

Smart Works

Smart Works is a dynamic, high profile and fast-growing UK charity that dresses and coaches unemployed women for success at job interview. Smart Works empowers each woman by giving her the clothes and the confidence she needs to succeed. After visiting Smart Works, the charity's current quarterly data show that 63% of clients secure a job within a month, gaining financial independence and transforming their lives. Smart Works believe in fashion as a force for good and are proud of the joy and magic their service brings to the women they serve. The Smart Works service is delivered in three London locations, two in Manchester, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Newcastle, Reading and Leeds and one in Glasgow. Over the past ten years, Smart Works has helped over 35,000 women. Its centres around the country operate on a license model, currently with six regional boards of trustees. It is Smart Works' mission that any woman who needs its service should be able to find her way to one of its centres physically or virtually.

In April 2022, and in response to the unprecedented need following the pandemic and in the midst of a cost-of-living crises, Smart Works launched a three-year plan to double the number of women helped annually from 5,000 to 10,000 women a year. The Charity is on track to help 10,000 in 2025. More information about who we are can be found on the Smart Works website here: <https://smartworks.org.uk/>

Duties & Responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer

Reporting to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, the successful candidate will lead a range of activities, including:

- Lead the implementation of Smart Works' strategic plan and meet all targets approved by the Board
- Lead the charity through a period of substantial change and growth, delivering on its ambitions to expand its reach in line with the 'The Three Year Plan' and beyond
- Lead the charity's work across its current sites and drive relevant expansion into other UK cities
- Lead a strong strategic fundraising campaign which grows revenues to £5m by end of 2025 (current revenue is £4m)
- Lead and build excellent community frameworks across the entire group ensuring it succeeds in building a nationwide brand.
- Build and maintain effective working relationships with the Smart Works regional chairs, correctly supporting and collaborating with all local centres through the 'Evolving our Model' strategy
- Lead, develop and manage the performance of staff via the set up of a best-in-class People function. The goal is to make Smart Works a No.1 charity to work for
- Recruit, manage and look after the wellbeing of its volunteer community (700 nationwide) who power the charity
- Cultivate an organisational culture that is driven by the Smart Works values
- Have exceptional fundraising skills and network to drive further growth and development of Smart Works
- Ensure appropriate People policies and systems are in place and utilised as the charity grows
- Identify strategic risks, issues and opportunities, taking responsibility for delivering associated changes
- Oversee the effective financial performance and governance of the charity



- Work closely with the Director of Finance and COO to develop and implement the financial strategy, including the formulation of annual budget for Board approval
- Attend Board meetings and oversee preparations for these, ensuring the board receives regular and timely updates
- Liaise with the board to ensure the Charity's governance structure, policies, procedures and operating model are fit for purpose and effective
- Ensure the Charity complies with all relevant legislation and reporting requirements such as the Charity Commission and Companies House, and ensure best practice is followed by functions such as ACAS for HR
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with national referral organisations such as DWP
- Represent, uphold and drive the Smart Works EDI strategy
- Build and maintain working relationships with relevant organisations and individuals to promote the work of the Charity, as well as provide clothing and accessory donations and cause marketing opportunities
- Represent Smart Works at external functions, advocating to referral partners, corporates and retail organisations about its mission and cause
- Be an ambassador for the Smart Works services, raising the Charity's profile and maximising its impact for its clients
- Ensure that Smart Works activities are evidence-based and data-driven such as via the Unemployment Index
- Maintain an accurate knowledge of the funding environment and develop fundraising and partnerships as appropriate
- Fulfil other duties reasonably requested by the Board



Skills, Knowledge & Personal Attributes

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- Extensive senior leadership experience and senior stakeholder management
- Extensive experience in leading matrix model organisations
- A proven track record of setting strategic goals, delivering impactful change and leading projects from concept to delivery
- Proven track record in strategic fundraising campaigns
- Outstanding interpersonal skills with an adaptable style to suit seniority levels and stakeholders in a variety of situations
- A creative approach to problem solving and adapting to change. Knowledge of change management principles is desirable
- Target-driven, able to perform against ambitious KPIs
- Thrive working in a fast-paced environment with competing priorities
- Ability to take a public facing role, representing the charity at the most senior levels
- Strong experience of brand guardianship, ensuring consistency internally and externally
- Exceptional cultural leadership with a specific interest for the empowerment of women

“I have successfully gained a role. It is thanks to you that I didn’t give up altogether. I had lost all hope when I was put forward to you. I now cannot wait for Monday morning and a new adventure.” – Janet

Smart Works promotes equity, diversity and inclusion in its workplace. The Charity particularly welcome applications from black, Asian and minority ethnic candidates, disabled candidates, and candidates with lived experience of unemployment, because it would like to increase the representation of these groups within the charity.

Benefits, Terms & Conditions

- Salary of c.£100,000 depending on experience
- Full-time role, based across the Charity’s London centre in Islington. Monday-Friday with typical working hours 9am - 5pm in line with centre opening times. Some working from home if required
- Positive, supportive working environment with opportunities for practical training and progression.
- 25 days annual leave, excluding bank holidays
- VIP access at Smart Works sales, events and pop-up shops

Smart Works will apply suitable measures to keep your information secure in accordance with its Privacy Policy (a current version of which is available on its [website](#)).



Contact Information

The MBS Group is proud to be partnering with Smart Works on this important appointment.

For further information please contact our Board Practice, using the details listed below.

A photograph of a courtyard with a brick building, a spiral staircase, and a bicycle. The text is overlaid on the image.

Established by Moira Benigson over 30 years ago, The MBS Group is widely recognised as the leading specialist executive search firm covering all consumer-facing industries

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