



Hackney School of Food

MANAGING DIRECTOR RECRUITMENT PACK



WELCOME

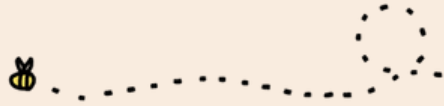
Thank you for your interest in Hackney School of Food and in becoming our next Managing Director.

Following three years of successful leadership, our current Managing Director is relocating and stepping down, creating an exciting opportunity for a new leader to build on the strong foundations that have been established.

Hackney School of Food is entering an exciting new chapter. With a committed team, supportive Board, strong partnerships and growing reputation, we're looking for someone who can lead the organisation through its next phase of growth and impact.

This recruitment pack tells you more about who we are, what we've achieved and where we're heading. We hope it gives you a sense of what makes Hackney School of Food such a special place to lead, and inspires you to apply.





Job title: Managing Director

Contract: Full-time, permanent

Hours: Full-time

Location: Hackney, E5 OBT

Reports to: Chair; Board of Directors

Salary: £50,000 - £60,000 depending on experience

Pension: HSoF participates in the National Employment Savings Trust (NEST) scheme and contributes 3%

Benefits: Holiday allowance of 25 days plus bank holidays, free lunches on-site.

Probation period: six months.





ABOUT US

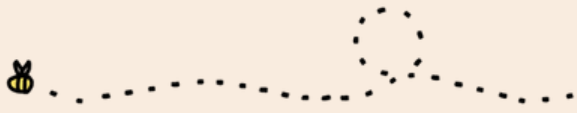
Hackney School of Food (HSoF) is a food education hub on the grounds of Mandeville Primary School in Clapton, East London. Since opening in March 2020, we have worked to improve the health and wellbeing of children, families and our wider community by developing practical skills and confidence in cooking and growing food, from seed to spoon.

Our teaching kitchen and educational garden sit at the heart of everything we do. Each year, thousands of children, families and community members take part in hands-on learning that builds confidence and strengthens community connections.

We work with schools to deliver curriculum-linked food education alongside a wide range of community programmes, holiday clubs, after-school activities, public classes, corporate volunteering and events. In 2023, we became a not-for-profit Community Interest Company (CIC). Since then, we have expanded our facilities, grown our team, strengthened our governance and increased our reach across schools, communities and corporate partners.

Today, Hackney School of Food is recognised as one of London's leading food education organisations. With strong foundations in place, we are now focused on deepening our impact, strengthening long-term financial sustainability and ensuring that high-quality food education remains accessible.





WHAT WE DO

Through our teaching kitchen and educational garden, we deliver a diverse range of activities that all share one purpose: helping people develop the skills, confidence and connection to enjoy good food.

Schools

Curriculum-linked cooking and growing sessions, teacher CPD and enrichment activities that inspire children to develop lifelong healthy eating habits.

Community

Free and low-cost programmes that bring local people together through cooking, gardening and shared meals, reducing isolation and improving wellbeing.

Children & Families

Holiday clubs, after-school clubs and family cooking sessions that make learning about food fun, practical and accessible.


Public Events & Classes

Seasonal workshops, masterclasses, community celebrations and events that bring people together around food and food growing.

Corporate Partnerships

Purpose-led away days, volunteering opportunities and sponsorships that connect businesses with meaningful social impact.





We're on a mission to improve the health and diets of children, families, and our local community.

By building knowledge, confidence and practical skills in growing and cooking nutritious food, from seed to spoon.

OUR VALUES

GROUNDED

We start with the essentials, giving people the practical skills and confidence to grow and cook affordable, sustainable food from scratch.

EXPLORATIVE

We believe food education should spark curiosity, creativity and a lifelong love of learning.

COMMUNITY -ROOTED

Food brings people together. We create welcoming spaces where people learn, share and connect.

EQUITABLE

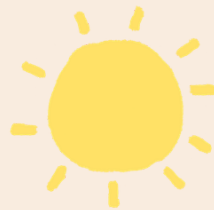
We believe everyone should have access to high-quality food education, regardless of background, age or ability.

RESPONSIBLE

We champion seasonal, sustainable food that supports healthier people, communities and our planet.



ABOUT THE ROLE



We are seeking an exceptional Managing Director (MD) to provide **strategic leadership** to Hackney School of Food. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the MD will be responsible for delivering the organisation's vision and mission and leading the growth and development of the CIC.

The MD **oversees all aspects of the organisation**, including governance, income generation, fundraising, partnerships, programme delivery, finance and people management. They will lead a small but dedicated team, build strong relationships with funders, community partners and supporters, and champion Hackney School of Food externally.

A key priority for the role will be strengthening and **diversifying income streams** through fundraising, partnerships and earned income opportunities, to ensure that Hackney School of Food remains financially resilient while continuing to provide accessible, high-quality food education for children, families and communities.

This is a role for a **resourceful, entrepreneurial and hands-on leader** who can balance strategic thinking with **practical management of a place-based organisation**. One day, you may be meeting a prospective funder, developing a new partnership or shaping the CIC's long-term strategy; the next, you could be chatting to local families or working with the team to solve operational challenges.

Balancing day-to-day operational oversight with big picture thinking, the MD will ensure Hackney School of Food remains **resilient, well-governed and responsive** to the needs of the communities it serves.



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic leadership

- Provide overall leadership and strategic direction for Hackney School of Food, ensuring delivery of its mission, vision and long-term objectives.
- Lead the development and implementation of Hackney School of Food's annual business plan and organisational priorities.
- Lead and evolve the organisation's strategy, identifying opportunities, risks and areas for future growth, supported by the Board.
- Monitor, report on and respond to organisational performance against agreed objectives and impact measures.
- Build and enhance HSoF's public profile through events and external representation.

Financial sustainability & income generation

- Develop and oversee organisational budgets, leading annual budget-setting and ongoing financial planning, monitoring and forecasting.
- Lead income generation across the organisation, including trusts and foundations, corporate partnerships, sponsorship, individual giving and earned income.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with major funders, sponsors and strategic partners, ensuring confidence in HSoF's governance, leadership and impact.
- Ensure all funding commitments are met, including grant reporting, monitoring and evaluation requirements.
- Work with the treasurer and accountant to oversee financial controls, cashflow management and monthly financial reporting to the Board.
- Identify opportunities to diversify income and strengthen the organisation's long-term financial sustainability.



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES



Partnerships & External Relations

- Act as the main point of contact for HSoF's key partners, the LEAP Federation and Chefs in Schools, to ensure the partnerships are effective and positive.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with key stakeholders, including local authorities, funders, local businesses, and sponsors.
- Champion Hackney School of Food's work and influence wider thinking on food education, contributing to local and national forums, partnerships and policy discussions.
- Oversee community consultation and engagement to ensure programmes reflect local needs.

Governance and public benefit

- Ensure Hackney School of Food operates in line with its CIC objects and delivers clear public benefit.
- Support the Board of Directors to fulfil its governance responsibilities through high-quality reporting, planning and decision-making.
- Prepare Board papers, reports and agendas, ensuring timely and accurate information is available to support effective governance.
- Oversee and report on organisational performance to the Board of Directors quarterly.
- Act as the primary link between the Board and the operational team.
- Ensure clear decision-making structures, delegated authorities and accountability frameworks are in place.
- Support the Board in meeting all statutory and regulatory obligations relating to the CIC.





KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

People, Culture and safeguarding

- Provide leadership to a small core team (currently c.4 employees), directly managing staff and fostering a positive, inclusive culture.
- Provide oversight and support for a wider network of approx. 15 freelance contractors to ensure high-quality delivery across the organisation.
- Lead the recruitment and onboarding of staff in line with Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and Safeguarding policies.
- Ensure effective organisational structures, clear roles, and performance accountability.
- Oversee HR processes including appraisals, performance management, and professional development.
- Act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and ensure compliance with any safeguarding and security requirements aligned with the site partner, Mandeville Primary School.
- Be rigorously mindful of child safeguarding at all times and remain up to date with relevant legislation and training.
- Develop internal systems, policies, and training that promote a fair, inclusive, and supportive workplace.

Risk Management & Compliance

- Ensure policies and legal guidelines are up to date, clearly communicated, and embedded in everyday culture.
- Maintain and regularly review the organisational Risk Register and report key risks and mitigations to the Board.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, including employment law, data protection, health & safety, safeguarding, and environmental regulations. Lead on crisis management and serious incident reporting.
- Oversee the development, implementation, and regular review of organisational policies and procedures.



PERSONAL SPECIFICATION

Essential experience

- Senior leadership experience with responsibility for organisational performance and accountability.
- Experience of income generation through a mix of fundraising, partnerships, and/or commercial activity.
- Experience of financial leadership, including budget setting, forecasting, cashflow oversight and working with finance professionals.
- Experience of building and maintaining successful partnerships with external organisations.
- Experience of working with a Board to translate organisational vision and strategy into clear operational plans, measurable objectives and sustainable organisational growth.
- Experience in managing, motivating and developing people and teams.
- Experience of working with and reporting to a Board of Directors, Trustees or other governing body.
- Experience of governance, compliance and risk management within a company, charitable, educational or community setting.
- Experience of safeguarding within an education, youth or community context.
- Excellent organisational and prioritisation skills, with the ability to manage competing priorities, make sound decisions and adapt to changing demands in a resource-constrained environment.



PERSONAL SPECIFICATION

Essential skills and attributes

- Passion for the mission of Hackney School of Food and the role of food education in improving health, wellbeing and community connection.
- A strategic thinker with the ability to balance long-term vision with day-to-day operational delivery.
- Entrepreneurial, resourceful and committed to building long-term financial sustainability and identifying growth opportunities.
- Ability to lead a team through change with sensitivity, clarity and kindness.
- Excellent communication and relationship-building skills, with the confidence to engage a wide range of stakeholders.
- Strong decision-making skills and the ability to work independently with a high level of accountability.
- Committed to equity, inclusion and community-led practice.

Desirable

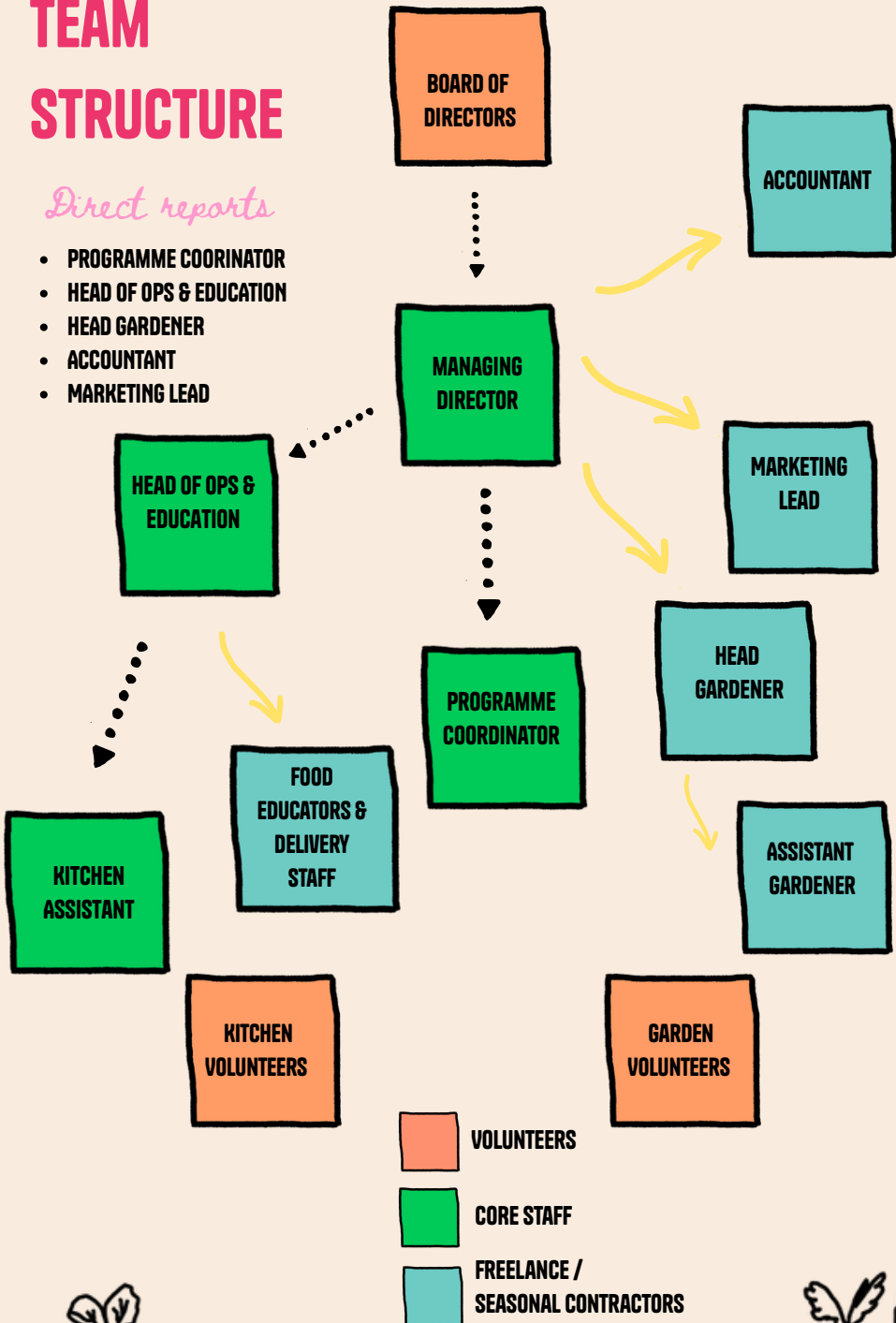
- Experience working within a Community Interest Company (CIC), charity or social enterprise.
- Experience of working within food education, community food, gardening, environmental education or a related field.
- Knowledge of the Hackney community and local stakeholder landscape.
- Demonstrable experience reviewing and managing contracts, service agreements or other legal documentation.



TEAM STRUCTURE

Direct reports

- PROGRAMME COORINATOR
- HEAD OF OPS & EDUCATION
- HEAD GARDENER
- ACCOUNTANT
- MARKETING LEAD





HOW TO APPLY

An inclusive workspace

We know that diverse teams make stronger organisations and are committed to building a workforce that reflects the communities we serve.

We are committed to fair and inclusive recruitment and will consider all qualified applicants regardless of age, disability, gender identity, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

We particularly encourage applications from people who are under-represented in our sector and in leadership roles, including people from the global majority and those whose lived experience brings valuable perspectives from the communities we serve. We also welcome applications from people who live in Hackney or East London.

Application process

The deadline to apply is **Monday 20 July at midday**. Please apply by filling out this application form [HERE](#).

Stage 1: A one-hour online interview with the Senior Team and Board Members (**24 July**).

Stage 2: An on-site interview at HSoF (**30 July**). You will be asked to prepare a presentation.

We may also invite the preferred candidate to an informal meeting with the wider team and Board before making a final appointment.

We may close the application window earlier if we are inundated with applications, so **please don't wait to apply**.

Because we work with children, the successful applicant will need to pass an **enhanced DBS check** and provide **two suitable references**.





THANK YOU AND GOOD LUCK

If you have any questions about the role or your suitability, please feel free to get in touch with **zoe@hackneyschooloffood.com**.



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