

1495



UNIVERSITY OF  
**ABERDEEN**

# HEAD OF PHILANTHROPY

*DIRECTORATE OF DEVELOPMENT & ALUMNI RELATIONS*

Closing date: **16 January 2025**

Interview date: **To Be Confirmed**

Reference number: **DEV134A**



## INTRODUCTION

---

Thank you for taking the time to explore the Head of Philanthropy role at the University of Aberdeen.

The University of Aberdeen is a broad-based, research-intensive university. Grounded in our foundational purpose – the University of Aberdeen is *Open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others*. We remain true to our roots as an ancient Scottish university, combining breadth and depth in our degree programmes and drawing strength from the quality of our research.

Outstanding in a wide range of disciplines, the University of Aberdeen is credited for its international reach and commercialisation. The University has over 16,000 students and 3,600 staff representing 130 nationalities. We encourage bold thinking, creativity and innovation, and we nurture ambition with many opportunities for professional and personal development in an inclusive learning environment which challenges and inspires.

The University encourages bold thinking, creativity and innovation, and we nurture ambition with many opportunities for professional and personal development in an inclusive learning environment which challenges and inspires.

The University continues to build on its achievements and has invested in 50 new academic posts and in 2020 launched five interdisciplinary, cross institution Research Centres that will catalyse world-leading research in our areas of strength. Our interdisciplinary challenge areas are Energy Transition, Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity, Environment and Biodiversity, Data and Artificial Intelligence and Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing.

### ABERDEEN 2040

In 2020, on our 525<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we launched Aberdeen 2040, our strategic vision for the next 20 years. Four strategic themes will shape our learning and discovery, underlined by 20 commitments we have made against each theme:

**Inclusive** - we welcome students, staff and partners from all backgrounds, organisations and communities. We value diversity.

**Interdisciplinary** - we innovate in education and research by generating, sharing and applying new kinds of knowledge. We learn together.

**International** - we connect with others and extend our networks and partnerships around the world. We think across borders.

**Sustainable** - we understand and nurture our environment, and take care of our resources, including our people and finances. We work responsibly.

The University reputation and the pride amongst alumni, supporters and our community is high - driven by the commitments outlined in Aberdeen 2040 and demonstrated by the University's recent league table success,

- Top 20 in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide (UK) 2024
- 12<sup>th</sup> in the UK and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Scotland in the Guardian University League Table (UK) 2025
- Medicine ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in the UK for two-years running
- 36/236 in the QS World Rankings (UK/World)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> in Scotland, Wales and N Ireland for Student Satisfaction (NSS 2024)

We have a compelling story of our history, progress to date and vision for the future. 2025, marks the University's 530th year which creates an opportunity to launch a transformative comprehensive fundraising and engagement campaign - **Go Beyond**.

The role of Head of Philanthropy is a crucial leadership position and will work at the highest levels to take our philanthropic impact to its next level. We are looking for a creative and motivational leader to nurture, challenge and inspire our growing development team and to deliver a bold and innovative strategy to support our new and exciting university-wide fundraising campaign. This opportunity presents the potential to raise transformational gifts at the 6-, 7- and 8-figure level from a portfolio of alumni, non-alumni, companies, trusts & foundations and institutional funders. The role reports into the newly appointed Director of Advancement and will play a key part in shaping the future direction of our Aberdeen 2040 strategic vision.

The successful candidate will have a demonstrable track record in raising major philanthropic gifts together with highly developed interpersonal and communication skills. The ability to build relationships across a large and complex landscape and to inspire and motivate a growing team of people will be equally important. The role is offered with flexible and hybrid working options. A relocation would also be supported with a financial package.

This is a truly exciting time to join a successful and growing development operation at Aberdeen. It also offers an unparalleled chance to work in a beautiful setting between the mountains of Aberdeenshire and the stunning North Sea coastline, surrounded by 530 years of university history.

## JOB DESCRIPTION

---

### MAIN PURPOSE OF THE ROLE:

The successful candidate will develop and manage some of our most important fundraising relationships, whilst managing the broader major gifts (£25k+) programme, directly managing a team Development Officers, and working with senior staff and volunteers to build a strong asking culture and ensure University fundraising goals are met. You will work with the Director of Advancement to create and implement a fundraising strategy which will generate philanthropic income from graduates, nongraduates, companies, Trusts, Foundations, and institutional funders. The post will be responsible for the development, implementation, and monitoring of strategic and operational plans with agreed targets aligned with our new philanthropic Campaign. You will work closely with the Campaign Director to align and coordinate with the Campaign pre- and post-public launch.

### KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

#### Planning

Plan income generation streams for major gift prospects in line with University strategic priorities and the fundraising Campaign. Identify and co-ordinate funding priorities and develop strategies to engage with major donors, individuals, companies, and charitable trusts to meet agreed targets. Work with the Development Officers to ensure that all income stream plans are aligned, coordinated and prospect-centred in approach.

#### Fundraising

Maintain a personal portfolio of up to 30 potential major gift prospects which will be of a senior level and capable of giving at least a five/six figure gift. Responsible for planning and conducting gift solicitations and face to face meetings in conjunction with senior University staff and volunteer leaders.

Priority Setting in tandem with Campaign Director, work with Schools and other units to develop Campaign priorities; build cases for support; agree to and set fundraising targets.

### **Major Gift Management**

Manage the major gift fundraising programme, working closely with the Prospect Research team and using the department's Prospect Management tools. Plan and manage an annual programme of fundraising activity of assigned prospects and monitor income against set targets; manage open proposals and ensure a final ask is made; develop new initiatives for short- and long-term income generation; manage budget. Provide leadership, direction, and strategic support to the Major Gifts team. Ensure KPIs are in place and met. Work with Development Officers to ensure clear direction and timely delivery of all requested proposals.

Coordinate the prospect lists of the Director and other Senior University leaders, ensuring coordination with overall programme.

### **Stewardship**

Work with the Donor Relations team to ensure stewardship strategies are in place and implemented.

### **Volunteers/Academic Champions/ Accountability**

Engage volunteers who can help to make the case for support with prospective donors; engage academic champions to support ongoing fundraising and the Campaign; ensure accountability to donors and university community.

### **Compliance**

Work with the Data Management team to ensure that procedures and practices are fully compliant with privacy and data protection legislation, and that all team members have completed the required level of training on use of the alumni and donor database. Oversee due diligence of gifts and donors, ensuring policies and standard procedures are followed. Report to the Development Trust SCIO Compliance Committee.

### **Reporting**

Report as required to the Development Trust SCIO Board of Trustees and its sub-committees, the University's Senior Management Team, Court, and the Governance and Nominations Committee (for due diligence). Quarterly reporting requirements include a fundraising performance report and lists of prospects/ gifts for due diligence purposes, as well as other papers as needed.

### **Continuous improvement**

Seek continuously to improve the policies, procedures and working practices that underpin major gift fundraising performance and compliance. Seek ongoing professional development.

## **CANDIDATE BACKGROUND**

---

A seasoned relationship fundraiser with significant major gift success, the Head of Philanthropy will assume responsibility and direction for Aberdeen's major and legacy giving efforts. A skilled strategist and planner, the successful candidate will partner with University leadership and the Development and Alumni Relations Team to design and implement fundraising plans to help to achieve the University's ambitious vision. Excited by the opportunity to build on existing successes, the Head of Philanthropy will combine energy and enthusiasm with

metrics and rigorous processes to keep the major and legacy gift programme on track and aligned with overall development goals.

As the Head of Philanthropy, you will be fundraiser, mentor and manager, with the ability to assess strengths, talent, and needs of individuals and teams. You will be a member of the department's management team. The new incumbent will have a deep passion and skill in helping people to reach their full professional potential. Patient and encouraging, the Head of Philanthropy will boost our confidence, champion our team, and celebrate our successes. Someone who leads by example, the ideal candidate will have a track record of closing significant gifts and will apply this experience to a portfolio of prospects at Aberdeen. The successful candidate will be an exceptional communicator, motivator, and team builder who will shift easily to meet the differing needs and styles of others.

The Head of Philanthropy will partner with development staff in the recruitment, education, and support of academic partners, Development Trust SCIO trustees, and campaign volunteers. An entrepreneurial mindset would be an asset in the ideal candidate. Thoughtfully decisive and respectfully direct, the Head of Philanthropy will be practical and solutions-focused encouraging others to work together in an integrated manner to balance the interests of the donors, the University, and its various schools. Approachable and flexible, you will be an open-minded listener who values the opinions, expertise, and ideas of others.

The successful candidate will also demonstrate professionalism and accountability and will operate with values and integrity. Diplomatic and politically astute, the ideal candidate will understand the complexity and nuances of a university environment. You will take time to learn about the defining strengths and unique character of Aberdeen and will be excited and proud to become part of our community.

## TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

---

Salary will be at the appropriate point on the Grade 8 salary scale, £58,596 - £65,814 per annum and negotiable with placement according to qualifications and experience.

Any appointment will be made subject to satisfactory references and probation period.

For further information on various staff benefits and policies please visit [www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here)

This role is based in the UK and as such the successful candidate will be required to live and work in the UK.

Prior to employment, the successful candidate must be able to demonstrate their right to work in the UK. This role may be eligible for sponsorship under the Skilled Worker route under the UKVI immigration rules but is dependent on factors specific to the candidate and if tradeable points can be used under the rules.

Information on other visa options is available at <https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa>.

Please do not hesitate to contact Patrycja Bromm, HR Adviser (e-mail: [patrycja.bromm@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:patrycja.bromm@abdn.ac.uk)) for further information.

The candidate appointed to this post may be eligible for homeworking on an occasional or regular basis (at least three days per week on campus). For more information, please refer to our [Homeworking Policy](#).

### AT A GLANCE

#### SALARY:

Grade 8

£58,596 - £65,814 per annum

#### HOURS OF WORK:

37.5 hrs per week

#### CONTRACT TYPE:

Substantive

#### LOCATION:

Aberdeen

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<p><b>Education/Qualifications</b>            Academic, technical and professional education and training</p>	<p>Minimum undergraduate degree or equivalent experience</p>	
<p><b>Work and Other relevant experience (including training)</b>            e.g. Specialist knowledge, levels of experience, supervisory experience, research</p>	<p>Proven track record and experience in major gift fundraising</p> <p>Proven ability to manage staff and budgets, with evidence of both during career advancement</p> <p>Strong understanding of all aspect of the donor cycle — identification, cultivation, engagement, solicitation, and stewardship</p> <p>Strong evidence of managing a portfolio of major gift prospects and demonstrated success in solicitation</p> <p>Strategic planning and vision-building skills; exceptional organizational skills</p> <p>Experience in executive and senior leadership interaction Strong oral, written and presentation skills and computer literacy</p>	
<p><b>Personal qualities and abilities</b>            e.g. initiative, leadership, ability to work on own or with others, communication skills</p>	<p>Sound judgement, tact, diplomacy; excellent demonstrated analytical skills, excellent communication, and interpersonal skills</p> <p>A strong commitment to, and understanding of, higher education or the charity sector and continuous learning.</p> <p>Sound knowledge of the vision and objectives of Development &amp; Alumni Relations.</p>	

**Other**

e.g. special circumstances (if any) appropriate to the role such as unsocial hours, travelling, Gaelic language requirements etc.

**ESSENTIAL**

Ability to travel within the UK and overseas

**DESIRABLE**



## UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

---

*open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others*

The University of Aberdeen is a broad based, research intensive University, and we put students at the centre of everything we do. Outstanding in a wide range of discipline areas, Aberdeen is credited for its international reach and commercialisation of research ideas into spin out companies. The University has over 16,000 matriculated students and 3,600 staff representing 130 nationalities. We encourage bold thinking, creativity and innovation, and we nurture ambition with many opportunities for professional and personal development in an inclusive learning environment which challenges and inspires.



**12<sup>TH</sup> IN UK**  
Guardian University  
Guide 2025



**15<sup>TH</sup> IN UK**  
The Times &  
The Sunday Times  
Good University  
Guide 2025



**37<sup>TH</sup> IN THE  
WORLD FOR  
SUSTAINABILITY**  
QS World Rankings 2025



**10<sup>TH</sup> IN UK  
FOR SOCIAL  
IMPACT**  
THE Impact Ranking 2024  
Based on UN SDGs

### CURRENT CONTEXT

The University continues to uphold the principals of the foundational purpose. We remain committed to delivering positive change both locally and globally. We work together and with our partners in an interdisciplinary way, catalysing world-leading research in our areas of strength: Energy Transition; Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity; Environment and Biodiversity; Data and Artificial Intelligence; and Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing. We are investing in our future and have committed £100m to upgrading our campus, including the new fully digitised Science Teaching Hub. Our commitment to our students, campus and community has led to us being named a Top 20 UK institution in two major league tables<sup>1</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> in the UK for overall student satisfaction<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2024 and the Guardian University Guide 2025

<sup>2</sup> National Student Survey (NSS) 2022

## ABERDEEN 2040

On our 525th anniversary as a University we launched [Aberdeen 2040](#), our strategic vision for the next 20 years. Four strategic themes will shape our learning and discovery, underlined by 20 commitments we have made against each theme:

- **Inclusive**  
We welcome students, staff and partners from all backgrounds, organisations and communities. We value diversity.
- **Interdisciplinary**  
We innovate in education and research by generating, sharing and applying new kinds of knowledge. We learn together.
- **International**  
We connect with others and extend our networks and partnerships around the world. We think across borders.
- **Sustainable**  
We understand and nurture our environment, and take care of our resources, including our people and finances.  
  
We work responsibly.

## OUR EDUCATION

Recognised as the Scottish University of the Year in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2019, we remain true to our roots as an ancient Scottish university, combining breadth and depth in our degree programmes and drawing strength from the quality of our research. Our flexible curriculum encourages students to grow as independent learners and therefore to thrive as graduates in the diverse workplaces of the future. Our education is open to all and we are setting ambitious targets to further widen access.

## OUR RESEARCH

Researchers at the University of Aberdeen have been at the forefront of innovation and excellence throughout the centuries, generating insights in medicine, science, engineering, law, social sciences, arts and humanities. This research has contributed to five Nobel prizes as well as other awards such as the Queen's Anniversary prize. Our research is intellectually rigorous working within our established areas of excellence as well as new methods of enquiry. We will continue to generate new knowledge addressing economic and societal issues with ambition and imagination, ensuring that it is globally excellent and locally relevant.

## INTERNATIONAL

Aberdeen is increasing its international presence, positioning the University as a global organisation and building on established global partnerships around the world, including Qatar, China, North America, Europe. We feature in the top 50 institutions worldwide for international students<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>3</sup> Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2024



## IMPACT

In 2020 the University signed the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals accord, solidifying our commitment to developing the world in a sustainable way. In 2024 we were listed in the global Top 100 for 8 of these goals<sup>4</sup>.

Our highly cited work in zero-carbon technology and global outlooks makes us Scotland's best institution for environmental research in 2022<sup>5</sup>.

---

<sup>4</sup> Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2024  
<sup>5</sup> QS World University Rankings 2022

## THE DIRECTORATE OF DEVELOPMENT & ALUMNI RELATIONS

---

The Directorate of Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) is responsible for engaging and growing our community of alumni, supporters and philanthropic partners. Our team works to build and maintain life-long relationships with 130,000+ graduates around the world, keeping them connected to the University and each other and encouraging them to give their time through our alumni volunteering programmes.

We also create opportunities for individuals and organisations to make charitable gifts to support the University's purpose and objectives. This includes advancing Aberdeen's challenge-led research and innovation, and support for scholarships and enhanced student experience.

DAR is part of the Professional Services structure, which works in partnership with Senior Management, Deans, and Schools & Institutes in the smooth operation of the University. A strong, interdependent team, Development & Alumni Relations is made up of four sections, Development, Alumni Relations and Regular Giving, Marketing & Communications and Advancement Services. We work together closely to achieve our shared mission to

We work in partnership with the Development Trust SCIO an independent organisation with its own governance arrangements and Board of Trustees and the US Foundation Board (501c3).

## ABERDEEN AND ABERDEENSHIRE

---

Scotland's third largest city, Aberdeen sits on the coast between the mountains of Aberdeenshire and the stunning North Sea coastline. The Aberdeen City region is a can-do place that is actively investing, at scale, in its future.

Renowned as a Global Energy Hub, Aberdeen is a vibrant, entrepreneurial region, home to a unique mix of business opportunities and specialist skills across various sectors including energy, technology, life sciences and food & drink. More than 20% of Scotland's top businesses are located in this region which is taking great strides to ensure that it continues to compete on a world stage. Investments of more than £10 billion of public and private infrastructure is due to be delivered before 2030, marking an exciting time to be part of a genuine world-class location.

Built from sparkling local granite Aberdeen has earned the name of the Silver City. As the energy capital of Europe, Aberdeen nevertheless retains its old-fashioned charm and character making it an attractive place in which to live, work and study. Due to its global business and international energy industry credentials, Aberdeen is well served by local and national transport infrastructure with excellent rail networks that run both North and South of Scotland and the rest of the UK. It also acts as an international travel hub. Flying time to London is just over one hour with regular daily flights and serves international travel to European centres such as Amsterdam (Schiphol) and Paris (Charles de Gaulle) as well as flights to other European destinations.

The City and the surrounding countryside provide a variety of urban, seaside and country attractions. Aberdeen has first class amenities including [His Majesty's Theatre](#), [Music Hall](#), [Art Gallery](#), [the P&J Arena](#), [Museums](#), and [Beach Leisure Centre](#). The City is framed by its accessible beach front which is within a short walk of the city centre and there are an array of activities available across the region such as hill walking; mountaineering; sailing; surfing; salmon, trout and sea fishing; golf; sailing; surfing and windsurfing. The surrounding countryside, known as Aberdeenshire, is also one of Scotland's most appealing regions. Royal Deeside and the Cairngorms National Park are within easy access of the city, and there are a variety of towns and villages scattered along the coastline.

The city and the surrounding area have ranked consistently highly in nationally recognised quality of life surveys, coming out top 10 as one of the best places to live in Scotland in 2020 in the annual Bank of Scotland survey.

To find out more visit [www.visitabdn.com](http://www.visitabdn.com)

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

---

The University values and celebrates a diverse working and learning environment and recognises the richness this brings, both in terms of contributing to the success of the University and creating safe and inclusive cultures. The University welcomes applications from individuals with diverse lived experiences.

The University supports flexible working, including hybrid working arrangements, and has policies in place to facilitate this where it is appropriate. The policies can be found at <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/flexible-working--5607.php>.

The University is committed to progressing gender equality across all its functions and has been a proud member of the Advance HE Athena Swan Charter, achieving an institutional Bronze award, one Silver departmental award for the School of Psychology and eleven departmental Bronze awards. LGBTQ+ equality is championed through the University's membership of the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme, where the University has achieved a Silver award in the Workplace Equality Index. The University is on a continual journey to respond to, and combat, GBV in our community and beyond. We are proud to be working towards the EmilyTest Charter, in partnership with the charity, EmilyTest. We all have a role to play in knowing how to signpost colleagues and students to support for gender-based violence, and training and support is available to all staff on this topic.

The University is signed up to Advance HE's Race Equality Charter, affirming the University's commitment to the Charter's aim of improving the representation, progression and success of staff and students who identify as belonging to a racialised group. The University launched its Antiracism Strategy in 2022, representing a bold framework for progress on race equality. Recognising the importance of addressing the under-representation of racialised groups in the senior team, the University's new Recruitment and Selection Policy embeds specific positive action measures to address this.

The University is delighted to be accredited as a [Disability Confident](#) employer and strives to ensure that disabled staff and students have the opportunity to work and study in an inclusive, accessible and supportive environment. The University's Wellbeing Strategy commits it to progressing work to tackle stigma related to mental health and action to promote and improve health and wellbeing for staff and students. Candidates who are British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact us directly by using [contact SCOTLAND-BSL](#)

The University's work on equality, diversity and inclusion is supported by a range of networks and engagement activities, designed to provide safe spaces and raise awareness of the support available and the steps everyone can take to create inclusive campuses.

[www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/equality-and-diversity-277](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/equality-and-diversity-277)

## HOW TO APPLY

---

Online application forms are available at [www.abdn.ac.uk/jobs](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/jobs)

The closing date for receipt of applications is **16 January 2025**

Should you wish to make an informal enquiry please contact:

Clare Livingston, Interim Director of Advancement

Tel: 01224 272011

Email: [clare.livingston@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:clare.livingston@abdn.ac.uk)

Please do not send application forms or CVs to Clare Livingston

**Please quote reference number DEV134A on all correspondence**