

Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in the position of Head of Fundraising with the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS), the wildlife conservation charity.

RZSS has an ambitious vision of a world where nature is protected, valued and loved. We work with partners in more than 20 countries around the world and the iconic Edinburgh Zoo and Highland Wildlife Park – set in the stunning Scottish Highlands – are our gateways to nature.

This is an exciting and rare opportunity to make a big difference for nature, people and the environment.

The RZSS fundraising team have made great strides in recent years, achieving major funding for key projects such as Saving Wildcats and Scotland's Wildlife Discovery Centre. I would like to thank our current Head of Fundraising Celia Brady and wish her the very best in her retirement.

This is a great time to join our charity as we aim to do even more to reverse the decline of species, create deeper connections with nature for people and support communities to protect our natural world.

Modern, progressive and conservation focused zoos have a vital role to play as we face up to the enormous challenges presented by climate change and biodiversity loss.

We are looking for someone who shares our passion for wildlife. A team builder who brings people together – and of course someone with the knowledge, skills and experience who can take our fundraising forward.

Nature needs us all more than ever, so please get in touch if you think this could be the right role for you.

With best wishes

Ben Supple
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Background to RZSS

RZSS was founded in 1909 by Edinburgh lawyer Thomas Gillespie. A visionary and nature enthusiast, in just four years Thomas garnered sufficient support and funding to enable RZSS to buy an 85 acre site to the west of Edinburgh, with help from the City of Edinburgh Council.

Edinburgh Zoo opened in July 1913 and was incorporated by Royal Charter later that year. However, it was only in 1948, following a visit by HRH King George VI, that RZSS was granted the privilege of adding the prefix 'Royal' to its name. In 1986 our charity brought Highland Wildlife Park into the RZSS family.

Our parks are gateways to the natural world through which people can experience nature. They can learn about the challenges facing wildlife and discover how we harness expertise in conservation science and animal care to save species from extinction. Making nature more accessible is fundamental because people protect and value what they love and understand.

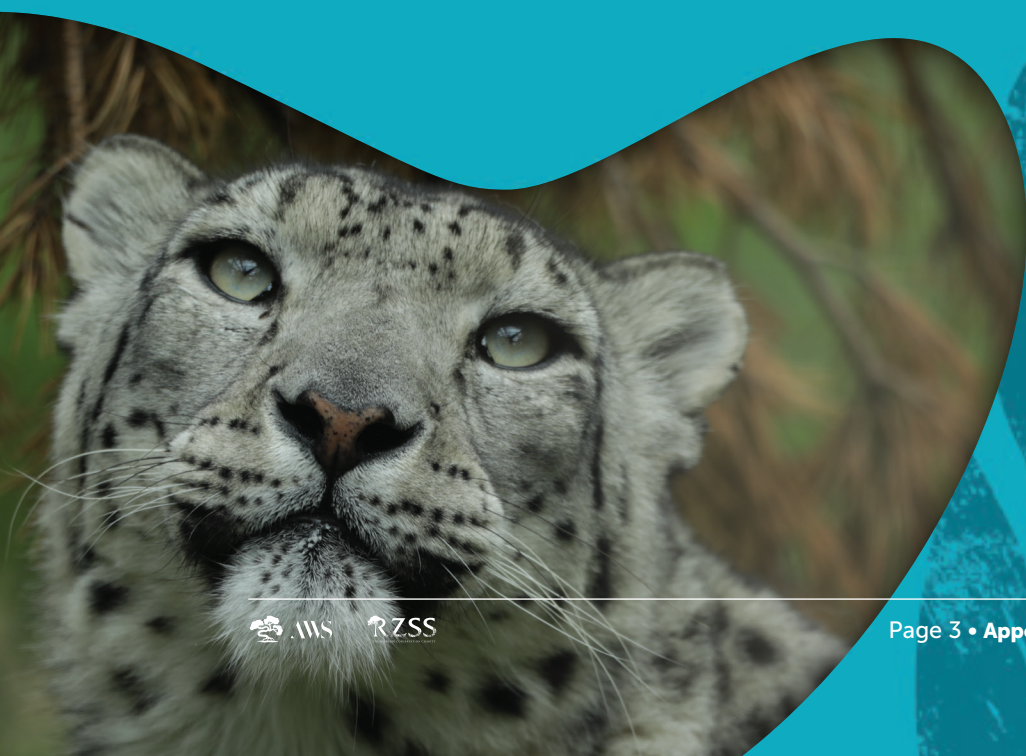
Our purpose, mission and vision

We have a very clear purpose: to create a world where nature is protected, valued and loved. But we cannot achieve this alone. Nature needs us all more than ever.

Working together with our teams, visitors, members, supporters and partners, we can achieve our 2030 pledges to:

- reverse the decline of at least 50 species
- create deeper connections with nature for more than a million people
- enable more than 100 communities to better protect our natural world

<https://www.rzss.org.uk/about/our-mission>



Job Description

Salary: £62,019- £65,158

Hours: 37.5 hours (We are open to a four day a week working arrangement)

Holiday entitlement: 34 days

Pension: Minimum 4% employee, up to 5% matched employer

Other Benefits

- Death in Service (3 times salary);
- Long Service Award;
- Annual Bonus (discretionary);
- Employee Assistance Programme;
- Access to personal Health Care (Healthshield);
- Annual leave buy and sell arrangements

Purpose

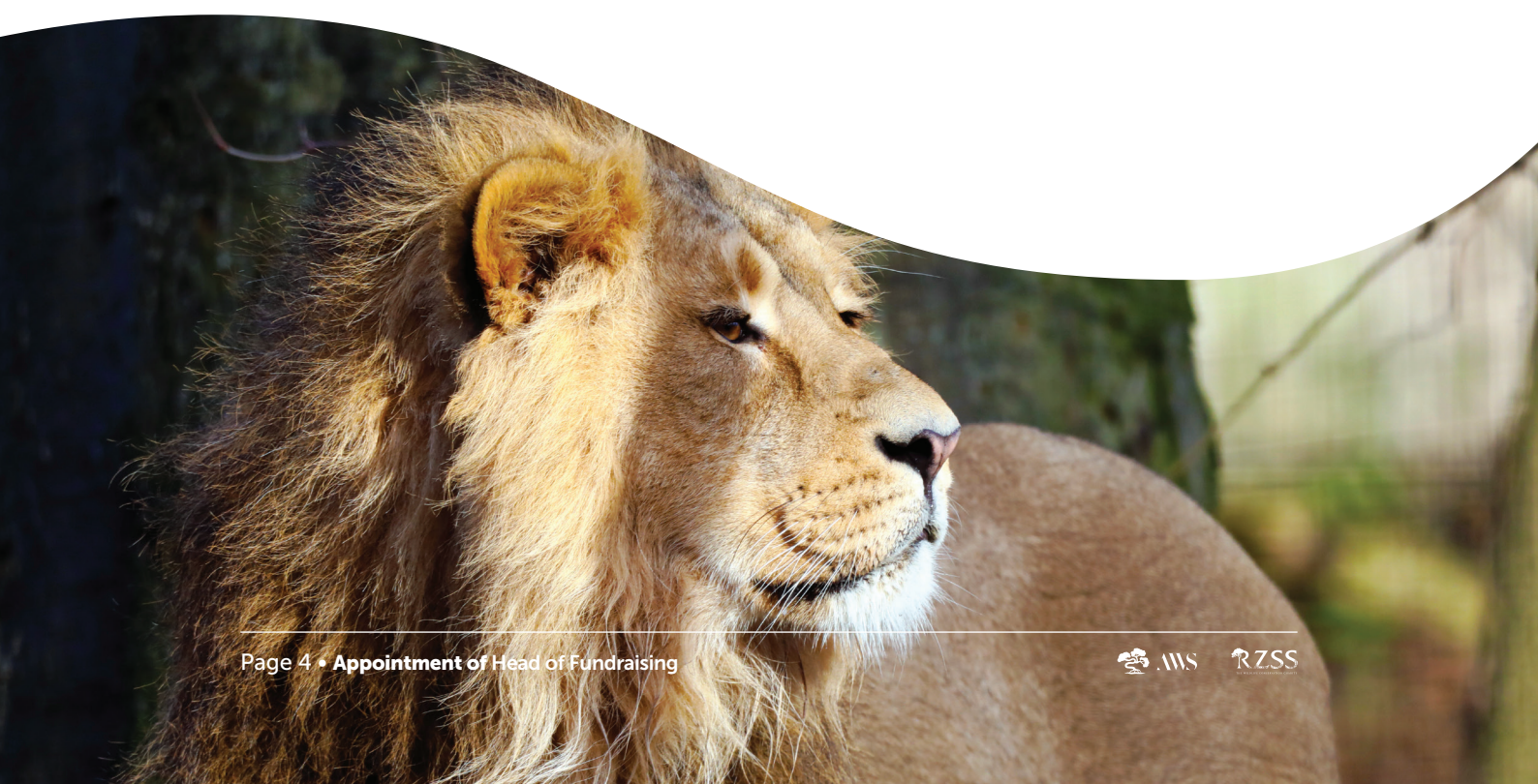
Lead the fundraising function across the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS).

Generate restricted and unrestricted funding through integrated activities, campaigns and stewardship, achieving agreed targets.

As a member of the senior leadership team, shape the strategic direction of RZSS, position our parks as world-class visitor attractions and strengthen our reputation as a global leader in conservation, science and community engagement.

Scope

- Lead fundraising function across RZSS, driving income generation and meeting targets
- Lead the development of integrated fundraising activities and campaigns for Edinburgh Zoo, Highland Wildlife Park and RZSS-wide initiatives
- Lead the development of a comprehensive stewardship programme to generate recurring income and increase support and advocacy
- Responsible for annual unrestricted fundraising of approximately £2m per annum and restricted funding dependent on projects and organizational need
- Manage the fundraising team budget of approximately £350k per annum
- Line manage three fundraising managers, with indirect management of fundraising officers





Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Design and deliver the fundraising strategy aligned with RZSS' mission and long-term goals
- Lead departmental planning, budgeting, performance management and KPI reporting
- Monitor performance against KPIs and report regularly to senior colleagues
- Achieve agreed financial targets, including trusts, foundations, corporate sponsorship, individual giving and legacies
- Monitor market trends and competitor activity to inform innovation and growth

Fundraising Activity

- Grow fundraising income by implementing data-driven strategies
- Oversee the creation of high-quality fundraising content and campaigns
- Develop a comprehensive stewardship programme
- Ensure brand consistency and across all internal and external fundraising communications
- Ensure compliance with data regulations including GDPR

People Leadership and Stakeholder Engagement

- Inspire, develop and manage a high-performing team
- Champion diversity, equity and inclusion
- Represent RZSS at national and international forums (e.g. BIAZA, ASVA and ALVA)
- Build and maintain strategic relationships with internal and external stakeholders

Personal Development

- Ensure compliance with RZSS's policies, procedures and guidelines, together with all relevant regulatory and statutory requirements
- Engage with the RZSS appraisal system, demonstrating commitment to our values and your continuous personal development
- Carry out other reasonable tasks in line with organisational needs

Knowledge, Skills & Experience

Knowledge

Essential

Desirable

Degree-level education or equivalent experience	✓	
Deep understanding of the fundraising sector	✓	
Expertise in fundraising, including trusts and foundations, corporate sponsorship and legacy and individual giving	✓	
Data regulations, including GDPR (additional RZSS specific training can be provided)	✓	
Full driving licence	✓	
Qualification, e.g. Advanced Diploma in Fundraising:		✓

Skills

Essential

Desirable

Excellent written and verbal communication	✓	
Strategic planning	✓	
Budgeting and financial analysis	✓	
Growing fundraising income	✓	
Stakeholder engagement and relationship building	✓	
Reporting against key performance indicators (KPIs)	✓	

Experience

Essential

Desirable

Leadership in a conservation organisation, charity and/or visitor attraction	✓	
Significant experience in fundraising campaign development	✓	
Team and people management	✓	
Donor stewardship programmes	✓	
Key external stakeholder relationship management	✓	

Behavioural Competencies



Competency	Level	Essential	Desirable
Planning and Organising	Leads strategic planning and resource allocation across multiple functions	✓	
Finding Solutions	Develops innovative solutions to complex, cross-functional challenges	✓	
Delivering Services and Experience	Builds a culture of excellence and accountability across multiple teams and functions	✓	
Understanding Others	Anticipates team needs and adapts leadership style to maximise performance	✓	
Communicating	Influences internal and external stakeholders through clear, compelling messaging	✓	
Embracing Change	Drive and support continuous improvements in the team	✓	
Thinking Big Picture	Aligns departmental strategy with long-term organisational goals	✓	





How to Apply

For further information or to arrange a confidential discussion about this vacancy, please contact either Alan Surgeon or Donna McKay at AWS Executive:

Email: rzss@awsexecutive.com

Closing Date for Applications: Monday 19th October 2026 at midday.

Recruitment Timeline: Interviews are scheduled to take place during the week commencing 2nd November 2026. The recruitment process may include a second-stage interview.

Please submit a tailored CV and covering letter via the microsite link below, clearly demonstrating how your knowledge, skills and experience align with the requirements outlined in the job pack.

<https://awsexecutive/headoffundraising-vacancy-rzss/>



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