

Head of Retention and Development

Candidate Pack



charisma
CHARITY RECRUITMENT



Welcome

Thank you for your interest in Embrace the Middle East and in this strategically important role: Head of Retention & Development.

At Embrace the Middle East, we believe in hope, dignity, and partnership. For more than 170 years, we've worked alongside local Christian partners to bring healthcare, education, and opportunity to vulnerable and marginalised communities across the region.

Today, rising conflict is deepening human suffering and placing growing pressure on our partners, who continue to reach some of the hardest to reach communities with compassion and courage. To respond effectively, we need to strengthen our fundraising and communications work and are seeking an experienced, relationship fundraiser and insight-driven leader who can create experiences and journeys that cultivate long-term donor relationships and inspire supporter loyalty.

Why This Role Matters

Our Fundraising & Communications 'cluster' brings together specialists in fundraising, marketing, communications, digital engagement, and our Web Shop. As Head of Retention & Development, you will play a central role in this group — shaping how supporters — whether individuals, churches, or charitable trusts & foundations — experience meaningful, consistent, and inspiring engagement, rooted in our values and mission.

You will be responsible for shaping the full supporter lifecycle: from onboarding and ongoing relationship building to reactivation, cross-engagement, and long-term value growth. This is a role that blends strategy, creativity and data insight. It requires someone who can hold the big picture while empowering a diverse and team of fundraising and subject matter experts.

A Season of Growth and Opportunity

Embrace is in a period of renewed strategic focus. We are expanding our digital capability, strengthening our supporter journeys, growing our acquisition programme, and developing communications with content at their heart.

In partnership with the Head of Marketing & Acquisition, this role creates a rich environment in which you will lead on:

- Supporter retention strategy
- Driving donor lifetime value growth
- Cross-selling giving, campaigning, volunteering, and shopping
- Supporter Journeys

Your work will make a tangible difference — not only in income generation but in how supporters understand, experience, and champion the mission of Embrace.

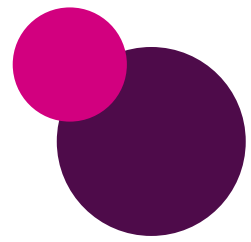
We are looking forward to meeting the person who will bring passion, expertise, and imagination to this vital leadership role.

- if you are energised by building long-term relationships, driven by insight, inspired by mission, and motivated by developing talented teams...
- if you have a heart for supporters and mobilising communities of a cause...
- if you thrive in collaborative environments where values matter...

Then we would be delighted to hear from you.

Ian Livett

**Director of Fundraising & Communications
Embrace the Middle East**



About Embrace the Middle East



Our vision is rooted in, and inspired by, the Gospel, in particular Christ's invitation to care for those most in need.

Embrace the Middle East is an international Christian charity committed to sustaining and supporting local Christian social witness in the Middle East. We do this by walking alongside local Christian-led organisations and churches, working to deliver excellence, build resilience, and learn together. Informed by voices from the Middle East, we seek to engage and mobilise UK Christians to join with us and our partners in the Middle East.

2024 marked 170 years of Embrace's close partnership and relationship with local Christians who, through their churches and local civil society organisations, serve some of the most marginalised and excluded communities in the Middle East during this time of significant challenges. Today, our Christian partners work in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Israel, Palestine (West Bank and Gaza), and Iraq. Through their wide-ranging programmes, they provide support and services for refugees, enable women's empowerment, work for community development and offer emergency humanitarian relief, serving people of all faiths and none.

Sustaining the active and powerful social impact of Christian-led NGOs in this amazing and diverse region is what drives us. The challenges are often immense. The sense of purpose is uniquely motivating.

With the help of existing and new supporters, donors, volunteers, and especially younger people prepared to engage with the lived reality of our partners in the Middle East, we want to trace the arc of Embrace's history of compassion in action, which began 170 years ago in 1854, long into the future.

We hope you will feel inspired to join us in the journey, supporting Christians working to transform the lives of some of the most marginalised and excluded communities in the Middle East.

“Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

Matthew 25:40



Left to right: The aftermath of the earthquake in Syria | Caritas Jerusalem mobile medical clinic, Gaza | The Olive Tree Project

About the Head of Retention and Development role



Embrace's Fundraising & Communications cluster comprises expertise in fundraising, marketing, communication, web shop, supporter engagement and retention. Working collaboratively, we serve our supporters by providing authentic and engaging communications, inspiring active social witnesses, engagement and giving to Embrace.

Cluster purpose

Strengthen Embrace's communication, education, and fundraising efforts to drive growth so that more people engage with our content; more donors are attracted to support; and the UK church is more deeply engaged with the cause; enabling us to fund more work in the region and generate a deeper understanding of Christian service in the Middle East.

Role purpose

Lead the development and delivery of Embrace's supporter retention and donor development strategy, building deep, lasting relationships with individuals and churches. Drive engagement and loyalty through diverse actions—campaigning, shopping, volunteering, and fundraising—while maximizing long-term financial value and lifetime supporter involvement. This role will harness individual giving, major gifts, and church/community fundraising to strengthen commitment and sustain impact.

What success looks like

- Increase supporter retention and lifetime value through insight-led supporter experiences and journeys.
- Improvement in retention and lifetime value.
- Sustained supporter engagement and increased participation in campaigns, volunteering, and fundraising.
- Growth in income from individual, church and community giving.
- Strong, lasting relationships with supporters, mid-major donors, trusts & foundations and churches.

Key responsibilities include

Strategy Development & Retention

- Develop and deliver strategies to retain and grow individual and church supporters in collaboration with fundraising partners and the Director of Fundraising & Communications.
- Design and implement comprehensive retention and engagement plans.
- Use data insights for segmentation, trend analysis, and benchmarking against best practice.
- Set clear objectives, KPIs, and timelines aligned with organisational goals.
- Incorporate risk management and compliance considerations into retention strategies.
- Develop contingency plans for retention risks (e.g. economic downturn, donor fatigue)
- Embed innovation and digital transformation in retention strategies

Supporter Journey Management

- Oversee supporter journeys across onboarding, regular giving, reactivation, and cross-engagement.
- Approve journey maps and campaign plans; ensure GDPR compliance, brand and multi-channel (digital, print, events) consistency.
- Monitor KPIs (conversion, retention, lifetime value) and lead quarterly reviews for continuous improvement.

Financial & Team Performance Management

- Lead and inspire a high-performing retention team, fostering innovation and continuous improvement.
- Accountable for individual giving, church/community fundraising, and major gifts, trust & foundations budgets and forecasting.
- Drive ROI through robust scenario planning and test-and-learn approaches.
- Set and monitor targets for income, costs, retention, churn, and conversion metrics.
- Champion strong project management across planning, delivery, and reporting.
- Maintain financial control through accurate coding, PO approvals, and spend management.

Cross Team Collaboration

- Partner with Head of Marketing Acquisition to deliver seamless welcome journeys and consistent messaging.
- Drive cross-sell between giving, fundraising, campaigning, webshop and volunteering) and ensure data quality and compliance.
- Foster knowledge sharing across teams for best practice retention strategies.

Organisation-wide Contribution

- Model Embrace's values of trust, respect, integrity, and compassion.
- Act as a brand ambassador, promoting the charity's mission internally and externally
- Uphold safeguarding responsibilities and compliance with GDPR and charity regulations.
- Actively support organisational goals and development initiatives.
- Adhere to Embrace's policies & procedures at all times.

KPIs you will own

- Supporter Retention Rate – Increase retained year-on-year in line with target.
- Lifetime Value (LTV) – Sustaining Embrace's supporter lifetime value.
- Engagement Actions – increase in cross-engagement (campaigning, volunteering, shopping).
- Reactivation Rate –lapsed supporters re-engaged in line with target.
- Income Growth – Revenue increase from individual giving, major gifts, trusts and church fundraising (2026 target: IG £900k, Church £300k, Regular Giving £700k, Major Donor £225k)

Milestones

3 months

- Build relationships with key stakeholders and team.
- Audit current retention strategies and supporter journeys.
- Finalise KPIs and reporting framework.

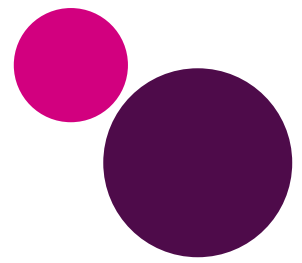
6 months

- Launch updated retention and engagement strategy.
- Implement improved supporter journeys and A/B tests.
- Achieve initial uplift in retention and engagement metrics

12 months

- Year-on-year improvement in retention and lifetime value.
- Deliver income growth across individual giving, major gifts, and church/community fundraising.
- Embed culture of innovation and continuous improvement in the team.
- Complete annual review and set strategy for next year based on data-driven insights.

Person specification



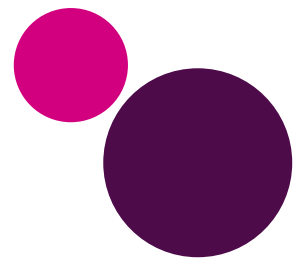
Essential criteria

Qualifications, Experience & Knowledge

- Educated to degree standard or equivalent (eg significant practical experience within fundraising or marketing functions). Member of Chartered Institute of Fundraising.
- Proven experience in supporter engagement, donor retention, and income growth strategies.
- Ability to design and deliver retention and development strategies aligned with organisational goals.
- Fundraising leadership. Understands UK charity fundraising regulations, consent, data protection, and ethical practice.
- A strong track record of fundraising leadership in £3m - £10m charities
- Strategic retention & development leadership.
- Strong understanding of retention and development principles,
- Team Leadership: Experience managing and developing high-performing teams.
- Lead a small supporter retention team (incl Individual Giving/Community/Major Donor and Trust income) and oversee the coordination of cross-functional projects.
- Experience managing budgets and delivering ROI-focused retention development initiatives.
- Knowledge of test-and-learn methodologies and innovation in fundraising.

Skills & Competencies

- Strategic thinker with ability to innovate and diversify income streams.
- Familiarity with CRM systems, digital fundraising tools, and supporter journey mapping
- Excellent leadership and team management skills.
- Data & Insight: Strong analytical skills; experience using data for segmentation, trend analysis, and performance optimisation.
- Financial Acumen: Skilled in budget management, forecasting, and ROI analysis.
- Project Management: Demonstrated ability to manage complex projects from planning to delivery.
- Strong IT and data analytical skills with experience in CRM and data-driven decision-making.
- Outstanding communication and collaboration abilities.
- Familiarity with LTV modelling, segmentation, and attribution.



Personal Qualities

- Donor-first mindset, inclusive and empathetic.
- Curious, evidence-driven, and comfortable iterating.
- High integrity, discretion and good judgment.
- Results-Driven: Focused on achieving measurable impact and income growth.
- Innovative & Adaptive: Comfortable with change and continuous improvement.
- Collaborative: Strong interpersonal skills; able to work across teams and with external partners.
- Excellent Communicator: Skilled in influencing and building relationships at all levels.
- Organised & Detail-Oriented: Able to manage multiple priorities effectively

Tools & Systems

- CRM
- Dashboards & analysis
- Payments: Direct Debit management, card updater/failed payment recovery
- Microsoft 365 (Teams, SharePoint, Planner), project boards
- Cybersecurity Awareness

Desirable Criteria

- Good understanding of UK church, across many denominations
- Theological understanding that underpins the politics culture and identity of the region
- Experience in church/community fundraising and major donor development.

Role Requirements

- Committed to the Christian mission, vision and values of the charity, either as a practising Christian or someone with a sympathy for Embrace's mission with the Christian faith and character.
- Willingness to carry out occasional overseas travel to the Middle East (approximately once every 2-3 years)

OTHER DETAILS

Job particulars:

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Job Title: | Head of Retention & Development |
| Location: | Hybrid - High Wycombe (minimum onsite twice a month) |
| Contract and hours: | Full time (36.5 hours), Permanent |
| Job band: | 2 |
| Cluster/Team: | Fundraising & Communications/Retention & Development |
| Reports to: | Director of Fundraising & Communications |
| Direct Reports | Individual Giving Retention Lead, Church & Community Fundraising Lead, Philanthropy Relationship Manager, Programme Funding Manager |

Salary & Benefits:

Salary: £50,000 - £55,000, based on experience

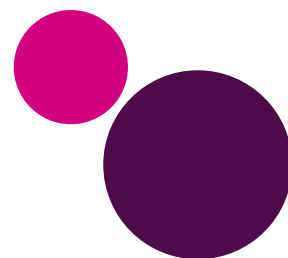
Benefits:

- Embrace supports all staff to work effectively through flexible and remote working options, including flexi-time and home-working.
- Under our flexi-time framework, staff may agree variable start and finish times with their manager, balancing organisational needs with personal circumstances.
- Pension: Employer contribution of up to 10%.
- Holiday entitlement: 24 days and 8 public/bank holidays.
- Entitlement increases to 25 days after 5 years and 26 days after 10 years.
- 3 additional days between Christmas and New Year.
- Access to retail discount portal.
- Life Assurance: 3x salary.
- Employee Assistance Programme (confidential counselling, legal and financial advice) - available 24 / 7, 365 days a year
- Training and development programme for all employees.
- Commitment to staff health & wellbeing.

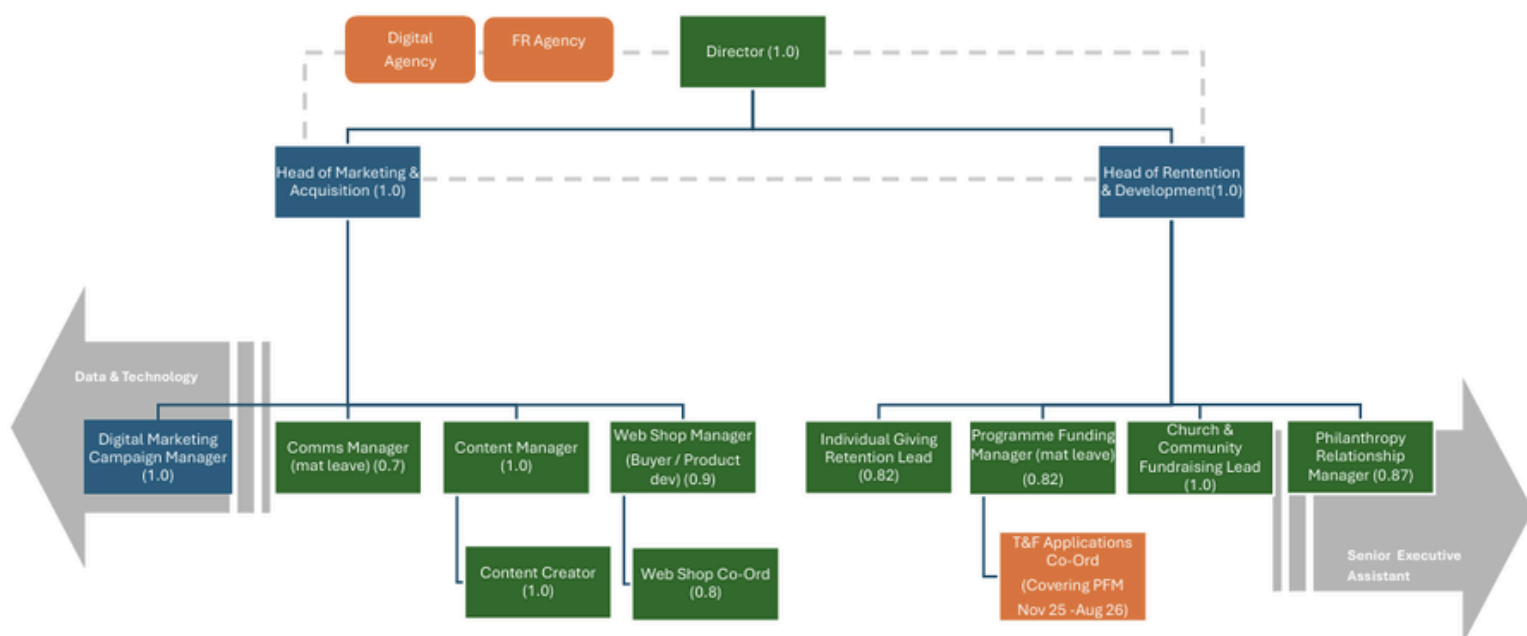


Left to right: Caritas Jerusalem's Mobile Medical Centre, Gaza | SIRA School, West Bank | Episcocare education support, Egypt

Team Structure



To strengthen Embrace’s ability to attract and retain supporters, donors, and customers, the Fundraising & Communications Team structure is designed to build deeper expertise in acquisition and retention. By integrating digital and retail functions and fostering strong collaboration across departments and with external agencies, we aim to deliver a clear, effective, and fully coordinated acquisition and retention strategy.



- NOTES:
- Strategic Church Engagement & Advocacy Advisor is part of PPA and works collaboratively with FR&C leadership to inform church engagement and fundraising.
 - New roles
 - Third parties

How to apply:

Embrace the Middle East are working exclusively with Charisma Charity Recruitment on this appointment.

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

- A comprehensive CV
- A supporting statement (no more than two pages) outlining your motivation for applying and how your experience meets the person specification

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 any other characteristic protected by law.

All offers of appointment will be subject to satisfactory references and a basic disclosure check.

Closing date for applications: Tuesday 28th April 2026

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

Nick Thomas, Senior Consultant at Charisma Charity Recruitment, on 01962 813300 or email info@charismarecruitment.co.uk.

To find out more about working for Embrace the Middle East visit our [careers page](#).



EMBRACE
the Middle East