

**THINK**  
**Recruitment**

**BOWEL**  
**RESEARCH**  
**UK.**

## Candidate Pack: Head of Fundraising and Comms

**Location:** Hybrid with presence in London office once per week

**Salary:** £55,000 - £60,000 per annum

**Contract:** Permanent

**Hours:** Full time – 35 hours per week

**Closing date:** Midnight 14<sup>th</sup> July

**Saving and improving the lives  
of those living with chronic  
bowel conditions**



# Welcome from Kathryn Pretzel-Shiels, Chief Executive at Bowel Research UK

Thank you for your interest in this role and in joining the team at Bowel Research UK.

I joined the charity as Chief Executive in April 2026, having previously served as Interim Chief Executive from October 2026, and before that as a Trustee for 7 years.

Over the past few months, I have been working closely with the team to develop an ambitious vision for the future and to ensure we are strongly positioned to make the most of the opportunities ahead and significantly increase our impact.

We are now entering a new and exciting chapter in Bowel Research UK's journey, and we are looking for a Head of Fundraising and Communications with drive, enthusiasm and commitment to help us build on this momentum and take this role forward with energy and purpose.

As a UK charity dedicated to bowel cancer and bowel disease research, our focus is on providing early-stage funding that helps promising ideas take shape and grow into larger, impactful research programmes.

Our fundraising function is a key area for growth and development. As a senior leadership role, the Head of Fundraising and Communications will be responsible for leading and developing the fundraising function, supporting and empowering the fundraising team, and identifying opportunities to maximise income and impact across the organisation.

Given the importance of close collaboration with colleagues and stakeholders, this is a hybrid role requiring attendance at our London office two days per week. The team is currently in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and we would welcome the successful candidate joining us in person on those days. We look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

*Kathryn*



# Background on Bowel Research UK

Bowel Research UK is a national medical research charity dedicated to funding new treatments and potential cures for bowel cancer, inflammatory bowel disease and other bowel disorders. Their goal is to save lives while also enabling people living with chronic bowel conditions to enjoy a much better quality of life.

Bowel Research UK was founded in 2020 following a merger between two well-respected charities: Bowel & Cancer Research and Bowel Disease Research Foundation. Today Bowel Research UK is funding life-changing research into bowel cancer and other bowel diseases.



In the UK, three quarters of a million people live with serious bowel conditions, and tragically, more than 17,400 people die from bowel cancer every year. It's the second deadliest cancer in the UK. Bowel cancer and other bowel diseases are woefully underfunded, even though the fact that these conditions can affect anybody; 1 in 17 men and 1 in 20 women will suffer from bowel cancer during their lives.

This must change. Bowel Research UK is working hard to find better treatments for bowel cancer and other bowel diseases, so people can live longer and enjoy a better quality of life.

They believe that a cure for bowel cancer and effective treatments to mitigate, or entirely eradicate, other bowel diseases remain possible – but only if they continue to fund leading research and invest in scientific and medical communities today, to see the benefits tomorrow.

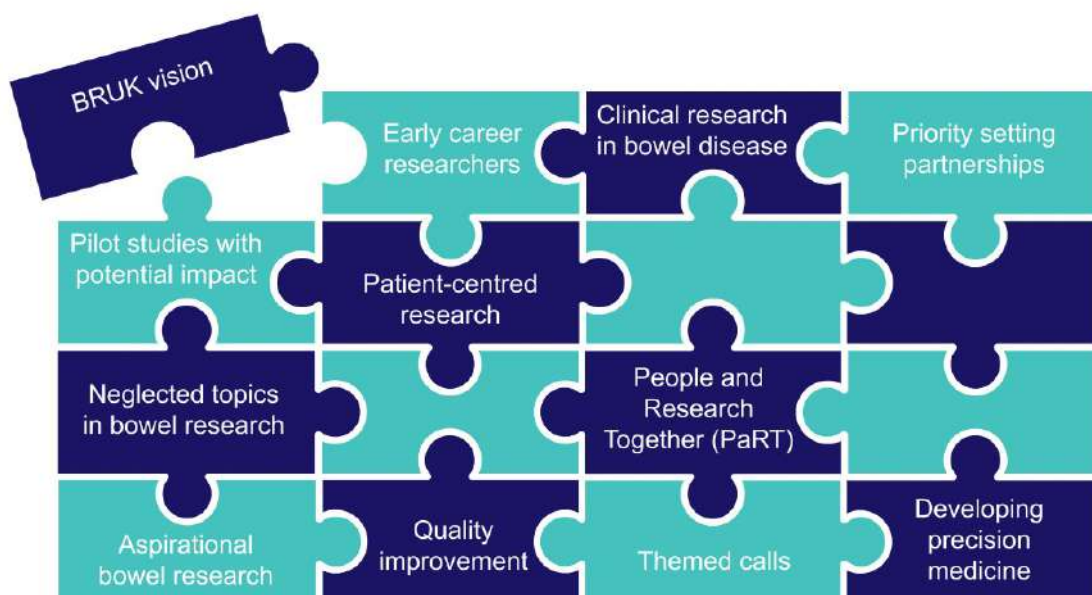
That's why they're working with some of the best experts in the field - from surgeons and other clinicians to researchers and scientists, and patients themselves - to find new ways to treat and beat these diseases.



# About Bowel Research UK's research

Bowel Research UK brings together researchers, healthcare professionals, patients, families and decision-makers to advance and fund pioneering research into bowel cancer and a wide range of bowel conditions, including chronic diseases such as Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, and incontinence.

## Their research priorities

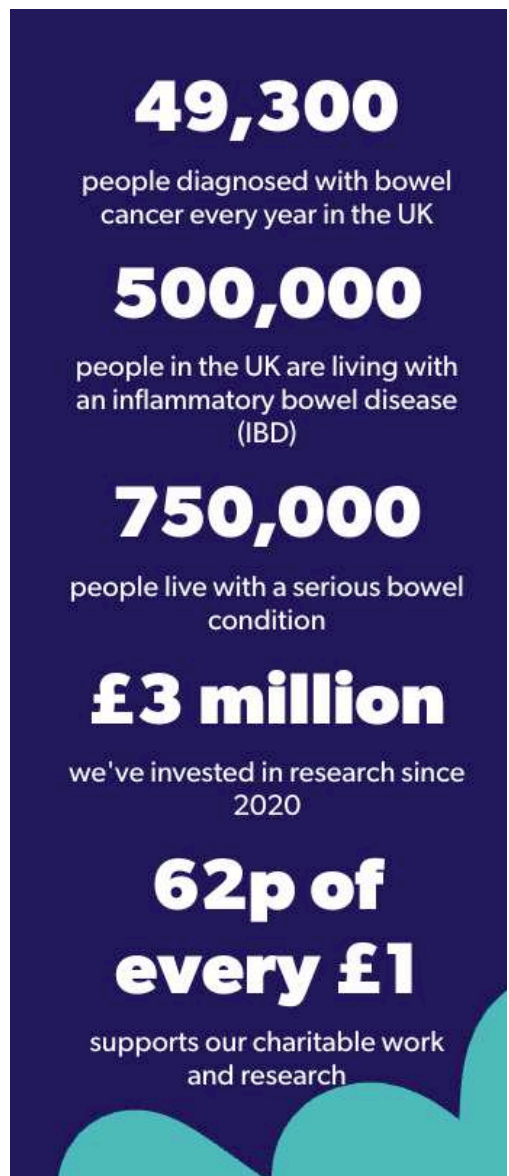


The charity's funding portfolio includes:

- Funding early-stage, proof-of-principle research through initial development grants, providing essential backing for promising projects to generate the evidence required to secure larger awards from major funding bodies such as the NIHR.
- Clinical research projects with the potential to transform the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of bowel disease. Current work includes studies at the University of Southampton investigating the role of viruses and the microbiome in the development of inflammatory bowel disease.

- Patient-centred research that improves outcomes and lived experience, including work at the University of Glasgow focused on enhancing the patient experience of emergency surgery.
- PhD programmes that develop the next generation of research leaders in the field. For example, PhD student Chris Roukas received funding from Bowel Research UK to undertake research at Queen Mary University of London.
- The 'Hard to Fund' programme, which addresses unmet need by funding research into less common or underfunded bowel conditions that may otherwise struggle to secure traditional funding.
- Patient and public involvement initiatives, including their People and Researchers Together (PaRT) programme, which ensures that patients and the public are actively involved in shaping research priorities and delivery.
- Work in partnership with leading organisations to co-fund and deliver research, including their close collaboration with the Association of Coloproctology of Great Britain & Ireland (ACPGBI), of which they are proud to be the charity partner.

Fundraising is critical to ensuring Bowel Research UK can continue to deliver their mission and purpose, and the Head of Fundraising and Communications role is vital to achieving fundraising success.



# Background on the Head of Fundraising and Communications role

The Head of Fundraising & Communications is responsible for leading and delivering an integrated fundraising and communications strategy that increases income, strengthens supporter engagement, raises the charity's profile, and enhances its reputation. As a member of the Senior Leadership Team, the postholder will provide strategic leadership across fundraising and communications, brand and supporter engagement, ensuring that all activity supports the charity's mission, values and long-term sustainability. The postholder will have autonomy to lead key areas of work and deliver agreed objectives, while collaborating with colleagues across the charity to design and implement initiatives, programmes and processes across income streams.



The role will lead and develop a talented, dedicated team, drive income growth across multiple fundraising streams, and ensure compelling communications that inspire support, demonstrate impact and influence key audiences. The Head of Fundraising and Communications is responsible for contributing and implementing effective fundraising strategies, growing Bowel Research UK's supporter base and income, and strengthening both established and emerging income streams. The post holder will also play a key role in shaping external communications to expand reach and inspire financial and non-financial support for the charity's mission.

## Why is the role vacant?

Bowel Research UK have been through a period of change, with Kathryn Pretzel-Sheils taking over as interim Chief Executive in Autumn 2025 and securing the permanent role in Spring this year. The team have been without a Head of Fundraising and Communications for over a year as the charity took time to evaluate what was needed to lead the fundraising team with the support of a fundraising consultant. Since the start of 2026, they have had interim support in the Head of role, which will ensure the fundraising team are in a positive and supported place, and the incoming candidate has a solid foundation to start from.

## Who are Bowel Research UK looking for?

The successful candidate will have operated at a senior level within the charity sector, bringing substantial fundraising experience across multiple income streams and a track record of developing and growing sustainable income. They will combine the strategic leadership expected of a Head of Fundraising with a hands-on approach to delivery, ensuring that fundraising plans are translated into measurable results.

Given the significant opportunity for growth within individual giving area at Bowel Research UK, a background in individual giving is an essential criteria. As the role leads across all income streams, understanding of a broad range of fundraising disciplines, including trusts and foundations, strategic partnerships, major donors, stewardship, and in memory and legacy giving would be helpful. Though the successful candidate doesn't need to demonstrate direct hands-on experience in all areas.

The candidate will demonstrate communications skills, a sound understanding of fundraising strategy, and experience of engaging and influencing senior stakeholders, with the ability to identify and maximise opportunities across diverse income streams.

They will be a proactive, self-motivated and collaborative individual with writing, communication and budgeting skills in line with the expectations of a senior leadership position. They will be confident in building effective relationships, influencing stakeholders at all levels, and will bring a positive, resilient, and solutions-focused approach. They will be confident articulating fundraising strategies to non-fundraising audiences and be fully aligned with the charity's mission and ambitions.



## Areas of potential

### Owning the Fundraising Strategy

Bowel Research UK is currently developing its organisational strategy and engagement strategy, and the new Head of Fundraising and Communications will play a key role in shaping this work ahead of final sign-off. This refreshed strategic direction will provide an essential framework for fundraising and communications activity, enabling a clearer and more compelling case for support, improved

identification of opportunities and risks, and expanded engagement with audiences, including those not previously or consistently reached.

Within this context, there is significant opportunity to develop and grow income across individual giving, major donations, legacies and in-memory giving, ensuring a more balanced and sustainable fundraising portfolio. The postholder will be instrumental in embedding these income streams within the wider strategy and unlocking their full potential.

The initial priority will be to strengthen donor retention, deepen audience insight, and establish a robust stewardship and supporter journey, before scaling acquisition activity. Alongside this, there is significant potential to expand legacy giving and in-memory fundraising, building meaningful long-term relationships with supporters and increasing lifetime value.

There is also considerable opportunity to develop and grow major donor fundraising, working closely with senior supporters and networks to secure transformational gifts. These income streams—individual giving, major donors, legacies and in-memory giving—represent a substantial growth opportunity for the charity.

The postholder will have the opportunity to shape strategy across all of these areas, develop business cases for investment, and take ownership of their development.

We are seeking someone who combines individual giving expertise with a passion for delivering exceptional supporter experience. Developing integrated strategies across individual giving, major donors, legacies and in-memory giving, alongside the wider supporter journey, will be a core and highly rewarding part of the role.

### Developing Restricted Income Opportunities Across All Streams



Historically, most fundraising income at Bowel research UK has been unrestricted, creating significant opportunity to grow restricted funding across trusts, major donors, legacy giving, in-memory fundraising and corporate partnerships. The postholder will work closely with the Trust Fundraising Manager to develop compelling cases for support, identify new audiences, and unlock income from previously underdeveloped areas.



## Systems and Data Optimisation

Investment has been made in strengthening Bowel Research UK's CRM system (Donorfy), alongside improvements in data quality and functionality. This has enabled more consistent stewardship, improved reporting, and stronger insight-led fundraising.

A demonstrable understanding of how to use CRM systems effectively to drive insight, performance and supporter engagement will be highly valuable in this role.

### **Immediate priorities**

The immediate priority is to shift towards higher-value income streams, building a stronger, more qualified pipeline and increasing momentum with major donors, larger trusts and aligned partners. More broadly, this role plays a key part in moving the organization from a largely transactional model to a more strategic, relationship-driven approach, with stronger storytelling and clearer



supporter journeys underpinning growth. In the first 6–12 months, success will look like a clear and actionable high-value strategy, early traction with larger gifts, and tangible progress on core building blocks such as the Case for Support and Impact Report.

This is a role that requires pace, resilience and a willingness to roll up your sleeves, balancing immediate income needs with longer-term development, but the opportunity is significant, with real untapped potential and the chance to shape the next phase of growth for the charity.

### **Areas of challenge**

#### Balancing immediate income with long-term foundations

The role requires delivering short-term income growth, particularly from high-value donors and trusts, while simultaneously building key infrastructure such as the supporter journey, case for support and stronger stewardship processes. Managing both at a pace can be demanding.

## Operating in a period of change and limited capacity

The organisation has been through leadership transition and a period without a permanent Head, and the team is relatively small. This means the postholder needs to bring stability and clarity, while also being comfortable being hands-on and working at pace with limited internal resource.

## Unlocking high-value potential from a modest base

While there are a solid trusts programme and strong credibility in the research space, high-value fundraising (major donors, partnerships, larger multi-year gifts) is underdeveloped. The challenge, and opportunity, is to build and convert a stronger pipeline, and to translate a respected but relatively low-profile brand into a compelling fundraising proposition.



## **What might a typical week look like in role?**

A typical week is a blend of strategy and delivery: shaping and driving a high-value fundraising plan (major donors, trusts and partnerships), reviewing and strengthening the pipeline, and getting directly involved in cultivation activity—particularly donor engagement events, which will be a growing focus over the next 12 months. Alongside this, there's important foundational work to do in line with the engagement strategy: embedding a clear supporter journey, making better use of data and Donorfy, and ensuring stewardship is more consistent and relationship-led.

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Estimated proportion of working time</b>
Team management and supervision/support	20%
Strategic planning, budget management and reporting	20%
Donor development – establishing, designing and delivering a programme for acquisition and retention of donors	40%
High value giving – overseeing and supporting the development of Trusts, Major Donor and Corporate income streams	20%

## **The Fundraising team**

The successful candidate will be working closely with a capable and genuinely lovely team, people who have been through a lot of change but remain positive, committed and a pleasure to work with,



as well as external support, and acting as a credible fundraising voice with senior leadership and trustees.

The postholder will lead a team that requires confident and authentic leadership. This role carries direct line management responsibility for both the fundraising and communications teams:

- Trust Fundraising Manager
  - Supporter Services Manager
  - Challenge and Community Events Manager
  - Digital Communications and Patient & Public Involvement Manager
- Oversee 2 external Communications Consultants (job share)

### **Financial responsibilities**

The Head of Fundraising and Communications will contribute to budget setting across all fundraising income streams and oversee expenditure budgets for communications and marketing activity, ensuring income targets are achieved and financial objectives are met.

# Key responsibilities: Head of Fundraising and Communications

## Strategic and Fundraising Leadership

- Develop and deliver a comprehensive fundraising and communications strategy aligned with the charity's strategic objectives to achieve and exceed agreed income targets.
- Contribute to the wider organisational strategy development, ensuring fundraising and communications opportunities are fully embedded.
- Develop a compelling case for support that reflects organisational priorities and opens up new audiences and income streams.
- Identify opportunities for growth across all fundraising channels, including individual giving, trusts and foundations, major donors, strategic partnerships, community fundraising, legacy giving and in-memory giving, and translate these into actionable plans and business cases.
- Ensure excellent stewardship and supporter care to maximise retention, lifetime value and supporter satisfaction.
- Build and maintain relationships with high-value supporters, funders, corporate partners and influencers.
- Monitor fundraising performance, using insight and data to drive continuous improvement and return on investment.
- Provide strategic advice to the Chief Executive, Board and colleagues on fundraising, communications and stakeholder engagement.

## Communications

- Lead the charity's Engagement Strategy to increase awareness and support fundraising objectives and organisational visibility.
- Oversee the development of compelling content across digital, social media, website, PR, campaigns and publications.
- Ensure a consistent and compelling brand identity across all communications channels.
- Develop impactful storytelling that demonstrates the charity's work, outcomes and impact.

- Work closely with internal stakeholders to ensure alignment between communications, fundraising and organisational priorities.
- Support the Chief Executive and senior leaders with public-facing communications and stakeholder engagement.

### **Supporter Engagement**

- Develop and deliver a sustainable strategy to grow supporter-led income across individual giving, major donors, legacy giving and in-memory fundraising.
- Lead supporter acquisition strategies, ensuring investment is cost-effective, scalable and focused on long-term supporter value.
- Champion an outstanding supporter experience across all fundraising and engagement touchpoints.
- Drive income growth and improved return on investment by maximising the potential of existing and underdeveloped supporter income streams.
- Collaborate with the Trusts Fundraising Manager to identify new funding opportunities and develop compelling applications and proposals.
- Support the development of restricted and unrestricted funding opportunities across all income streams.

### **Systems, Data and Infrastructure**

- Drive donor retention and fundraising performance through the effective use of Donorfy CRM, leveraging audience insight, segmentation and targeted engagement strategies.
- Optimise the use of Donorfy to support donor stewardship, reporting, data analysis and evidence-based fundraising decision-making.
- Champion strong systems use across the team to improve efficiency and supporter engagement.

### **Team Leadership and Line Management**

- Lead, motivate and develop the Fundraising and Communications team.
- Foster a culture of collaboration, accountability, innovation and continuous learning.
- Set clear objectives and performance measures for team members.
- Support professional development and succession planning within the team.

## **Governance and Compliance**

- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation, fundraising regulations, codes of practice and data protection requirements.
- Manage fundraising and communications budgets effectively.
- Prepare reports and performance updates for the Chief Executive, Board and relevant committees.
- Monitor and manage reputational and fundraising risks.

# Person Specification: Head of Fundraising and Communications

## Person Specification

### Experience

- Senior-level fundraising expertise within the charity sector
- Experience in delivering individual giving fundraising strategies, with demonstrable results in both supporter acquisition and retention.
- An understanding or additional experience across other income streams such as major donors, legacy giving, in-memory fundraising and corporate partnerships.
- Demonstrable success in delivering substantial income growth.
- Line management skills that demonstrate the ability to motivate, develop and manage teams, providing effective support, constructive challenge and performance management when required.
- Financial management skills, including responsibility for income and expenditure budgets, forecasting, risk assessment and contingency planning.
- Analytical capability that demonstrates the ability to interpret financial data and present clear, accurate reports and insights to a variety of audiences, including senior stakeholders and trustees.
- A track record of developing and implementing strategic fundraising plans that align with organisational priorities and deliver sustainable income growth and supporter engagement.
- Proven ability to build, influence and maintain relationships with donors, funders, corporate partners or other senior stakeholders.
- Demonstrable expertise in communications, marketing and brand development, with a track record of creating integrated campaigns that increase awareness, deepen engagement and support fundraising objectives.
- Practical understanding of fundraising regulation, compliance requirements and sector best practice, including relevant guidance from the Fundraising Regulator, Gambling Commission and Advertising Standards Authority.

### Skills and Abilities

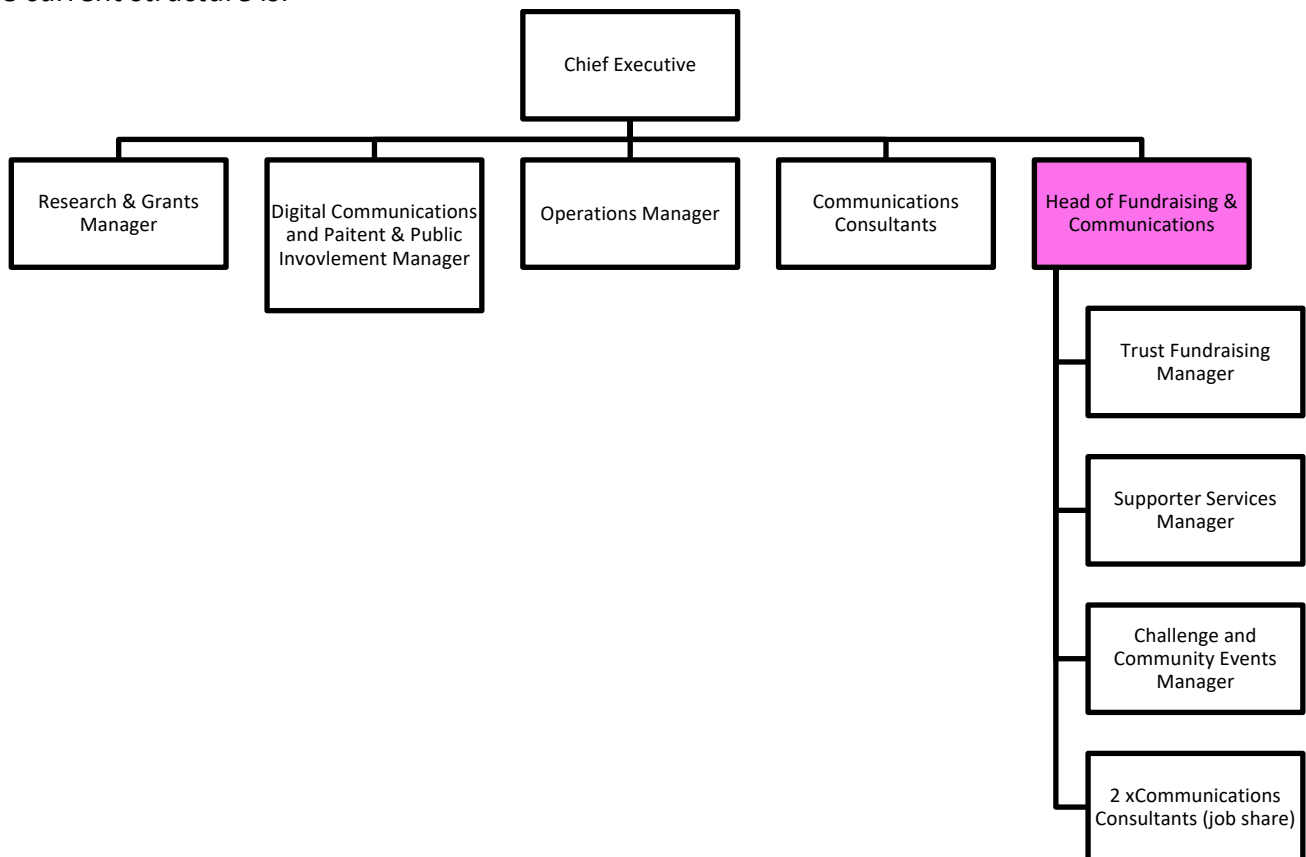
- Interpersonal, influencing and relationship-building skills that demonstrate the ability to engage effectively with colleagues at all levels, including senior stakeholders, funders and external partners.
- Written and verbal communication skills demonstrative of the ability to craft compelling messages, adapt communication styles for different audiences, and act as an effective ambassador for the charity.

- Confident and professional communicator across a range of settings, including virtual and in-person meetings, presentations, events and stakeholder engagement.
- Organisational and time management skill demonstrative of the ability to prioritise effectively, manage multiple competing deadlines and work independently without close supervision.
- Confident across digital platforms and products, including experience of CRM and fundraising databases, digital fundraising platforms, website content management systems, social media channels and marketing tools, alongside proficiency in Microsoft Office applications.
- Creative and solutions-focused thinker, able to identify opportunities to improve fundraising products, supporter experience, communications and operational efficiency.
- Ability to operate effectively as part of a Senior Leadership Team, demonstrating sound judgement, collaborative working and contribution to strategic decision-making.

# The Bowel Research UK team

Bowel Research UK are big enough to make a real difference, but small enough to stay agile and take advantage of new opportunities, with every staff member able to see the impact of their work.

The current structure is:



Bowel Research UK are committed to offering a flexible working environment to help attract and retain the very best talent. They have offices in central London, with most team members working from there on Tuesdays and Thursdays.



# Benefits & life at Bowel Research UK

<b>Salary</b>	£55,000 - £60,000 per annum  The successful candidate will be offered along the salary band in line with their experience and performance at interview.
<b>Hours</b>	35 per week
<b>Contract length</b>	Permanent
<b>Location, travel, and flexible working</b>	Bowel Research UK is a flexible employer, and this role is offered on a hybrid working basis. The postholder will be required to work from the charity's London office two days per week, ideally Tuesdays and Thursdays to align with other team members working a hybrid pattern.  For candidates who prefer an office-based arrangement, there is also the option to work from the office full-time if preferred.
<b>Annual leave</b>	25 days annual leave, plus public holidays, and 3 additional days at Christmas
<b>Pension</b>	5% employer contribution
<b>Other benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Death in service – 4 x annual salary</li> <li>• Health cash plan scheme including Perkbox</li> <li>• Employee assistance programme including access to annual health check and digital GP</li> <li>• Season ticket loan</li> <li>• Cycle to work scheme</li> </ul>

If you have questions about the benefits package, or if there are policies you would value seeing before continuing in the selection process, please do reach out via [recruitment@thinkcs.org](mailto:recruitment@thinkcs.org) and we will be happy to find out the information you need.

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Bowel Research UK is committed to treating everyone fairly, equally, and with respect. They are an equal opportunities employer and actively promote equality of opportunity by ensuring fair treatment for all and opposing all forms of discrimination in the workplace.

Throughout the recruitment process, the charity and THINK Recruitment will ensure that candidates are assessed solely on merit, without reference to any protected characteristic, and that no individual receives less favourable treatment for any reason.



Selection criteria are strictly based on the requirements of the role and are directly relevant to the skills, experience, and qualifications needed to perform the job effectively. Only criteria that are essential to the role will be used in the assessment of candidates.

All recruiting managers are required to ensure that no pre-judgements or preferences are made in advance that could influence or compromise the fairness of the recruitment process.



Bowel Research UK's Equal Opportunities Policy is available upon request.

If there is anything THINK Recruitment can do to make any reasonable adjustments to ensure you can fully engage in the process, please do contact Jo McGuinness at [recruitment@thinkcs.org](mailto:recruitment@thinkcs.org) for a confidential discussion.

# How to apply

To express interest in this role, and to arrange an initial conversation with THINK Recruiting please email [recruitment@thinkcs.org](mailto:recruitment@thinkcs.org) with a copy of your CV and contact information.

Our Recruitment Manager will have an informal screening conversation with all applicants prior to shortlisting. Rather than requesting candidates submit a supporting statement or cover letter, we will provide interested candidates with screening questions to answer which alongside your CV will form your application. Please ensure you allow enough time to have a call prior to the closing date, as we cannot put candidates through to shortlist who have not been screened.

<b>Screening calls with THINK Recruitment</b>	Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> June – Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> July
<b>Closing date</b>	Midnight Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> July
<b>Invites to interview out to candidates</b>	Midday Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July
<b>Stage 1 interviews</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> or 23 <sup>rd</sup> July
<b>Stage 2 interviews</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> or 30 <sup>th</sup> July
<b>Decision by</b>	EOD Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> August

The selection process will take place in two stages.

- Stage 1 will consist of a short virtual interview, focused on scenario-based questions.
- Stage 2 will include a panel interview followed by a meet-the-team session.

At the point of invitation, candidates will receive further details including information about the panel, any task requirements, and the interview questions in advance to support preparation.



If you require any reasonable adjustments to support your participation in the selection process, please contact THINK Recruitment. All requests will be handled confidentially.

Thank you for your interest, please do get in touch if you have any questions.

**Jo McGuinness**

**Senior Recruitment Manager** - [recruitment@thinkcs.org](mailto:recruitment@thinkcs.org)

# THINK Recruitment

## THINK Consulting Solutions Ltd

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