with external agencies, governing bodies, community partners and other stakeholders to ensure effective delivery of RLSS UK non-vocational qualifications, awards and training.
- Oversee policies, standards and procedures to ensure that high-quality educational activities are delivered.

Overarching Director responsibilities

- To undertake other duties from time to time as reasonably required by the Chief Executive.
- This job description is not to be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive. It is intended as an outline indication of areas of activity and responsibility and will be amended in light of the changing needs of the organisation.
- Within the Directorate, provides strong leadership and direction, taking responsibility for the planning, development and managerial work of the organisation.
- To attend Trustee Board meetings and Committees where required, and any other such Leadership Team functions where necessary.
- To demonstrate and uphold RLSS UK's values and behavioural standards at all times.
- Build effective relations across departments to become the focal point for strategic issues across RLSS UK.

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Person specification



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Person specification

Essential skills and experience

- Experienced leader with a track record of driving membership/audience growth, and membership engagement.
- Experience of establishing educational goals, policies, and procedures.
- Experience of working with governing bodies, and high-level stakeholders, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements.
- Ability to foster a culture of innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement, while promoting best practices across membership and education development, assessment, and inclusion.
- Ability to stay up to date on changes in lifesaving and lifeguarding policies and practices.
- Experience of monitoring and evaluating the performance of educational programmes.
- Experience of budget creation and management.
- Ability to use data insight to shape strategy.
- Highly motivated with the ability to organise developmental activities for self and team to increase competency levels and meet future business goals.
- Good working knowledge of IT, including Microsoft Office, databases, and digital platforms.

Desirable strengths sought

- Leading and developing others – take responsibility for influencing and motivating others to contribute to the goals and success of their team and organisation. Promote other people's learning and development to help them achieve their goals and fulfil their potential.
- Results focused – maintain a strong sense of focus on results, driving tasks and projects to completion.
- Self-confidence – a strong belief in yourself and your abilities to accomplish tasks and goals.
- Critical thinking – approach problems and arguments by breaking them down systematically and evaluate them objectively.
- Flexibility – remain adaptable and flexible in the face of unfamiliar or changing situations.
- Strategic mindedness – focus on the future and take a strategic perspective on issues and challenges.
- Creativity – contribute new ideas and original solutions to move things forward.
- Empathy – readily identify with other people's situations and can see things clearly from their perspective.

Useful experience (but not essential)

- Experience as a Trustee or NED in a large/national charity or non-profit.
- Experience in or knowledge of the leisure sector.

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How to apply



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How to apply

Royal Life Saving Society UK is working exclusively with Charisma Charity Recruitment.

Applications should be submitted through the [Charisma website](#) and include:

- A comprehensive CV
- A supporting statement (no more than two pages) summarising why you're applying and how you meet the person specification

For an informal and confidential discussion about the role, please contact:

Katherine Anderson-Scott, Associate Director of Charisma Charity Recruitment on 01962 813300 or email info@charismarecruitment.co.uk.

We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds. We do not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, colour, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, veteran status or other category protected by law.

Closing date: 10 September 2025

Interviews with RLSS UK: TBC

Charisma vetting interviews must be completed by 18 September prior to shortlist submission on 19 September.



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