

CEO Recruitment Pack



School Library Association

Supporting everyone involved in school libraries

November 2024

*For all those interested in
reading in schools*

Welcome

Dear prospective candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Executive Officer of the School Library Association.

The SLA is an old charity with a vibrant future and we are excited to find the right person to take the Association to the next level, and build on the work which has come to date.

Our members are central to how the SLA operates, and providing the best educational experience for all pupils is our guiding principle. If you:

- Are passionate about school libraries, literacy and education
- Have experience in leading and motivating a team to achieve
- Are eager to advocate to improve the standing of school libraries in the educational system

Then read this pack and get in touch if you have any questions. We look forward to hearing from you!

Paul Register,
Chair of Trustees

Interested in finding out more?

That's great; we'd love to hear from you.

Email chair@sla.org.uk in the first instance for an informal conversation with a trustee.

You are welcome to visit the office to meet some of the team and have a look around before the interview.

To apply, send your CV with a covering letter to Paul Register at Chair@sla.org.uk. before noon on 21st November 2024.

Key information

- We are looking to appoint asap
- Salary will be c.£47,000
- This role will be hybrid and the exact working pattern/requirement will be open to negotiation.
- The SLA Office is based in Swindon

In 2023,

the SLA achieved...

111 titles to borrow from our CPD library

280 new members

339359

<http://>



67

online events

11 online training courses

273 volunteers



115 Weekend Course delegates



books reviewed

5 Awards

ENTERPRISE of the YEAR

INFORMATION Book Award
SLA
School Library Association

204

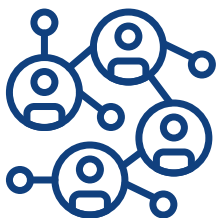
downloadable resources

133 book reviewers

The Peter Usborne Primary
SCHOOL LIBRARY of the YEAR



SCHOOL LIBRARIAN of the YEAR
SLA
Secondary



21

branches

35 mentors

“ Every time I check the website I find something inspiring.”

“ It's a super useful tool for CPD, organising the library and keeping up to date.”

“ I can't imagine being without the support and sense of community it brings.”

“ It's helped me in researching and developing my role and moving our library forward.”

“ Webinars I have attended have been excellent and informative.”



School Library Association

-  www.sla.org.uk
-  info@sla.org.uk
-  01793 530166

ABOUT THE SLA

The School Library Association is a charity which supports schools develop their school library, reading culture or deliver independent learning skills.

We currently have about 2500 members, and are the first port of call for schools and individuals wanting advice, resources and training.

We are experts on developing a reading culture that extends beyond the classroom, and that supports literacy and wellbeing.

We support schools to overcome their barriers – time, money, space, amongst others – and ensure that no child gets left behind on their reading journey.





School Library Association

Supporting everyone involved in school libraries

The School Library Association (SLA) is a charity which supports schools develop their school library, establish a reading culture and deliver independent learning skills.

We currently have approximately 2,500 members and are the first port of call for schools and individuals wanting advice, resources and training. We support schools to overcome their barriers – including time, money and space, amongst others – to ensure that no child gets left behind on their reading journey.

We work to ensure that every child gets the strongest start when considering their future. The environment of the school library often means it's the first shared space children inhabit. It provides precious opportunities to learn about who they are, and who they could be. Reading can deliver a range of skills, and inquiry can build independent learning skills vital for lifelong self-sufficiency.

We have a wide range of resources that provide a starting point to support these important topics, and can also support lessons or individual conversations.

As a school member, up to 10 members of staff can benefit from free resources, on demand and live training, networking opportunities, a quarterly journal, personalised advice, exclusive discounts and more as part of a school membership. Our membership is designed to help you build an inclusive, supportive and engaging reading culture, where all children read widely and often to develop their confidence, enjoyment and skill.

For more information on joining our community – as well as free resources and support to give you a taste of how the SLA can support you and your school – visit our website: www.sla.org.uk.

For the latest sector news and exciting event updates, connect with us on social media.

 [@schoollibraryassociation](https://www.facebook.com/schoollibraryassociation)

 [School Library Association](https://www.linkedin.com/company/school-library-association)

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

 [@uksla](https://www.instagram.com/uksla)



We do this through...



Membership



Membership brings together much of our offer. A school membership includes free resources, on demand training, networking opportunities, our quarterly journal and personalised advice for up to 10 members of staff.

Training



Training on all elements of reading, research and reading spaces; in-person, on-demand and online to suit all requirements.



Advice by phone or email

Access advice and guidance based on the needs and priorities of each school.

Resources



Exclusive resources available via our website, including practical 'how to' guides, reading lists, lesson plans, toolkits and policy templates.

Journal



TSL is our quarterly journal bringing together book and digital reviews, case studies and articles.

Publications



Explore a range of topics with our in-house publications, written by sector leaders to be engaging and accessible.

Member Discounts



We make members' budgets go further by offering exclusive member discounts with a range of suppliers including Peters, Literary Gift Shop, and Library Management System Suppliers.

Consultancy



Should schools need additional support we can go to them

Awards and advocacy



We celebrate successes and share what works for schools.

We share this widely to advocate for school libraries.

Research and understanding within the education sector



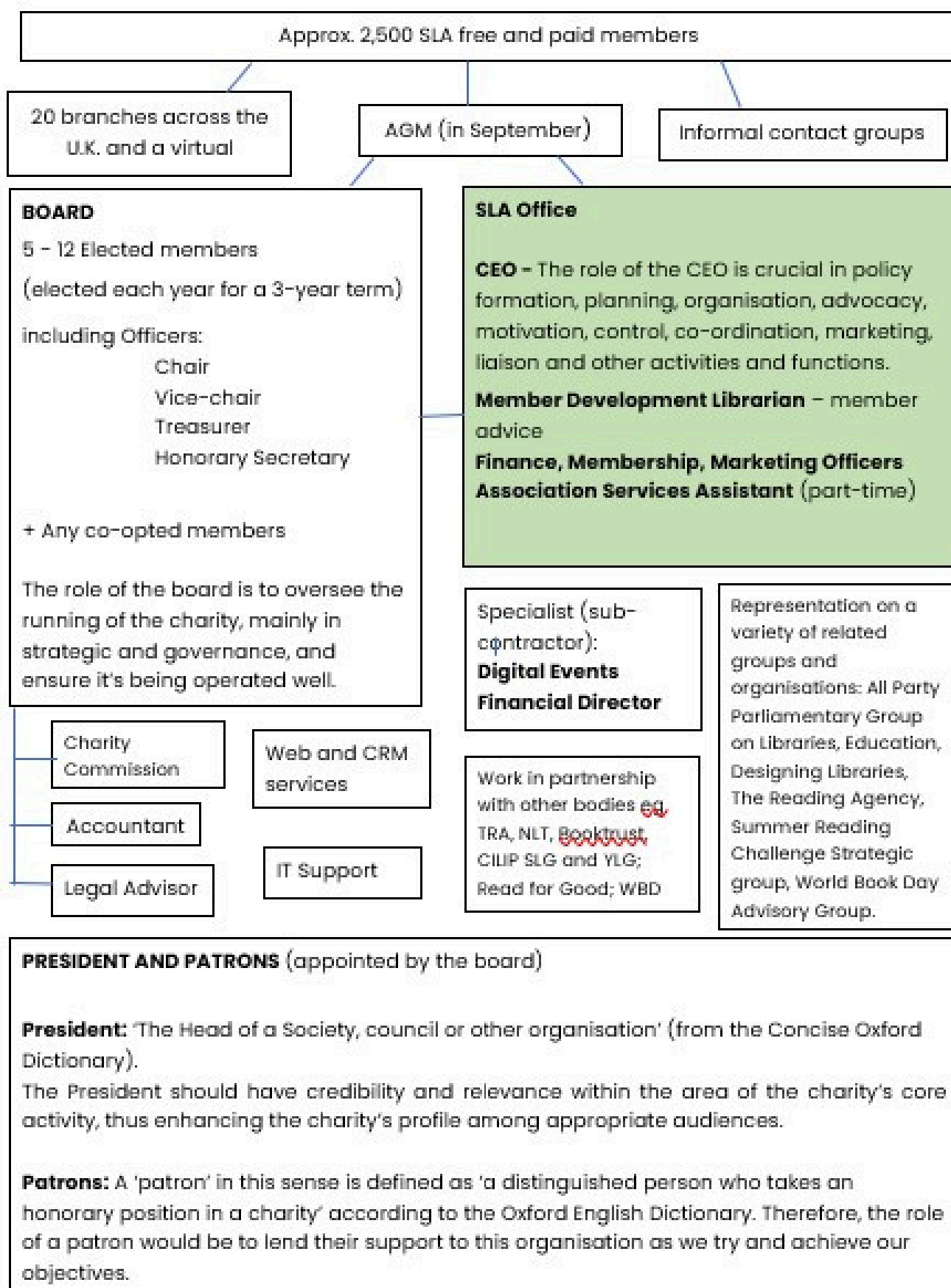
Building understanding and knowledge of best practice for all schools.

**Members
say...**

"Without SLA there is little to guide me as a school librarian. The role is often poorly managed and the librarian isolated. SLA provide me with guidelines, information, support and community. It is my go to before anything else."

"The SLA keeps me up to date with developments in the sector, from promoting & reviewing new books, to keeping me in touch with positives experienced & challenges faced by library staff across the country, to making sure that the latest research, advocacy and policy work are all accessible. The day to day demands and priorities of the role don't allow for this deeper understanding, so having an organisation behind me which can focus on and share these elements in a timely open dialogue is vital."

Organisational structure



Our Mission

The SLA works towards all schools in the UK having their own (or shared) staffed library to help all children and young people fulfil their potential.

School staff and children should have access to a wide and varied range of resources and have the support of an expert guide in reading, research, media and information literacy.

Our Strategy 2022 – 2027

In 2022 we launched a new five year strategy which would tackle some of the core issues in the school library sector.

WHO ARE WE?



We are experts in school libraries, literacy and research.



We are supportive of the individual contexts of schools and the challenges they face.

We have lived experience of working in schools, and understand the pressures and priorities.

We support anyone involved with school libraries, regardless of experience, role, or any other factor.

CHALLENGES WE FACE



Educational landscape



School finances



Range of need



OUR OBJECTIVES



OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS WE WILL...



Engage in active advocacy and PR campaigns to raise the profile and benefits of school library provision to those in the educational sector and government, with the aim of school library provision becoming a pillar of the UK's learning and literacy agenda.



Create new research exploring the benefits of school library provision to pupils, teachers and the wider community, and how this supports government literacy and educational attainment goals, building on existing research.



Continue to **build strong partnerships** with organisations supporting literacy and be recognised as an expert, equal partner.



Ensure membership is utilised by all school staff, to increase their understanding of how school libraries support literacy, media and information literacy, knowledge acquisition, wellbeing and employability.



Promote member use of a full range of digital and physical educational **resources** by illustrating how they can support the aims of the library and school.

PRIORITIES



Build a **community** of members to share best practice and provide practical support.



Raise the profile and benefits of school library provision and their contribution to the UK's educational agenda to regional and national governments and educational bodies.

Support senior school leaders, governors, parents, teachers, Trust leadership and others in the development of their school libraries to improve literacy and learning in a realistic and constructive manner.

Our Values

- Act honestly
- Empower members
- Listen and understand
- Be curious

Work on the new strategy begins with the members at the 2025 Weekend Course

Chief Executive job description

Responsible to: the Board of Trustees as a whole, but line managed by the Chair of Trustees on behalf of the Board.

The School Library Association, founded in 1937, is a charitable membership organisation. Its mission statement states:

“The SLA is a UK focused charity which supports everyone involved in school libraries. The educational, emotional and developmental benefits of a school library deserve to be felt by all children.”

Key responsibilities:

1. To provide leadership to the charity and to be responsible for the management and administration of the charity within the strategic, policy and accountability frameworks laid down by the board of trustees.
2. Together with the Chair, to enable the board of trustees to fulfil its duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of the charity and to ensure that the board receives timely advice and appropriate information on all relevant matters.

Duties and tasks to fulfil the key responsibilities

- To provide leadership to the charity and to be responsible for the management and administration of the charity within the strategic and accountability frameworks laid down by the board of trustees.
- Leadership:
- To lead, inspire and motivate staff and volunteers.
- To assist the board in agreeing the values, ethos, vision and mission of the charity.
- To lead the review and development of a medium to long-term strategy for the charity within its objects, vision, and mission, and to obtain the approval of the board.
- To develop the work of the charity in order to achieve the agreed strategic plan and its objects, vision and mission and thus to ensure that the charity is focused on achieving the strategic priorities.
- To ensure that the charity's values, ethos and policies are relevant, fair and consistently implemented.
- To develop an organisation that is constantly seeking ways to learn and to improve its performance.
- To develop and maintain an environment that attracts and retains the best staff and volunteers.

Job description
continued on next page

Job description cont...

Management

- To be accountable to the board for the proper and effective management of the charity.
- To administer the charity efficiently and effectively by ensuring that the charity has an appropriate management structure and systems in order to fulfil its strategic objectives and to carry out its work.
- To ensure that all management policies and decisions support the agreed vision, mission, values, philosophy and strategic priorities of the charity.
- To ensure that business, operational and annual plans to underpin the strategic plan are developed, agreed and implemented.
- To identify appropriate methods for monitoring the performance of the charity and to report back to the trustees on the performance of the charity against its strategy, its business, operational and annual plans, and against the annual budget as approved by the board.
- To maximise the effectiveness of the staff team through proper line management, conducting performance reviews and formal and informal discussion.
- To ensure that the recruitment, management, training and development of staff (including themselves) reflect good employment practice and are directed towards achieving the charity's objectives.
- To ensure that the charity is aware of best practice and that it constantly works to achieve this within the constraints laid down by the trustees and resources available.
- To ensure the efficient provision of services to members and regularly review resources, training and communication.
- To oversee the weekend course secures positive returns on the outlay of time and cost, with positive delegate and exhibitor experiences.

Job description
continued on next page

Job description cont...

Finance and risk

- To be responsible overall for the financial health of the charity including developing, overseeing and monitoring an effective programme of income generation.
- To ensure that the major risks to which the charity is exposed are reviewed regularly by the board and the executive team, systems have been established to mitigate these risks, and a risk analysis is automatically carried out when taking on new work or proposing new work to the board.
- To write, or oversee the writing of, reports, forecasts, cashflows, budgets, product cost breakdowns and other items to assist with the management and understanding of the financial health of the organisation.
- Checks requests for grant awards received from branch committees, passing them to the Honorary Treasurer with recommendations or queries
- To lead the Association's fundraising efforts through grants applications and building relationships with suppliers and others.

External and internal relations

- To foster good communications throughout the charity and externally.
- To develop, as appropriate, the charity's public profile and foster good relationships with government, statutory, voluntary and private bodies, and other external stakeholders.
- To set up mechanisms for listening to the views of current and future beneficiaries on the performance of the charity, as well as on areas for future development.
- To scan the external environment for changes that may affect the charity, to advise the trustees proactively and to take necessary action.
- To oversee the work of any advisory staff and ensure all requests from members are responded to in a timely manner.
- To promote and advocate for the provision of school libraries and librarians wherever and whenever possible.
- To ensure the support and development of SLA branches.
- To oversee the management of, promote and regularly review the SLA Awards.

**Job description
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Job description cont...

Legal and regulatory compliance

- To ensure that the charity fulfils all its legal, statutory and regulatory responsibilities.
- Together with the Chair, to enable the board of trustees to fulfil its duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of the charity and to ensure that the board receives timely advice and appropriate information on all relevant matters.

Strategy and planning

- In partnership with the Chair, to ensure that the trustees set the values, ethos, vision, mission, strategic objectives and strategic priorities for the charity.
- Ensuring high-quality governance
- To ensure that the board receives all necessary advice, guidance and information on matters relating to current performance, the short and long-term future of the charity, regulatory and legal compliance, and other appropriate issues; and making sure that such advice, guidance and information are timely, honest, balanced and relevant.
- To ensure that the staff understand and support the governance role of the board and that there is a positive and constructive working relationship between the board and the executive.
- To ensure with the Chair that the board of trustees reviews regularly the charity's governing instruments and governance structure, and to assist with the board's assessment of its own performance.
- In partnership with the Chair, to ensure that the board's delegated authority is recorded in writing and understood fully by staff and volunteers, and that all agreed reporting procedures are followed.
- To work closely with the board to ensure that the board has on it the skills it requires to govern the charity well, and that the board has access to relevant external professional advice and expertise.
- To assist the Chair in ensuring that there is a systematic, open and fair procedure for the recruitment or co-option of trustees, future chairs of the board and future chief executives.
- To work with the Chair to ensure that all members of the board receive appropriate induction, advice, information and training (both individual and collective), thus getting the best thinking and involvement of each member of the board.
- To act as Company Secretary.

**Job description
continued on next page**

Job description cont...

Board meetings

- To ensure that the board is given the information it needs to perform its duties.
- In partnership with the Chair, to develop an annual programme of board and committee meetings and board away-days.
- In partnership with the Chair, to ensure that the right and appropriate items reach board agendas and that high-quality papers support each item on the agenda.
- To assist the Chair in ensuring that the board focuses on its governance role by making sure that the board agenda and papers do not draw the board away from governance and into unnecessary detail and management issues.
- To report regularly to the board of trustees on the performance of the charity, progress towards the strategic priorities and the achievement of board policies.
- To submit high-level policy proposals for the approval of the board or assist the board in the development of these policies, and to be responsible for the efficient and effective achievement of these policies.
- To implement board decisions.
- Relationships with the Chair of Trustees
- To have regular one-to-one meetings with the Chair at which the Chair and Chief Executive can talk openly, discuss progress and problems, agree expectations of each other, plan the board's annual programme together and prepare together for meetings.
- In close consultation with the Chair, to agree respective roles in representing the charity and acting as spokesperson at public functions, public meetings and to the press/media.

Person Specification for CEO

Education/Qualifications

- Desirable: Degree level of education

Experience

Essential:

- Experience of strategic planning
- Considerable experience of leading staff and teams through change, innovation and service development
- Experience of managing resources, including large budgets, business plans and major change processes
- Experience of successful project management
- Understanding of knowledge management and digital technologies relative to teaching, learning and research in school libraries

Desirable:

- Experience of school libraries
- Experience of company secretary duties
- Experience of charity sector; particularly governance and regulations
- Experience of advocating for a cause at local and/or government level

If you have any questions about the SLA, or anything in this pack, please email Paul Register on chair@sla.org.uk in the first instance.

Person specification
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Person specification cont...

Knowledge/Skills

Essential

- Understanding the developments of literacy and reading within the school environment, and the role of school libraries within it.
- Strong leadership, management and decision-making skills
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to persuade, influence and negotiate with others – including building relationships with other organisations
- Thinks analytically and strategically, and responds creatively to challenges
- Combines entrepreneurial skills with the ability to help develop a commercially sound strategic/business plan for the association

Desirable

- Understands digital developments and the impact that new and emerging technologies have on school libraries
- Knowledge of Customer Record Management systems (CRM) or Association Management Systems (particularly imis)

Personal Qualities/Disposition

- Pro-active and flexible approach
- Skilled negotiator, tactful, persuasive and assertive when appropriate
- Confident in challenging colleagues and peers
- Member focussed approach
- Commitment to their own continuing professional development
- Good listener, supportive and fair – particularly as a line manager
- Able to motivate a team and create a positive atmosphere
- Able to make clear decisions and communicate them to the team
- Works collaboratively with the board

Other requirements

- Committed to equality and diversity
- Committed to our Health and Safety policies and procedures
- Willing and able to travel as required

KEY FACTS

£350K
AVERAGE
TURNOVER

5
TEAM
MEMBERS

200
VOLUNTEERS

DETAILS AND HOW TO APPLY

Salary and terms of employment

Salary will be c. £47,000 p.a.

Applications

Please submit an application by emailing your CV and a covering letter to Paul Register, Chair at Chair@sla.org.uk. Applicants must be based in the UK.

Closing date

12 noon on Thursday 21st November 2024.

Working pattern

This role is not expected to be based in the office full time, and the exact working pattern will be negotiated.

Start date

We would ideally have the successful candidate starting in role as soon as possible, though this is not a deciding factor.

[More information](#)

These dates may be subject to change, and should this be the case all applicants will be notified.

To find out more about the role, please contact chair@sla.org.uk