CILIP The library and information association

DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP

Closing date: Friday 13th November

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in joining **CILIP** as our next **Director of Membership**. This is an exciting opportunity to lead the whole member experience at the UK's library and information association, an organisation that has held a Royal Charter since 1898 and is passionate about the power of information, knowledge and libraries to change lives.

CILIP is in the early stages of a **transformation**, and membership is at the heart of it. Numbers and renewals have fallen, and we are determined to reverse that by rebuilding our offer around what members actually value.

As Director of Membership, you will own the member journey from first contact to renewal. You will lead four teams (Communities and Partnerships, Events and Awards, Communications and Marketing, and Business and Customer Support) and bring them together as one directorate with a shared purpose. You will develop a membership strategy that grows numbers and renewals, strengthen our volunteer-led networks, put our events and awards on a sustainable financial footing, and improve how we use member data and our CRM. You will also sit on the Executive Team and ensure member voice is a core part of organisational decision-making.

We are looking for a senior leader from a membership organisation, professional body, charity or similar, with a track record of reversing decline or delivering measurable growth in membership or renewals. You will bring commercial and financial judgement, confidence with data, and experience of working with volunteers and member-led structures. You will also be able to lead people through change with honesty and compassion. This is a role for someone who wants to reshape the current model, and be part of building something new.

If this sounds like you, and you are excited to help decide what CILIP changes into, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Sam Harris
Interim Chief Executive Officer, CILIP

About CILIP

CILIP is **the leading voice for the information, knowledge management and library profession**. We are here for everyone with a professional connection to information, knowledge, data and libraries, and who shares our belief in their power to change lives. We received our Royal Charter in 1898. Library and information professionals regularly appear in the top five of most trusted professions, but we believe the sector's ability to support and enrich its communities has yet to reach its full potential.

Our purpose is **to unite, support and empower information professionals across all sectors, and to advocate for their role in their communities**. Our vision is **a professional community dedicated to changing lives through quality information, services and expertise**. Our mission is **to be the leading professional membership association for people working in information, knowledge, libraries and related sectors**. The values that unite our profession, and that we champion, are **social justice**, **intellectual freedom** and **evidence-based practice.**

CILIP has **over 8,000 members** working in higher education, the public sector, schools, health care, national libraries, government, the armed forces and prisons. We have recently developed a Chartership offer for Knowledge and Information Professionals, opening our services to this wider part of the sector. Much of what members value is delivered by members themselves, through volunteer-led networks, groups and committees supported by a small staff team. CILIP Scotland operates as a devolved nation body, and we have colleagues in Wales and Northern Ireland as well.

CILIP delivers:

- Professional membership and Chartership for library, information and knowledge professionals
- Member networks, special interest groups and regional and devolved nation support
- Events, awards and learning opportunities
- Employer partnerships, sector-leading products and services, and advocacy to policymakers on behalf of the profession

About CILIP

Where we are now

CILIP is in a period of **transition** and **transformation**, led by an Interim Chief Executive and now in its early stages. We have strong brand recognition, a committed membership and a solid balance sheet supported by historic reserves. We also face a material financial sustainability challenge. Membership provides around 47% of our income, but paying member numbers and income per member are declining. Most of our core activities are loss-making. We are currently held steady by tight cost control rather than income growth, and without systemic change our reserves would be depleted in around five years.

The first phase of our transformation is about operating within our means and being honest about what is working and what is not. The second is about rebuilding services, people and culture so that CILIP is stable and growing. The Director of Membership is central to both. **This role will be appointed into an organisation that is changing, and the successful candidate will help decide what it changes into.**

How we work

We expect everyone to live our team values.

We are:

- One Team (we deliver on our commitments and share a purpose)
- Innovative (commercially agile, and embracing change)
- Collaborative (we share knowledge and expertise generously)
- Act with Integrity (we are inclusive, work for the public good and champion the profession)

Our Team

CILIP employs 45 staff. Since January 2026, colleagues based in London have worked remotely - this will be reviewed as part of our transformation programme - and we have colleagues based in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Our team is united by a belief in the power of libraries, information and knowledge, and by a commitment to supporting the professionals who work in them.

The Chief Executive reports to the Board of Trustees, who direct the affairs of CILIP and ensure it is solvent, well run and delivering the objects of its Royal Charter. Ambassadorial Presidential roles and the Chairs of the Devolved Nations also provide leadership and direction to the Board. The Executive Team, which the Director of Membership will join, brings together our finance, development, people and operations, and digital transformation and growth leads alongside the Chief Executive.

As Director of Membership you will lead a directorate that brings together four teams who have historically sat in different parts of the organisation:

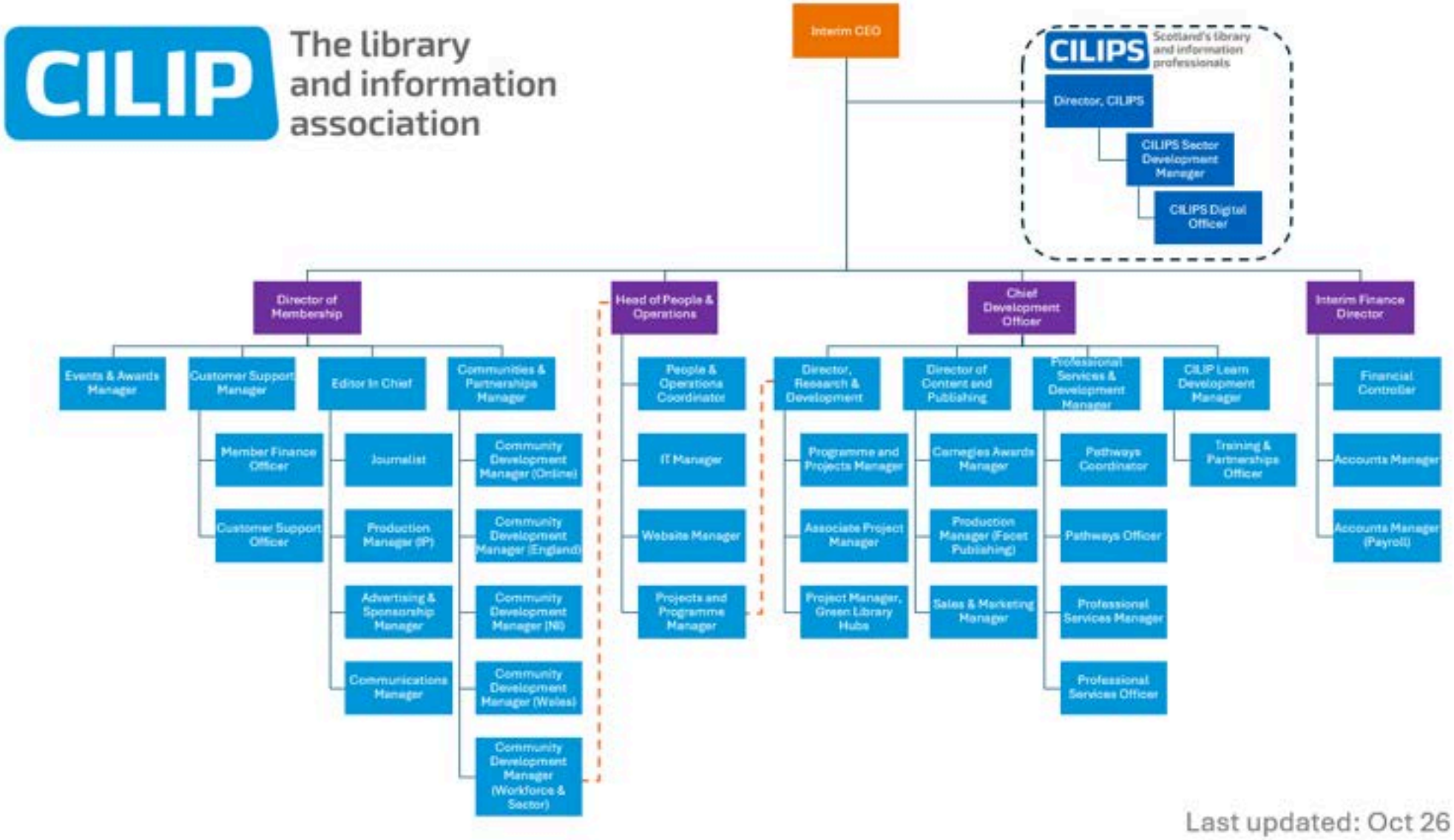
- **Communities and Partnerships**: member networks, special interest groups, regional and devolved nation support, volunteers and our Employer Partners programme
- **Events and Awards**: our events programme and awards, and the sponsorship and partnership income that supports them
- **Communications and Marketing**: member-focused communications, recruitment and renewal campaigns, and our editorial output
- **Business and Customer Suppor**t: the front line for joining, renewals, payments and enquiries, and the systems and data behind them

You will also work closely with our volunteers, the Member Council and the Devolved Nations, who are central to how CILIP works.

Benefits

- Remote working, with regular travel across the UK for team meetings, stakeholder meetings, member networks and events
- 28 days' annual leave plus public holidays, increasing after three years' service, with the option to buy up to 5 additional days (pro rata for part-time employees)
- Generous pension scheme: 10% employer contribution and 5% employee contribution, including death in service benefit
- Enhanced leave benefits, including occupational sick pay, maternity, paternity and carers leave
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Perkbox discounts and wellbeing hub
- Annual flu vaccination voucher
- Contribution towards eye tests and glasses for DSE use
- CILIP is a Living Wage employer

Staff structure



About the role

Job title: Director of Membership
Reports to: Chief Executive
Salary: £75,000 per annum for London-based candidates; £70,200 for outside of London
Working hours: 35 hours per week (full-time); open to discussing part-time or flexible patterns for the right candidate
Location: Remote working. Regular travel across the UK for team meetings, stakeholder meetings, member networks and events.
Contract type: Permanent, full-time
Direct reports: Communities and Partnerships Manager, Communications Manager, Editor in Chief, Customer Service Team, Business Development, Events team

Purpose of the role

CILIP exists for its members. This new role brings together, for the first time, everything that shapes the member experience: **communities, events, communications and customer service**. The Director of Membership owns the whole member journey from first contact to renewal, and is accountable for making membership worth having and worth keeping.

It is a **turnaround** role. Membership has fallen and renewal rates have dropped,we need someone to work with the Interim CEO and wider team who can stop the decline, rebuild the offer around what members actually value, and put the organisation on a footing where membership grows again. We are not looking for someone to manage the current model more efficiently. We are looking for someone to reshape it.

Key Responsibilities

Strategy and leadership

- Develop and lead a membership strategy that reverses the decline in numbers and renewals, with targets agreed with the Chief Executive and Board
- Own the member value proposition: use evidence to understand what each segment values at each career stage, and restructure the offer, grades and pricing around it
- Sit on the Executive Team, contribute to the leadership of the whole organisation and bring the member voice into every major decision
- Give the Executive Team and Board an honest picture of membership health (joiners, leavers, renewals, engagement and satisfaction by segment and career stage) without spin, and run member research so that what members tell us changes what we do
- Be accountable for the directorate's budget, income and costs, and for delivering membership and events income targets
- Build the directorate into one team with a shared purpose, from four teams that have historically sat in different parts of the organisation

About the role

Communities, networks and volunteers

- Lead the Communities and Partnerships team to deliver relevant, well-run networks, special interest groups, regional networks and devolved nation support, deciding with members and volunteers which to invest in, merge, refresh or close
- Recruit, support and develop the volunteers who run our networks so that volunteering is rewarding rather than a burden
- Lead the Employer Partners programme as our organisational membership offer, and build strong relationships with Member Council, the Devolved Nations and CILIP Scotland

Events and awards

- Lead our Events and Awards programme, working with our Events & Awards Manager to grow its reach, profile and engagement while covering its costs
- Review the events portfolio against member demand and financial return
- Grow sponsorship and partnership income to make events and awards financially sustainable

Communications, marketing and insight

- Lead the Communications and Marketing function, currently one manager, and shape how it grows
- Deliver clear, consistent, member-focused communications across all channels, including recruitment and renewal campaigns
- Set CILIP's tone of voice so that members feel heard and informed, not marketed at
- Use member research, listening exercises and engagement data to understand members better and develop an engagement, recruitment and renewal strategy that deepens their connection with CILIP

Customer and member services

- Lead the Business and Customer Support team to deliver a responsive, accurate and friendly service across joining, renewals, payments and enquiries, setting service standards and measuring performance against them
- Lead improvements to the CRM, member data quality and the digital experience of joining, renewing and engaging with CILIP
- Be the accountable owner for member data: its accuracy, lawful use and protection

People

- Lead, develop and support staff through a period of significant change, with care for their wellbeing and clarity about what is expected
- Model the values and behaviours we want across CILIP: integrity, compassion and fairness, and hard decisions made humanely

About you

We are seeking a leader who has:

- Senior leadership experience in a membership organisation, professional body, charity, trade association or similar, with direct accountability for membership numbers, income or retention
- A track record of reversing decline or delivering measurable growth in membership, engagement or renewals
- Experience of leading multi-disciplinary teams (ideally across communities, events, communications and customer service) and bringing separate teams together
- Financial literacy and commercial judgement: able to own a budget, read management accounts and understand contribution by service, with experience of sponsorship, partnership or event income
- Confident use of member data and insight to make decisions and make the case for change, including experience of Microsoft Dynamics to improve membership engagement
- Experience of working with volunteers, committees or member-led structures, and of getting the best from them

Personal qualities

- Leads people through organisational change with honesty and compassion, including making unpopular decisions well
- An excellent communicator, credible with members, a Board and a customer service team in the same week
- Comfortable with ambiguity and pace, able to act on incomplete information and adjust as the picture becomes clearer
- Committed to equity, diversity and inclusion in practice, not only in statements

Desirable

- Experience in a chartered or professional registration body, or in the library, information, knowledge or education sectors
- Experience of membership grades, pathways or registration schemes
- Experience of CRM or membership system improvement projects, and of data protection responsibilities
- Understanding of devolved nation working
- Experience of turnaround or recovery situations

The application process

How to apply

We are committed to a fair, inclusive and structured recruitment process that gives you a clear sense of what to expect at each stage. The process usually looks like the one below. If you apply, we will send you a more detailed breakdown ahead of time. If you need any reasonable adjustments to support you through the process, please let us know.

Step 1: Application

Start by completing an application form which includes 2–3 tailored questions, designed to help you demonstrate your experience, motivation, and alignment with the organisation's values. In addition to this, you will also be asked to upload your most recent CV.

Step 2: First Interviews

These are usually conducted remotely via Microsoft Teams and give us a chance to explore your application in more detail - particularly your experience, motivation, and alignment with the organisation's goals. Themes and topics of interview questions are shared with you prior to your interview.

Step 3: Final Interviews

Final interviews are held in person, and may include a task, presentation, or scenario-based questions to explore your suitability in more depth. You'll have the chance to meet key individuals and get a feel for the culture of the organisation.

Using AI to Help With Your Application

We get it - writing application letters and answering questions takes time, and it's sometimes hard to find inspiration and know where to start. We therefore recognise that some candidates might use AI (such as Chat GPT) to help them write their application. This can lead to some challenges that might impact your application. So, we're sharing some some tips to help you avoid some of the common pitfalls. Read them here.

If you have any questions or would like to arrange an initial, informal discussion about the role, please contact Nida Ashraf via email at nida@atkinsonhrconsulting.co.uk

The application process

Deadline: Friday 13 November 2026
First Interviews: week commencing Monday 23 November 2026
Final Interviews: Wednesday 9 December 2026

How to apply

To apply, please submit your CV and complete the application form where you can asnwer the following questions:

1. Why do you want to work at CILIP, and how do your values align with ours?
2. Tell us about a time you grew or reshaped a membership or customer offer. What did you do, and what difference did it make?
3. Tell us about your experience of leading a team through change or transformation. How did you maintain and improve performance, and what was the result?

Please respond to each of the questions with a maximum of 400 words per answer. You may wish to prepare your answers in advance in a separate document to avoid losing your responses before you submit them in the form.

If you think you have what it takes to fulfil this role but aren't sure you meet every point on the person specification, please still get in touch. We'd love to have a chat and see if you could help us to create a lasting difference.

AtkinsonHR

For an informal conversation about the role and application process, please contact our recruitment partners, Atkinson HR Consulting:

nida@atkinsonhrconsulting.co.uk

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