



ENGINEERS

WITHOUT BORDERS **UK**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Appointment brief
October 2026

Nick Shanks

Director, Harris Hill Ltd

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HarrisHill
Executive Search



Welcome from the Chair

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Chief Executive Officer of Engineers Without Borders UK.

Few professions are as influential as engineering in shaping our future; whether fighting climate change or harnessing the opportunities and risks of AI, EWB-UK strives to ensure engineers have the knowledge and skills to confidently tackle the greatest design challenges of our time.

This is an exciting moment for our organisation. In recent years, we have transformed how we work and significantly expanded our reach and influence. Our current strategy sets an ambitious course to 2030, aiming to upskill 250,000 people, based on dual pathways of transforming engineering education and reshaping industry practice.

Our outgoing CEO has built a talented team, a highly engaged community including student chapters and corporate partners, a respected reputation, and a clear strategic direction. We now seek a new leader to join our team, consolidating and building on our successes, bringing fresh energy and inspiration, and working towards developing the next 10-year strategy that will ensure lasting systems-level change.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you for considering this opportunity. We look forward to hearing from those who share our vision and belief that engineering can and must play a central role in creating a better world for all.

Georgia Elliott-Smith

Chair of the Board
Engineers Without Borders UK

About us

Engineers Without Borders UK is leading efforts to put global responsibility at the heart of engineering. We envision a future where the needs of all people are balanced with the needs of our planet.

Our mission

Engineers will play a pivotal role in designing the solutions we need for humanity and the planet to thrive. Achieving this demands a rapid shift towards globally responsible approaches, requiring a complete reimagining of engineering education and industry practices.

We empower individuals, teams, and organisations with the skills and expertise needed to drive this urgent change. Together, we are transforming engineering to create a safe and just future for all.

How we drive change

We are proud to be part of a global movement of over 50 Engineers Without Borders organisations united in our belief in engineering as a catalyst for positive change. We are committed to putting global responsibility at the heart of the profession by tackling the critical challenges facing higher education and industry.

Our Principles

To achieve social and environmental justice, we need those working in and around engineering to commit to global responsibility. Our 2021-30 strategy sets out four key principles for globally responsible engineering that we want to see adopted across the engineering community and embedded in the culture of how all engineering is taught and practiced.



Responsible. To meet the needs of all people within the limits of our planet.



Purposeful. To shape outcomes to be equitable and ethical throughout engineering and the life cycle of any project.



Inclusive. To ensure diverse viewpoints and knowledge are included and respected in the engineering process and outcomes.



Regenerative. To maximise the ability of all living systems to achieve and maintain a healthier state and naturally co-evolve.

Our Strategy

Our 2021-2030 strategy provides a strong, persuasive plan to put global responsibility at the heart of engineering, ensuring a safe and just future for all.

Doctors have a moral duty to their patients, first and foremost. Lawyers have a moral duty to justice, first and foremost. But what about engineers?

For a sector employing millions of people across the UK alone, we continue to have a surprising lack of clarity around our commitments to people and planet. We have the Professional Engineering Institutions individual codes of conduct and the Statement of Ethical Principles, but to enable a better world a professional commitment should be about putting principles into action, every single day.

As we look ahead to the 2030 deadline for the UN Sustainable Development Goals, it is time for the engineering community to proactively consider how we can address the destruction of global ecosystems and the current failure to meet the basic human rights of everyone.

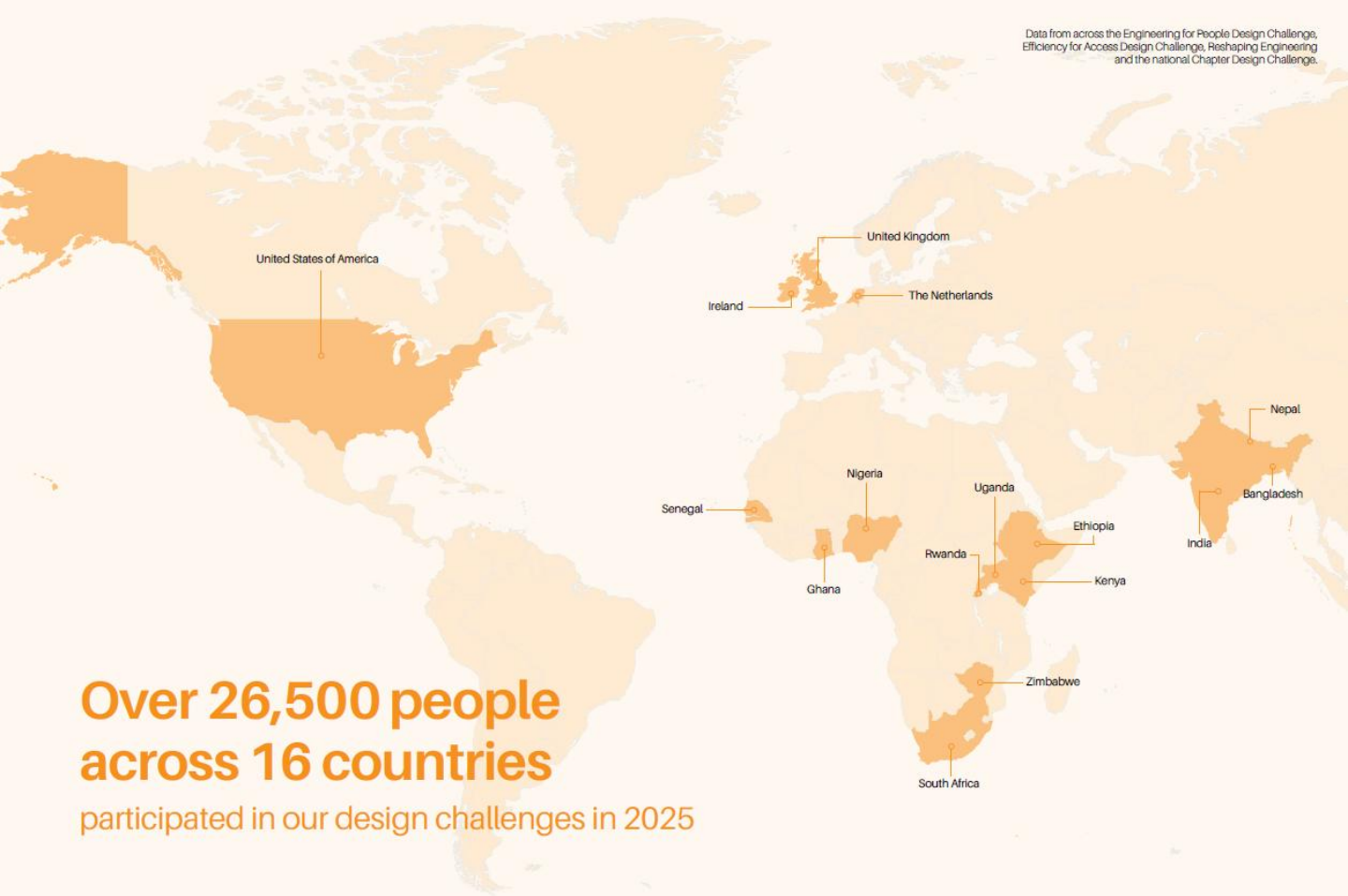
The engineering community is uniquely placed to address these challenges - and can do so if we take a different approach and act urgently.

There needs to be a rapid move towards globally responsible practice. This means critically reflecting on the role of engineering in society and understanding the social, environmental and economic impacts engineering has, both locally to where it is implemented and globally through supply chains and operational outputs.

We need to move from an approach of engineering for people and planet to an approach of engineering with people and planet; a globally responsible approach.

This is an ambitious strategy but the scale of the challenge demands it. By bringing together thousands of people and organisations, we will develop unstoppable momentum towards achieving social and environmental justice through engineering. Whether you are an engineer, academic, university student, or involved with engineering in any way, we want and need you to be a part of this movement for change.





Over 26,500 people
across 16 countries
participated in our design challenges in 2025

Our work

Transforming Education

- **Engineering for People Design Challenge** Flagship programme which brings to life real-world design challenges in a safe and supported environment, through a project-based learning approach.
- **Efficiency for Access** The Efficiency for Access Design Challenge was a global, multi-disciplinary competition that empowers teams of university students to help accelerate clean energy access.
- **Reimagined degree map** The Reimagined Degree Map supports engineering departments to navigate the decisions that are urgently required to prepare students for 21st-century challenges

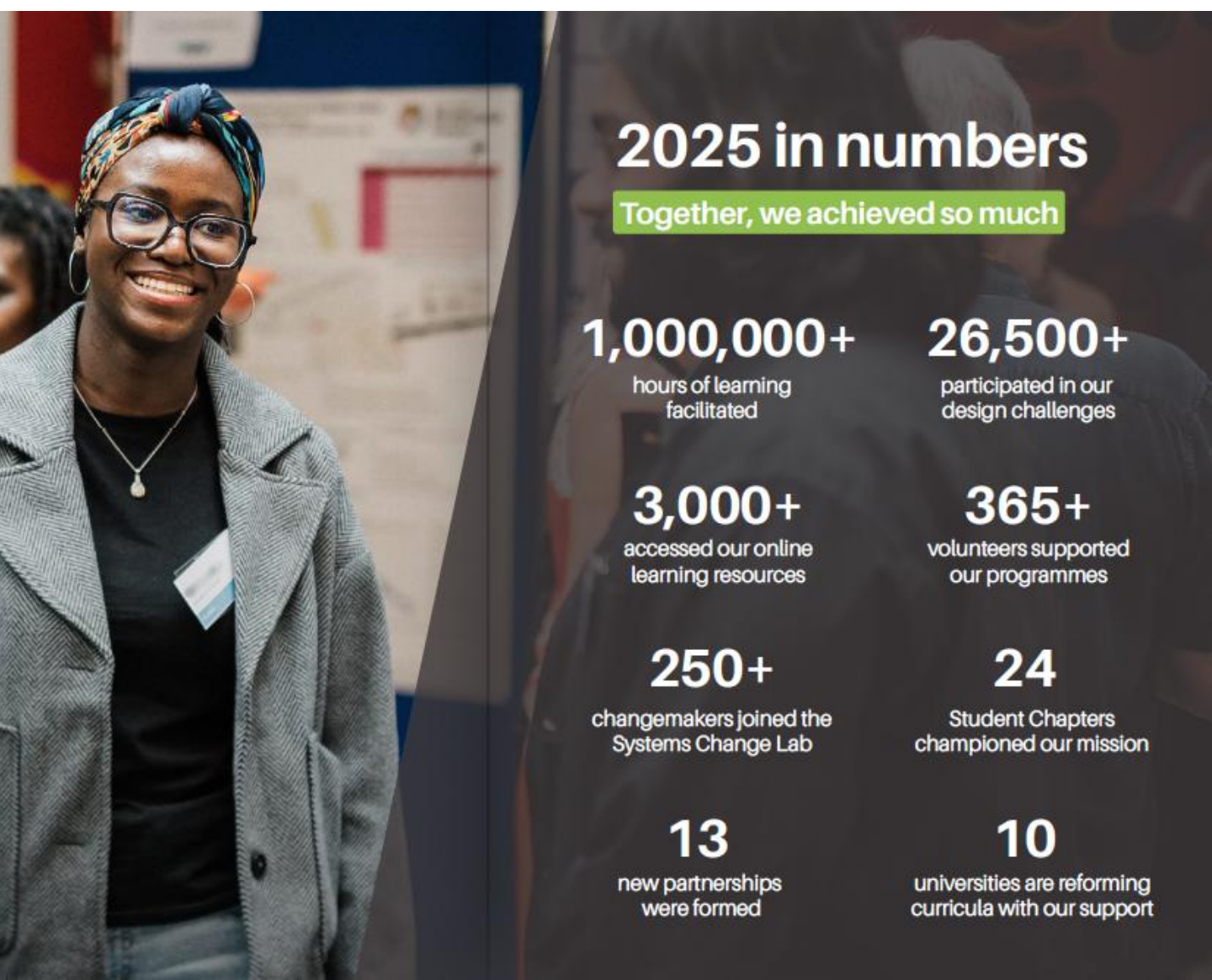
Building Knowledge

- **Virtual experience programme** We've partnered with Forage to create a free virtual experience programme designed to upskill the engineering community in globally responsible practices.
- **Reshaping Transport** The virtual design challenge fostering innovative thinking and practical solutions to enhance sustainable mobility for Low- and Middle-Income Countries.

- **Reshaping Engineering** The virtual design challenge working to reshape how engineering is taught and practised.
- **AMplify Impact Challenge** The national 3D design competition that invites UK-based university students to design solutions to shape the future of Additive Manufacturing (AM).

Changing Practice

- **Competency Compass** Empowering practitioners with the capabilities to respond to a changing world.
- **Systems Change Lab** A collaborative space transforming engineering's impact on society by leading systemic change in education and industry practices.
- **Insights** In line with our 2021-2030 strategy, we are expanding our reach outside of curriculum through collaborative research, influence and consultation.





Job description

Job Title	Chief Executive Officer
Salary	circa £70,000 per annum
Hours	Full-time (flexibility will be considered)
Responsible for	Delivering the strategy of Engineers Without Borders UK.
Key relationship	Trustees, staff team, strategic and academic partners, collaborators and funders.

Our overall ambition is to reshape engineering education, culture and practice by empowering our community and putting global responsibility at the heart of engineering. To achieve this, we must build on our momentum, strengthen our foundations and maintain a clear strategic direction. As Chief Executive, you will focus on five key areas:

Leading: inspiring and driving forward the organisation, including our staff, volunteers and members.

Building: supporting and growing a diverse movement of individuals and organisations.

Influencing: encouraging the wider engineering community to support our agenda and strategy.

Delivering: developing and implementing plans to deliver the goals set out in our 2020-2030 strategy.

Resourcing: ensuring we have the funds to maintain our operations while building the funding pipeline to underpin growth.

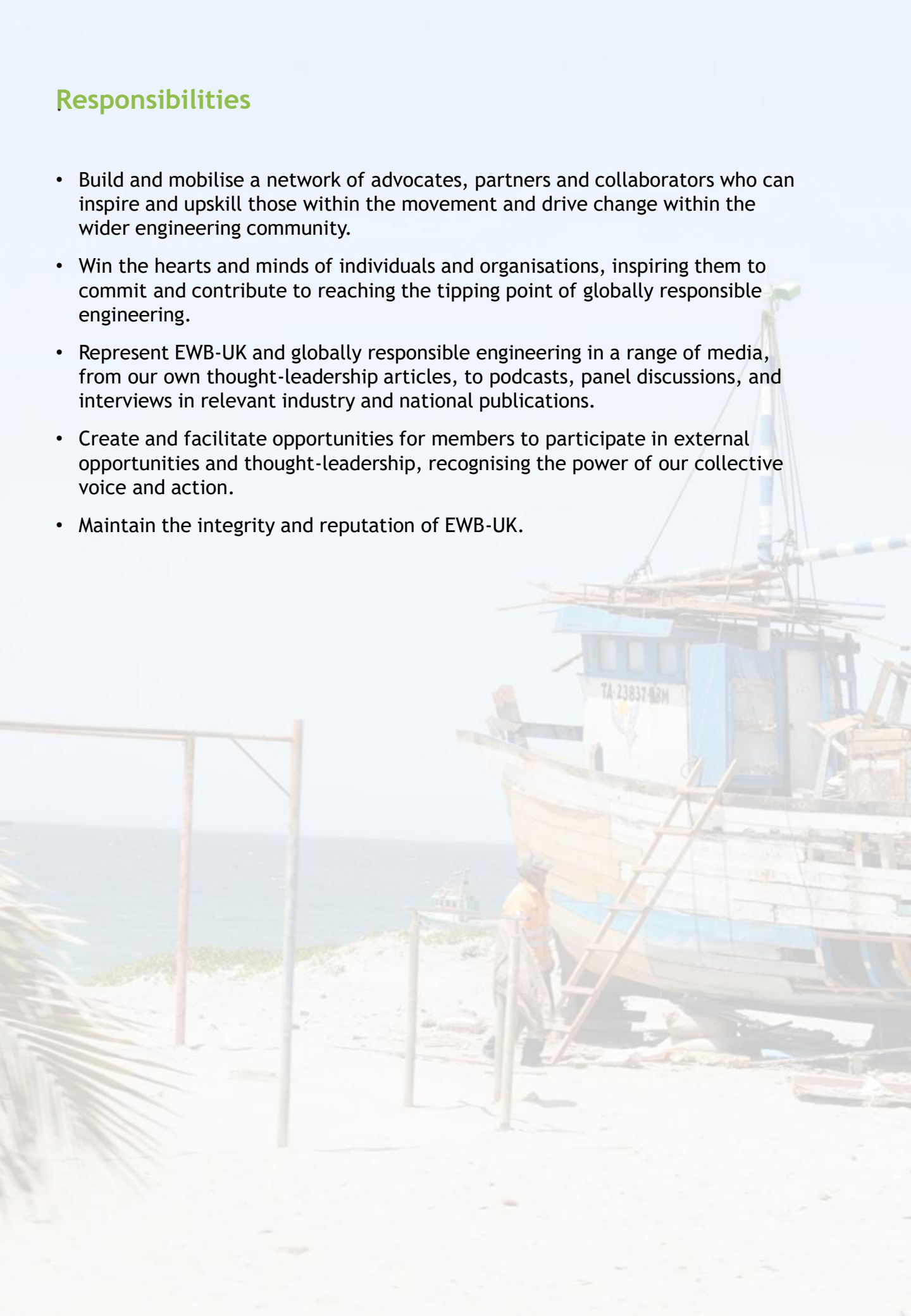


Responsibilities

- Responsible for the overall programmatic and financial performance of the organisation.
- Lead, coach and inspire our team, members and wider movement, fuelling their passion and commitment to our purpose.
- Improve and build on our current programmes to deliver clear, consistent progress towards achieving the 2020-2030 strategy.
- Further growing the reach of our flagship programmes to more universities within and outside the UK.
- Driving development of university partnerships in support of curriculum change and being hands on in delivering them.
- Providing a clear direction of our movement and ensuring that our movement projects support meaningful change.
- Building on our expanded university chapter programme portfolio to drive growth in chapter numbers and university members.
- Building on our emerging short-course offering to support early career development.
- Ensure we have the financial resources and skills and expertise required to deliver on the remainder of the strategic plan.
- Play a leading role in income-generation through prospecting, securing and delivering high-impact partnerships and earned income opportunities.
- Be a lead advocate for EWB-UK and globally responsible engineering, living the principles and approach detailed in our strategy.
- Seek and seize opportunities to be in a position of influence (boards, working groups etc.) to ensure global responsibility is on the agenda for how engineering is taught and practised.

Responsibilities

- Build and mobilise a network of advocates, partners and collaborators who can inspire and upskill those within the movement and drive change within the wider engineering community.
- Win the hearts and minds of individuals and organisations, inspiring them to commit and contribute to reaching the tipping point of globally responsible engineering.
- Represent EWB-UK and globally responsible engineering in a range of media, from our own thought-leadership articles, to podcasts, panel discussions, and interviews in relevant industry and national publications.
- Create and facilitate opportunities for members to participate in external opportunities and thought-leadership, recognising the power of our collective voice and action.
- Maintain the integrity and reputation of EWB-UK.





Person specification

This role is ideal for someone with a strategic vision and growth mindset, who has leadership experience with excellent coaching and communication skills to speak credibly and with authority about our cause across audiences. Senior leadership experience in the charity sector and/or with small organisations would be advantageous.

To ensure you're the right person and can achieve success for yourself and EWB-UK, we think that the following are essential:

- Senior level experience of leading organisations and driving cultures of excellence. We expect you to approach leadership as a coach and facilitator, utilising excellent interpersonal skills to support and empower our team and the movement, whilst also implementing/overseeing improved and new policies, procedures, systems and processes.
- An excellent communicator and relationship builder, with demonstrable ability to inspire, influence and energise a range of audiences. You will need to be adaptable, able to address a room of committed individuals one day and advocating for globally responsible engineering to the C-suite of a public company or negotiating a partnership the next day.
- Knowledge of the UK engineering sector and ability to talk credibly about engineering and its role in addressing our global challenges. Regardless of experience, you will bring an appetite to deepen your understanding in order to drive forward the movement and influence cross-sector change.
- Strategic, versatile and hands-on. As a small charity, we expect you to lead with a 'can do' and collaborative attitude, be highly organised, solutions-oriented and a self-starter.
- Experience of income generation. The majority of our income is achieved through purpose-aligned partnerships and earned income opportunities. Experience of developing purpose-aligned partnerships and earned-income opportunities is highly desirable.
- Strong numeracy skills with experience of financial management (budgeting, monitoring performance, forecasting).
- Experience of working with or participating on a board.
- A strong commitment to EWB-UK's purpose and a passion for the potential of the engineering community to meet the needs of people within the limits of our planet

If we were putting together our ultimate wish list, we'd also include the following:

- CEO/senior leadership experience in the charity sector and/or small organisations, able to relate to the opportunities and challenges we face as a small charity.
- Experience with action-oriented communities or movements and an understanding of the way movements grow, shift power, and create change.
- Experience in advocacy/campaigning to influence change in policy/practice.
- Career experience in or around engineering or sustainability, for example as a practising engineer, university educator, or within a professional engineering institution, particularly in professional competence or degree accreditation.
- Experience of identifying and managing risks and opportunities, and ensuring compliance with charity law.
- Professional qualification(s) in project management, change management and/or organisational improvement.
- Volunteering experience.





Terms of appointment

Job Title:	Chief Executive Officer
Salary:	circa £70,000 per annum
Contract:	Full-time (flexibility will be considered)
Pension:	Up to 5% matched employer contribution to workplace pension scheme
Annual Leave:	24 days annual leave plus public holidays
Location:	Hybrid - open to candidates based in the UK with reliable internet access. The role combines remote working with attendance at monthly team days in Fitzrovia, London and ad-hoc events, plus travel across the UK as required



How to apply

If you would like to apply, please send the following:

- An up-to-date CV
- A Supporting Statement (no more than 1 x A4 pages) outlining why you are interested in becoming Chief Executive Officer of Engineers Without Borders UK demonstrating relevant experience for the role.

Please submit your completed application to: nick.shanks@harrishill.co.uk by 9am Monday 2 November 2026

Dates for your diary:

Closing date for applications:	9am Monday 2 November 2026
First interview:	w/c 16 November 2026
Second interview:	w/c 23 November 2026

Please let us know if you require any reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process.

Please state in your application if you have any commitments during the interview period that may coincide with these dates.

Advertisement

Harris Hill is delighted to be working with Engineers Without Borders UK to recruit its new Chief Executive Officer.

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- **Building:** supporting and growing a diverse movement of individuals and organisations.
- **Influencing:** encouraging the wider engineering community to support our agenda.
- **Delivering:** developing and implementing plans to deliver the goals set out in our 2020-2030 strategy.
- **Resourcing:** ensuring we have the funds to maintain our operations while building the funding pipeline to underpin growth.

If you are inspired and excited by what EWB-UK does, we'd love to hear from you.

Job title: Chief Executive Officer

Salary: circa £70,000 per annum

Contract: Full-time (flexibility will be considered)

Location: Hybrid - open to candidates based in the UK with reliable internet access.

The role combines remote working with attendance at monthly team days in Fitzrovia, London and ad-hoc events, plus travel across the UK as required

How to apply:

Please review the Recruitment Pack for further information about EWB-UK, the CEO position and for details on how to apply.

Closing date for applications: 9am Monday 2 November 2026

Both EWB-UK and Harris Hill operate an equal opportunity policy and commit to treating all of our candidates and jobseekers fairly. We welcome and encourage applications from everyone regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships.