



TALL ROOTS

# Chief Executive Officer

April 2024

 [bdadyslexia.org.uk](https://bdadyslexia.org.uk)

 [@bdadyslexia](https://twitter.com/bdadyslexia)

British  
**Dyslexia**  
Association 

# Welcome



On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I extend a warm invitation to you to consider joining the British Dyslexia Association as our next CEO.

This is a fantastic opportunity to lead an organisation that has, since its inception, made a significant impact locally, nationally and internationally.

For more than 50 years, the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) has been the voice of people living with dyslexia. We aim to influence government and other institutions to promote a dyslexia friendly society that enables dyslexic people of all ages to reach their full potential. The BDA is established as the leading dyslexia charity in the UK.

Unfortunately, the need for our support and services is high. Although awareness of dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties has grown, there are ongoing and widening gaps in access to the identification of dyslexia and the provision of expert learning support. Our national Helpline is busier than ever, supporting almost 5,500 people each year, reminding us on a daily basis why we must keep fighting for the rights of our beneficiaries.

Against a challenging backdrop for so many organisations, last financial year we saw continued growth in income from fundraising and training. We invested in growing our team and identified five strategic objectives for the period 2023-2026:

1. To promote the advancement and dissemination of knowledge about dyslexia and related specific learning difficulties.
2. To nurture and represent an engaged and informed community.
3. To advocate for dyslexia-friendly change across society.
4. To provide and model expert services.
5. To build a sustainable organisation with demonstrable impact.

Activities are currently underway to deliver these priorities. Our next CEO will continue to oversee these whilst laying the foundations for our next strategy cycle which we intend to publish in 2026. As such, the timing of this appointment allows the successful candidate the opportunity to work with the Board and other key stakeholders to articulate the long-term vision for our charity, establishing a plan that enables us to expand our reach and deepen our programmes.

The role of CEO at the BDA is one of both challenge and immense reward, offering the chance to lead a passionate and skilled team dedicated to making a tangible difference in society. The ideal candidate will bring strategic thinking, leadership experience and a commitment to promoting inclusion for our beneficiaries in education, in work and in life. The successful candidate will also need to demonstrate their financial acumen and business development and delivery skills, as achieving our mission will depend on financial security and sustainability.

We are excited about the next stage in our development as a charity and the opportunity to support even more people with dyslexia to reach their full potential. Thank you for considering the role of CEO at the British Dyslexia Association. I look forward to the possibility of welcoming you to our team.

Yours sincerely,

**Michelle Catterson**  
Chair of the Board

## Our history

### Building on strong foundations

The British Dyslexia Association is built on foundations established over 50 years ago by a pioneering woman, Marion Welchman. Her vision, passion and tenacity for understanding and supporting those with dyslexia led to the founding of the BDA and 50 years later we are continuing to uphold her vision.

Her journey saw her establish relationships both in the UK and in the United States, and bring groundbreaking practice from America to the UK. Such was the success with teaching her son, that Marion was eager to share this knowledge with teachers and parents in the UK. As a consequence, the Bath Association for the 'Study of Dyslexia' was formed. After a considerable amount of hard work, and the support of her family, Marion was able to disseminate the method of teaching across the country.

In 1972 the British Dyslexia Association was founded and over the years has grown to the organisation it is today providing a wide range of services to those living with dyslexia.

As an organisation we are committed to standing beside those that are on their journey with dyslexia, whether that is at the discovery stage or learning to live well and adapting to reach their fullest potential.

## Our vision, mission and values

### Our vision

A world where people with dyslexia can flourish.

### Our mission

To change society by removing barriers so that everyone with dyslexia can reach their full potential in education, in employment and in life.

### Our values

Our values are what we at the British Dyslexia Association stand for, they are embedded into every area of our work and help us make decisions every day to bring their ideas and initiatives, reflecting the diversity of the community we support.

## Our values



### Excellence

We work with our community and each other to continuously improve all that we do and the services that we offer.



### Respect

We are an inclusive organisation where everyone has a voice that is listened to and is valued for the unique skills they bring.



### Innovation

We embrace different thinking and encourage everyone to bring their ideas and initiatives, reflecting the diversity of the community we support.



### Team work

We collaborate and support each other in pursuit of our vision; we are strongest and most effective when we work together.

## What we do

### We raise awareness

We inform and educate to encourage inclusion and inspire change.

### We promote understanding

We base our expertise on evidence and research, setting professional standards and influencing policy.

### We empower people

As the leading national dyslexia charity, we speak out on behalf of the dyslexia community to champion a dyslexia-friendly society.



## Our impact

**5,400+**

enquiries to our Helpline each year

**400+**

graduates of accredited e-learning courses each year

**50+**

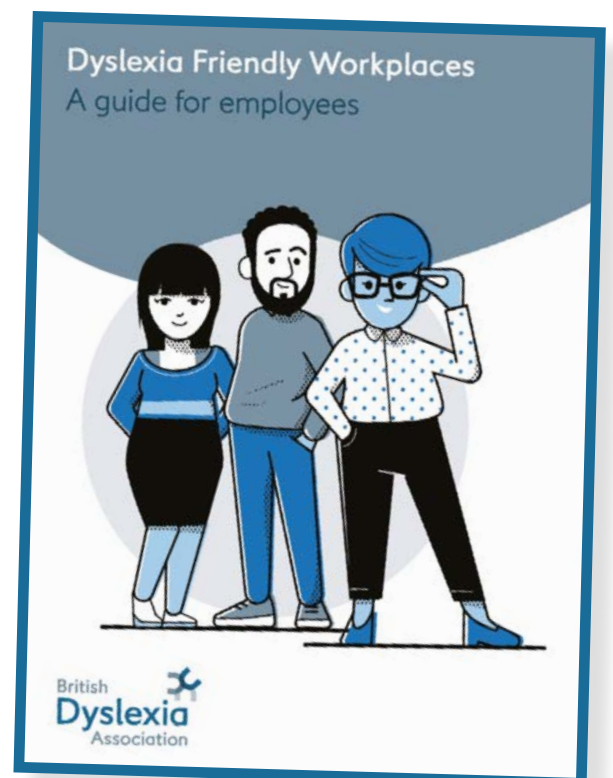
Dyslexia-Friendly Quality Mark schools

**4,000+**

views of free information webinars each quarter

**5 million+**

views of our online information pages each year



## Job description

### Main purpose and scope of role

The CEO will lead and develop the charity so that it maintains its position as the expert and forerunner in the field and fulfils its growth potential. Working closely with the Chair, the Board of Trustees, and with a strong Senior Management Team, they will bring expertise and relevant experience to ensure the long-term success and sustainability of the charity. They will be able to demonstrate:

- Strategic awareness and the ability to lead and grow an organisation.
- Significant experience as a decision-maker in a senior-leader / director-level role.
- A strong track record of financial management, income generation, delivery of contracts and risk management.
- External relations skills including experience communicating with all stakeholders and an understanding of the policy landscape.
- A commitment to excellence, collaboration, kindness, diversity and inclusion.

### Duties and Responsibilities

(to include, but not limited to)

#### Leadership

- Act as ambassador for the charity, championing its interests nationally with stakeholders and in the media.
- Create and maintain networks with key individuals and groups across sectors, including charities, corporates, funders and policymakers.
- Provide oversight of all of BDA's activities, ensuring the organisation maximises impact for beneficiaries in accordance with BDA values.
- Recruit, retain and motivate the right talent to deliver our vision.



#### Strategy

- Ensure the BDA is in a position to deliver our vision and values.
- Deliver the current strategic priorities and work with stakeholders to develop the charity's next strategy.
- Ensure the BDA maintains its reputation as the leading source for sound and accurate information on dyslexia.

#### Governance

- Establish and maintain an effective working relationship with the Chair and the Board of Trustees.
- As appropriate, monitor and advise on the governance and organisational structures of the charity to best meet its strategic objectives.
- Ensure the charity fulfils its legal, statutory and regulatory responsibilities.

#### Finance

- Manage all budgets, financial planning, income and expenditure to ensure the financial sustainability of the charity.
- Oversee all funding streams, maintaining and growing income generating services and fundraising activities.
- Ensure that the charity is cost effective, gaining value for money whilst maintaining a high level of quality.



## Person specification

### Essential

- Previous experience of working in a leadership role in the charity, education, training or service sectors, either as a CEO or as part of a wider Senior Management Team.
- Experience of partnership and relationship building, with the ability to work collaboratively and flexibly with stakeholders at all levels.
- Successful experience of leading and/or contributing towards strategy development, as well as supporting organisational change.
- Proven track record of working closely with a Board of Trustees/Non-Executives.
- Advanced leadership and motivational skills with a strong ability to relate well with people.
- Experience of managing budgets and financial planning.
- Advanced written and oral communication skills with the confidence and willingness to learn public speaking, and media skills.

### Desirable

- Awareness of dyslexia and/or other specific learning difficulties and an understanding of the relevant educational, political and social landscape.
- An understanding of charity operations and governance structures.

## Terms of appointment

<b>Contract</b>	Permanent, full-time.
<b>Salary</b>	Up to £80,000 per annum, depending on experience.
<b>Location</b>	Hybrid: home based with regular presence in the Bracknell office and ad hoc meetings in London and around the UK.
<b>Pension</b>	5% employer contribution
<b>Annual leave</b>	25 days, plus additional three days non-contractual leave provided between Christmas and New Year

## How to apply

Tall Roots is acting as an employment agency partner to the British Dyslexia Association. Applications should be made online at [www.tallroots.co.uk](http://www.tallroots.co.uk) and include:

- a CV
- covering letter (no more than two pages), explaining your motivation for applying for the role, along with how you meet the Person Specification.

The closing date for applications is **9am, Tuesday 7th May 2024.**

Preliminary interviews with Tall Roots will be held virtually during **w/c 13th May 2024.**

Final panel interviews with the British Dyslexia Association will be held **in person** at the BDA's Bracknell offices on **Tuesday 4th June 2024.**

If you have any questions relating to the role or the process, or would like any adjustments made to accommodate your needs, please contact Mark Crowley at Tall Roots by email at [mark.crowley@tallroots.co.uk](mailto:mark.crowley@tallroots.co.uk).





The British Dyslexia Association is a registered charity in England and Wales (289243).  
Registered England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee (1830587).  
Registered office: 1, Friar Street, Reading, England, RG1 1DA

[www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)