



Chief executive application pack

£68k- £73k dependent on experience

35 hours per week, permanent contract



Welcome from our chief commissioner

I am so pleased that you are interested in joining our team. This is a really exciting time to join Girlguiding Scotland. With nearly 40,000 young members and powered by 9,000 volunteers we are the largest charity for girls and young women in Scotland. Girlguiding Scotland has been around for over 100 years, and we have much to be proud of in that rich and vibrant history, but we know that to remain exciting and relevant to young people we must continually evolve.

Our approach at Girlguiding Scotland is two-fold. We support and develop volunteer teams to deliver guiding in local areas, and we also provide high quality events and experiences at a national level that encourage volunteers to make a difference to the lives of girls across Scotland.

We had a very a successful 2025, where we launched our Volunteer Recruitment Project, celebrated our volunteers, held an inspiring Lead 2025 event, an international wide game in Amsterdam, a takeover by 8,000 members of a safari park and launched our youth voice panel's manifesto. In 2026 we plan to strengthen support for local commissioners and welcome more volunteers to grow guiding in Scotland. We are proud to be holding One Team 2026 an event where volunteers can network, share and learn from each other. For our young members, we are excited to launch 'Get On Board' – a resource to support girls and volunteers to increase confidence with using public transport. We also look forward to Camp CEO in August – a 4-night residential for girls to develop leadership skills and meet CEOs from across industries in Scotland.

Our current chief executive is retiring so we are looking for an experienced and inspirational leader who shares our values and vision, to enable even more girls and young women to fulfil their potential. You will lead the staff team and play a key role working in partnership with the Scottish chief commissioner and her team, as they support the volunteers who deliver guiding in our communities. You will be a role model for members and an ambassador for the organisation in the wider Scottish community.

For our staff, girls and volunteers, we want Girlguiding Scotland to be a place where everyone is welcome, free to be themselves, and has an equal sense of belonging – whoever they are and wherever they're from. We are committed to employing and supporting a diverse workforce and welcome applicants from all backgrounds. In recognition of this we are accredited with the LGBT Youth Scotland charter at silver level. We also recognise the importance of staff being paid fairly and being able to achieve a good standard of living, which is why we are also an accredited Living Wage Employer.

Girlguiding Scotland is committed to promoting diversity, inclusion and equal opportunities. We welcome requests for reasonable adjustments in our recruitment process so if you need help to complete your application, please let us know.

After reading this application pack I hope you feel inspired to apply to join us. If we can provide more information or support to help you apply, please contact our retained consultants at AWS Executive, Donna McKay (donna@awsexecutive.com) or Alan Surgeon (alan@awsexecutive.com).

Best wishes,



Elaine Rough

Chief commissioner and chair of the board of trustees



About Girlguiding Scotland

Girls can do anything.

We help every girl discover this for herself, whether she's 4 or 18 or in between. All girls have a home at Girlguiding - whoever they are, and wherever they are. This is a place where she can be herself, get creative, explore, and most of all have fun. Where she'll make special friends and do things she never thought she could.

Girlguiding is what each girl wants it to be. She can choose her own path through our activities and events. It might be giggles in sleeping bags. Songs around a campfire. The buzz of getting a new badge. The sound of thousands of excited girls at their very own music festival. The thrill of doing something for the first time. Coming home exhausted and full of stories and having made new friends.

We help girls think big and be bold. We catch them if they stumble and encourage them to try again. We show them a world of possibilities big and small. We're for girls, with girls, led by girls. We're Girlguiding Scotland.

Our vision

An equal world where all girls can make a positive difference, be happy, safe and fulfil their potential.

Our mission

Through fun, friendship, challenge and adventure we empower girls to find their voice, inspiring them to discover the best in themselves and to make a positive difference in their community.

Our values

Caring - Challenging - Empowering - Fun - Inclusive - Inspiring

Our sections



Rainbows welcomes all girls from 4-7 years old for play, learning and tonnes of fun in a colourful, safe space



Brownies welcomes all girls from 7-10 years old for nonstop fun, learning and adventure.



Guides is a relaxed, welcoming space where girls can have fun learn and be themselves with good friends from 10 to 14 years old.



Rangers is a space for girls from 14 to 18 to get together to have fun, learn more, give back, hang out, and just be themselves.

Our strategy

Shared goals for Girlguiding & Girlguiding Scotland



Unrivalled
girl
experiences

By 2030 more girls and young women will have had a Girlguiding experience which meets their evolving needs, is girl-led and builds their confidence and wellbeing. We'll tackle gender inequality through positive outcomes for girls and society.



Rewarding
and flexible
volunteer
experiences

By 2030, we'll attract more volunteers to our fun and flexible opportunities, so we reach more girls. Slicker processes and digital tools will make volunteering easier.



Inclusive,
impactful
and visible

By 2030, we'll reach girls from all backgrounds and work with partners, communities and schools to be more accessible to girls. We'll be known widely for our impact on girls across the UK.



Sustainable
and efficient

The best way to do brilliant things, is by getting the basics right. We're going to build strong foundations, including: strong structures and processes; empowering girls to lead the way and; new ways of working.

Girlguiding Scotland's priorities, 2023 – 2028

Recognising the vital role of volunteers in delivering our mission

Enquire

We'll increase our visibility through a range of local and national recruitment and awareness raising activities so more people from a range of backgrounds **enquire** about volunteering with Girlguiding Scotland.

Welcome

We'll support local areas to improve the consistency and quality of the **welcome** new volunteers receive, making it quicker and easier to join Girlguiding Scotland as an adult. We'll also champion flexible approaches to guiding to ensure our offer meets the needs of today's volunteers as well as today's girls.

Stay

We'll deliver unique, high quality girl events that encourage more volunteers to have fun, build friendships and see the difference they make to the lives of girls across Scotland. We'll also celebrate our volunteers' achievements, encouraging them to **stay** in guiding.

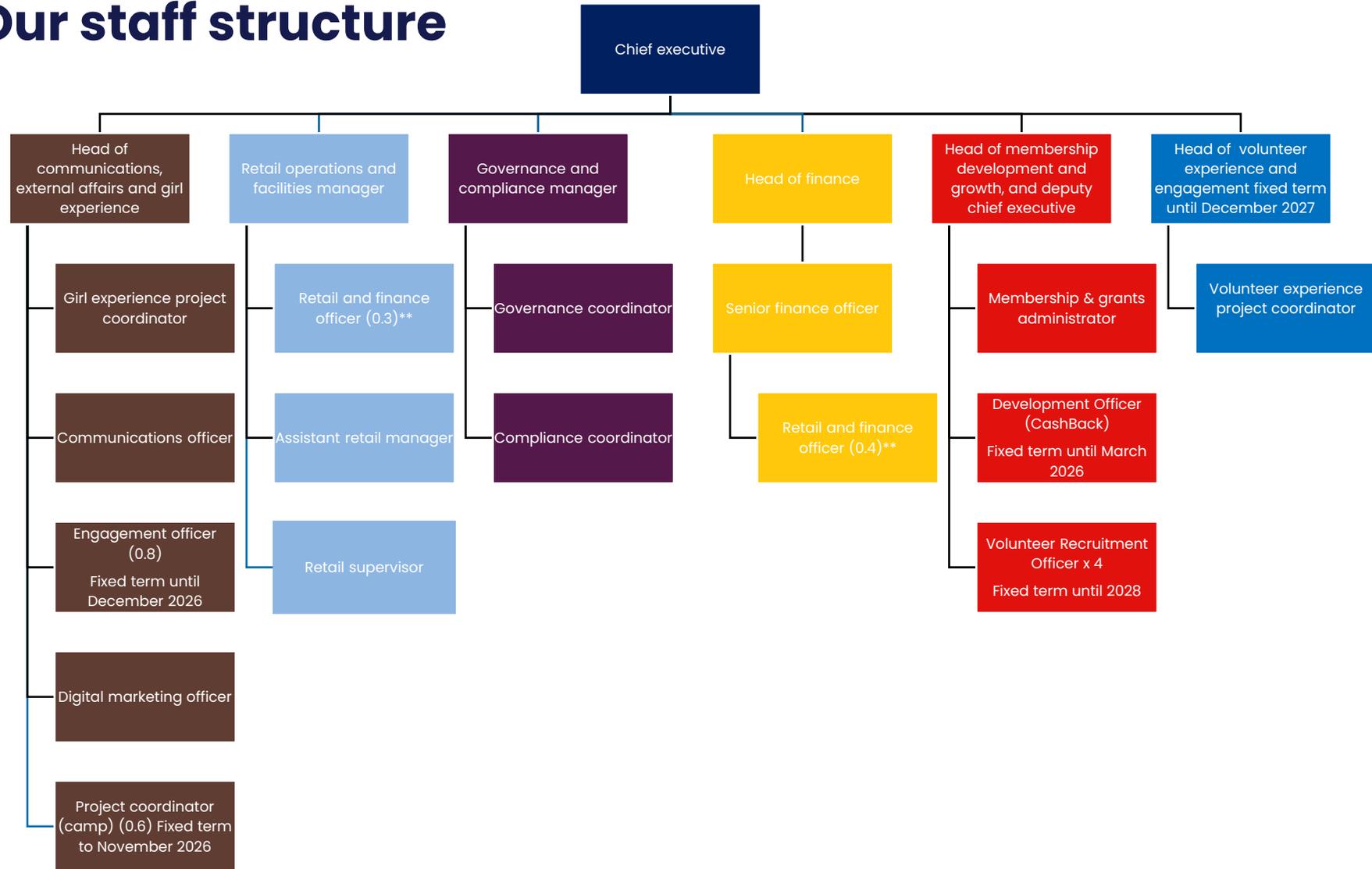
Develop

We'll give all members access to leadership opportunities and training, so they **develop** new skills and gain confidence. Our existing volunteers will develop in their roles and more of our young members will progress to adult volunteering, helping to build our future volunteer workforce.

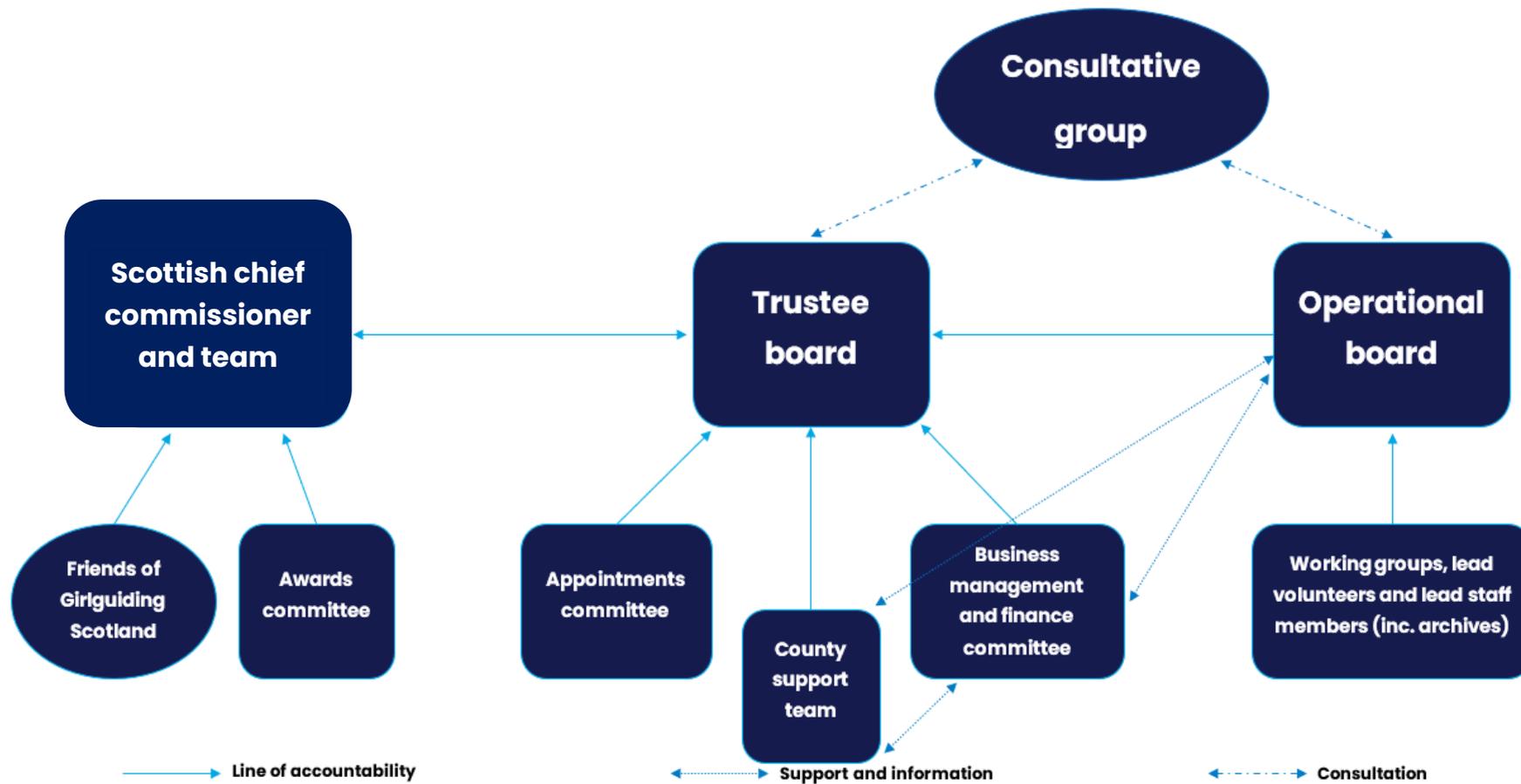
The Essentials

We'll ensure we're **efficient, compliant** and **well-run**. We'll lead by example and support our counties, districts/ divisions and units to follow charity best practice and meet their responsibilities with regards to Girlguiding policies and procedures, and the law.

Our staff structure



Our governance structure



Chief executive role description

Overall purpose

- To lead the staff team, and - in partnership with a team of national volunteers - shape and deliver guiding in Scotland.
- To provide inspirational leadership for volunteers and staff and effective management of the staff team.
- To work closely with the Scottish chief commissioner and trustee board to ensure the charity is well governed.
- To work closely with the deputy Scottish chief commissioner to ensure the operational board effectively delivers on agreed projects.
- To act as a role model for members and be an ambassador for the organisation in the wider Scottish community.
- To provide a link between Girlguiding Scotland and Girlguiding (UK), fostering positive reciprocal relationships and ensuring ongoing alignment of vision, purpose and strategies.

Main areas of responsibility

Leadership and Management

- Develop a close partnership with the Scottish chief commissioner and her team to ensure smooth working relationships between staff and volunteers.
- Maintain a strong working relationship with Girlguiding (UK), supporting implementation of organisation-wide policies and processes and fostering effective communications
- Provide strong and visionary leadership alongside the Scottish chief commissioner for senior volunteers and staff, in the development and implementation of Girlguiding Scotland's overall strategy.
- Provide support for the Girlguiding Scotland trustee board and be responsible for implementing its decisions and recommendations by providing inspiring leadership to the management team and wider organisation, with the ability to lead change, prioritise and ensure the effective and efficient delivery of the strategy.
- Provide leadership for the business planning process, regularly monitor performance against the plan and advise the trustee board where significant change occurs.
- Champion the Girlguiding Scotland brand by promoting and building networks and relationships with relevant stakeholders and organisations and, as appropriate, leading or supporting opportunities to enhance Girlguiding Scotland's funding opportunities, presence, reputation and influence nationally and internationally. Act as an advocate for the organisation.
- Maintain awareness of trends and relevant changes and developments in the external environment and advise the Girlguiding Scotland trustee board of their implications as relevant.

- Demonstrate values-based leadership, reflecting the mission and vision of the organisation and promote the organisation's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Implement and support the development and maintenance of a high performing and positive culture, which consistently adds value to the impact of our work across combined teams of staff with volunteers.
- Be accountable for the effective recruitment and management of staff in line with legislative requirements and employment good practice. Oversee effective delegation and support within the staff team.
- Be responsible for staff performance through the performance appraisal scheme, ensuring regular appraisals are carried out, providing support and guidance, and taking prompt action to address performance issues when required.
- Advise the Scottish chief commissioner and business management and finance Committee regarding appropriate employment policies and implement those policies which have been adopted.
- Manage the offices and other facilities at the Scottish Headquarters office in Edinburgh on a day-to-day basis and provide support service to the Scottish chief commissioner and her team to enable them to fulfil their volunteer management role.
- Ensure that the organisation has the necessary administrative systems and support and take responsibility for administration associated with the role, balancing own admin tasks with appropriate delegation to the wider team.

Governance

- Manage overall financial position, subject to any limits of authority. Be accountable for the effective and efficient management of delegated budgets in accordance with Girlguiding Scotland financial policies and procedures and report to the Girlguiding Scotland trustee board as appropriate.
- Ensure that policies, practices and staff behaviours are consistent with relevant good governance law, regulations and guidance and in line with OSCR best practice.
- Ensure that the risk register is maintained, that the Girlguiding Scotland trustee board are informed of any issues arising from organisational activities that may pose governance, reputational, safeguarding, or other risk to the organisation and to advise as appropriate on the most effective ways to manage such risks.
- Fulfil obligations as a voting member of the Girlguiding Scotland operational board fostering a positive and dynamic culture which sustains a rolling plan of activities for the benefit of members.
- Foster and maintain positive working relationships with Girlguiding (UK) through active participation in networks and ad hoc working groups as appropriate.

Additional responsibilities

To undertake any other duties that may reasonably be required to fulfil the duties of this post.

Additional information

This is a full-time position based at our Scottish Headquarters in Edinburgh, with some hybrid working. Hours of work will normally be Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm. There will be an extensive requirement to attend meetings and events held in the evening and at weekends, in line with volunteer availability, for which time off in lieu (TOIL) will be given.

Person specification

The below skills, experience and knowledge may have been gained through education, paid employment or in a voluntary role.

Skills	Essential or desirable
Commitment to the vision, mission and values of Girlguiding	E
Ability to think strategically and understand the broad context within which the organisation operates	E
Exceptional interpersonal and influencing skills with the ability to build networks and represent the organisation at a senior level to key decision makers	E
Ability to initiate change, manage it smoothly and ensure continuous improvements in performance	E
Excellent communication skills (written and oral), especially the ability to digest large amounts of information and present complex issues clearly and concisely to a variety of audiences	E
Ability to take initiative and exercise sound judgement, including in complex or high-risk situations, and remain calm under pressure	E
Ability to lead inclusively and embed inclusive practices	E
Ability to work flexibly and to travel frequently within Scotland	E
Valid driving licence	D
Experience	
Significant experience of leading teams at a senior management level within the voluntary, public or private sectors, including the ability to motivate, inspire and develop others	E
Experience in developing and implementing clear strategy and policy	E
Experience in planning and delivering varied programmes of work, including adapting to changing priorities	D
Experience of managing staff and understanding of best practice in recruitment, training, and performance management.	E
Experience of financial responsibility and developing, managing and reviewing budgets and financial activity	E
Experience managing and reviewing retail activity	D
Experience of organisational governance in third sector	D

Knowledge

Knowledge of voluntary and charitable sector and how this sits within Scottish civic society	D
Understanding of the culture and ways of working of a large membership organisation	D
Knowledge of different leadership styles and an understanding of how to inspire and motivate others	E
Understand the nature of change and how to plan for and implement change	E
Strong knowledge of good practice in charity governance	D
Understand how to build and manage an organisational budget, how to set up financial controls, and how to analyse financial statements for financial strength and sustainability.	E
Knowledge of how to assess risk both at strategic and operational levels and be able to identify appropriate mitigations	E
Awareness of fundamental principles of keeping staff, young members and volunteers safe	D
Understanding of HR and charity law and regulations, and when to seek external advice	D
IT literate (Microsoft packages)	E

Personal qualities

Willingness to embrace the organisation's commitment to young people and youth voice	E
Flexible approach to working hours, and willingness to work evenings and weekends as required.	E

Employment details

Contract type

This is a permanent, full-time (35 hours per week) contract.

Location

This is an office-based role, with the option to work part of the week from home. We're based at Girlguiding Scotland, 16 Coates Crescent, Edinburgh EH3 7AH. There will be a requirement for travel throughout Scotland and the UK including evenings and weekends with occasional overnight stays.

Salary

£68,000 – £73,000 per year depending on experience.

Working hours

The core hours are 35 hours per week.

You will be required to work additional hours – including evenings and weekends – for which time off in lieu (TOIL) will be given. Overtime is not paid.

Holiday entitlement

38 days inclusive of bank holidays and office closures

Probationary period

The post will be subject to a probationary period of 6 months.

Notice period

The notice period required by both parties after successful completion of the probationary period will be 3 months.

Criminal record check

Girlguiding Scotland is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. This role requires the post holder to be a member of the PVG scheme. The successful candidate will be supported to join the scheme and/or to complete a PVG scheme disclosure, the cost of which will be covered by Girlguiding Scotland.

How we value our people

Learning and development

We are committed to supporting our staff through a variety of methods including coaching, e-learning, and individual courses. There is scope to apply to be supported to obtain further qualifications relevant to the role. This is likely to include support with time and a modest contribution to course fees, repayable to Girlguiding Scotland if you leave before a specified date.

Flexible working

We are committed to ensuring that our staff have a good work-life balance and we are happy to offer flexibility where possible, whilst balancing business need.

Contributory pension scheme

In addition to the government's auto enrolment pension, we offer a generous organisational pension, including an employer contribution of 10% of your basic salary.

Volunteering support

Staff who volunteer within Girlguiding or with other recognised organisations are entitled to up to five days of paid volunteering leave per year (pro rata for part time staff).

Employee assistance programme

We have an employee assistance programme provided by Health Assured. It is free of charge and offers confidential, independent help, information and guidance to all employees and their immediate family 24 hours a day.

Enhanced family leave

We offer enhanced maternity and adoption, partner (paternity), and shared parental leave, as well as up to 3 days paid carer's leave per year (pro rata for part time staff).

How to apply

To apply please contact our retained consultants at [AWS Executive](#).

The closing date for applications is **9am on Tuesday 7 April 2026**. Please note that applications received after this date will not be considered.

For further information or to arrange a confidential discussion about the vacancy, please contact Donna McKay (donna@awsexecutive.com) or Alan Surgeon (alan@awsexecutive.com) at [AWS Executive](#).

We anticipate that the first round of interviews will take on **Monday 27** and **Tuesday 28 April** at our headquarters in Edinburgh.

Candidates who are successful in the panel interview will be invited to attend a discussion with a Youth Panel of Girlguiding members. It is anticipated that this will take place online, in the evening of **Tuesday 5** or **Wednesday 6 May**.

Girlguiding Scotland values inclusivity, and so we welcome requests for support or reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process. If you need any support to complete your application, then please get in touch to discuss how we can support you.