Special Olympics GB Director of Operations Recruitment Pack

August 2026

Special Olympics Great Britain

Introduction

Special Olympics GB is proud to support some of the most inspiring athletes in the world — individuals with intellectual disabilities who compete from local to international levels, breaking down barriers and showing the transformative power of sport both on and off the field of play.

As we enter an exciting new chapter, we are seeking an outstanding Director of Operations to join our Executive Leadership Team. This is a pivotal role for a strategic and values-driven leader who can strengthen our organisation, drive operational excellence and help deliver even greater impact for athletes, families and communities.

Working closely with the Chief Executive, Board and wider movement, you will lead organisational performance across governance, people, systems, planning and delivery, ensuring Special Olympics GB is resilient, ambitious and fit for the future. As Executive Lead for Safeguarding and Welfare, you will champion a culture where the wellbeing, safety and dignity of every athlete remains at the heart of everything we do.

We are looking for someone who:

- Is inspired by the power of sport to transform lives and create more inclusive communities.
- Brings significant senior leadership experience and a track record of organisational development and operational excellence.
- Can translate strategic ambition into effective delivery and sustainable growth.
- Has experience of governance, compliance, finance, risk management and safeguarding.
- Builds strong relationships and partnerships, influencing with credibility and integrity.
- Leads with empathy, accountability and a commitment to inclusion.

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About Special Olympics GB:

Special Olympics GB is a dynamic and inclusive charity that transforms lives every day through the power of sport. We provide year-round sports training and competition opportunities for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, enabling them to develop physical fitness, build confidence, make friends, and experience joy through sport.

Special Olympics GB focuses exclusively on individuals with intellectual disabilities — a population that is too often overlooked, underserved, and underestimated. Our athletes face daily barriers to inclusion, from social stigma to limited access to services, education, health and employment. Through sport, we help break down these barriers.

Sport is a universal language — one that speaks in determination, teamwork, and courage. For people with intellectual disabilities, sport provides not just a platform to compete, but a pathway to empowerment. It builds belonging, creates opportunities, and inspires entire communities to think differently about ability.

Special Olympics GB is part of the global Special Olympics movement, which serves over 5 million athletes in more than 190 countries. In Great Britain, we support c13,000 athletes across England, Scotland, and Wales through a network of 100 local clubs and 3,600 volunteers.

Every time our athletes' step onto the field of play, they show what inclusion truly looks like. They represent not just their local community or our nation, but a vision of a more accepting and unified world.

What is intellectual disability?

When a person has certain limitations in cognitive functioning and skills, including communication, social, and self-care skills

Intellectual disability in Great Britain:

- **1.5 million** children and adults have intellectual disability
- **36%** of adults (19 million) have a connection to, or are aware of, someone with an intellectual disability
- **96%** of adults with intellectual disability are unemployed
- **78%** of people with intellectual disability do not take part in any sport activity
- **31%** of people with intellectual disability live in poverty, compared to 18% of the general population

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Job Description

Job title:

Director of Operations

Salary:

£62k-£65k – Pro rata will apply if hours are reduced.

Accountable to:

CEO

Responsible for:

Direct reports - Head of Finance and Business Operations, Safeguarding Lead, Operations Support Officer

Team members – Finance Manager, Safeguarding Support Officer

Location:

National (Great Britain) – Home based (UK), regular travel required across Scotland, England and Wales, including semi regular travel to National Office team days (location variable). Occasional international travel.

Hours:

Full time, 35 hours - negotiable but no less than 28 hours per week

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Director of Operations Responsibilities

The Director of Operations at SOGB is a wide-ranging, key role, reporting to the Chief Executive as a member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). Working across the organisation, the Director of Operations manages the operational and support services activities including governance, compliance, HR, business processes, IT, safeguarding, finance and health & safety to ensure that the organisation runs smoothly, efficiently and effectively.

Charity Governance

- Lead the development and implementation of the governance policy in line with charity legislation and best practice.
- Provide senior level governance advice and support to the Chair, Trustees and ELT as required.
- Work closely with , and act as secretary for the SOGB Governance Sub-committee, and ensure that the organisation's Risk Register and management systems are robust and up to date.
- Oversee the recruitment and induction of new Trustees.
- Oversee the completion of all statutory returns including the Charity Commission Annual Return.
- Ensure all required papers for Board Meetings and the AGM are prepared and circulated in good time ahead of the meetings and that all meetings are accurately minuted.
- Ensure the Charity continues to meet all 'A Code for Sports Governance' Tier 3, SORP and Charity Governance Code requirements.
- Complete the Special Olympics International (SOI) Accreditation annually.

Safeguarding

- Oversee the development and implementation of safeguarding and welfare practice across the organisation.
- Ensure that all relevant polices and procedures are created, distributed and implemented.
- Oversee the development of a Safeguarding Strategy and framework in place with plans to implement high-quality practice across all SOGB activity.
- Oversee the SOGB Incident Management process to ensure that incidents have resolution.
- Oversee safeguarding and welfare compliance including DBS, training and education, health and safety to ensure that our athletes, volunteers and staff are supported appropriately in line with other operational factors.

Responsibilities cont……

Business Planning

- Ensure the smooth working of the SOGB National Office team – including enabling successful remote-working.
- Oversee the arrangement and management of insurances and the production of robust disaster recovery and business continuity plans.
- Oversee the development, design and delivery of effective management information systems.
- Oversee risk management - including writing and carrying out risk assessments as required, and training and instructing others to write appropriate risk assessments, sense checking and ensuring compliance with SOGB policy.

Human Resource Management

- Ensure all of the organisation's policies and procedures are up to date, implemented and effectively communicated.
- Ensure SOGB's HR practice is compliant with employment legislation, best practice and in accordance with corporate policy.
- Ensure all managers are aware of SOGB's HR practices and supported in their practical application in the workplace.
- Lead in the staff appraisal system and audit in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team and Chief Executive.
- Promote a culture of learning and development and ensure all members of staff are well resourced to reach their full potential.
- Oversee all payroll related tasks including the production of P11Ds as required.
- Oversee the implementation, development and effectiveness of the training platform and HR information management system.

Information Systems

- Oversee effective management and delivery of SOGB IT systems and related technology in line with business needs, data and cyber security measures, and anticipating future requirements.
- Oversee data security, back-up and support systems across SOGB and associated companies and interests.
- Support the Head of Finance & Business Operations to fulfil the role of SOGB's Data Protection Officer.
- Oversee the organisation's content management system including on-going development and training.

Management of Health & Safety responsibilities

- Oversee all of SOGB's health & safety responsibilities including ensuring all policies and procedures are up to date, implemented and effectively communicated.
- Source and coordinate training as required.
- Ensure any relevant SOGB office facilities comply fully with all statutory workplace regulations.

Responsibilities cont……

Finance management

- Overall responsibility for all aspects of SOGB's finance function linking to planning, risk management, governance activities, fundraising and legal.
- Support the development of annual budget and management accounts framework.
- Oversee the development of a financial reporting framework.
- Ensure that all required financial policies and procedures are written and implemented in accordance with the Charity Commission, OSCR and Companies House requirements.
- Oversee the audits for SOGB and SOGB Promotions.
- Oversee the production of statutory accounts and any other reports required by Companies House, OSCR and the Charity Commission in close co-operation with SOGB's auditors.
- Work closely with, and act as secretary for, the SOGB Audit & Risk Sub-committee to ensure that all legal and best practice obligations are met.

Legal

- Assist the SOGB Team and work with external partners to ensure all contracts and agreements are fit for purpose.

Line management and team working

- Contribute as a member of the Executive Leadership Team.
- Lead the Senior Leadership Team to wider business improvement, organisational development and championing the professional integrity of SOGB.
- Responsibility for the day-to-day management, leadership and motivation of direct reports.
- Set objectives, professional development and performance management of direct reports.
- Ensure direct reports are supported to take ownership for individual work plans.

Other Responsibilities

- Maintain an excellent knowledge of SOGB's activities, programmes and projects.
- Comply with all relevant Safeguarding, Data Protection and fundraising legislation, regulation, requirement and best practice and work within the organisation's policies and procedures.
- Be responsible for and autonomously lead your area of work.
- Undertake any training and continuing professional development as required for the role and renew regularly.
- Any other duties required to fulfill this role and the needs of SOGB.

This job description is intended to be a basic guide to the scope and the responsibilities of the post and is not exhaustive. There may be other duties required of the post holder commensurate with the role. It will be subject to regular review and amendments as necessary.

Benefits

- 25 days' annual leave allowance (pro rata for part-time staff) plus bank holidays.
- Additional closure days at Christmas.
- Birthday day off.
- Flexible working due to remote nature of the organisation.
- Time Off In Lieu (TOIL) policy.
- Employee pension scheme.
- HSF Health Cash Plan.
- Ongoing access to professional development opportunities.
- Access to networking groups across the sector.
- Friendly and supportive team with the opportunity to work closely with other teams and beneficiaries.

Person Specification

Experience and Knowledge

- Proven experience as Director, Head of or Lead in the Operations field or relevant role.
- Understanding of business functions such as Governance, HR, finance, operations, etc
- Senior strategic programme management within a comparable organisation.
- Senior finance and resource management within a comparable organisation.
- Business Operations qualification or substantial evidence to demonstrate qualification by experience.
- Knowledge of charity legislation and compliance including statutory reporting.
- Knowledge of sporting landscape across GB and in-depth understanding of community sport.
- Experience of developing high level strategic relationships which have delivered demonstrable results.
- Extensive experience of developing business plans, strategy, and leading complex change.
- Demonstrable evidence of leading growth in complex environments.
- Experience of developing and implementing management information systems, and performance measurement and management.

Skills and Abilities

- Leadership and people-management ability that inspires and motivates others.
- Aptitude in decision-making and problem-solving.
- Working knowledge of data analysis and performance/operation metrics.
- Working knowledge of IT/Business infrastructure and MS Office.
- Ability to articulate strategic vision and translate this to operational objectives.
- Planning and organising skills in order to produce operational plans, manage projects and establish appropriate organisational business processes.
- Empathy and social skills in order to build effective working relationships with others, e.g. athletes, volunteers, decision makers, regulatory bodies and staff members.
- Effective negotiating, influencing and persuasion skills at the highest level.
- Excellent oral, written communication and presentation skills including the ability to present in public with gravitas.
- Effective team-working and collaboration skills.
- Financial and business acumen (assessing opportunities and applying resources effectively).
- Innovation in the development of responses to challenges and opportunities.
- Passionate about ensuring intellectual disability has a louder voice in the UK and ensuring our work reaches more individuals and families around the UK.
- Live and breathe our Special Olympics GB values

How to apply

To apply, please send a covering letter (maximum 2 pages) explaining why you wish to apply for the Director of Operations role. It is important that all prospective candidates understand our mission and are driven by our cause. Referring to the role description, please be specific about how your skills and experience will help you undertake this role. Generic letters will not be considered.

Please also include your CV and send with your covering letter to recruitment@sogb.org.uk with the email title stating SOGB Director of Operations.

The closing date for applications is Friday 4th September 2026 at 9am. There will be a two- stage interview process that will cover both culture/motivators and thematic competencies. Stage 1 interviews will take place week beginning 28th September 2026 and stage 2 will take place week beginning 5th October 2026.

Due to the high volume of applications we receive, we are only able to contact candidates who have been shortlisted for interview. If you have not heard from us by 2nd October 2026, please assume that your application has not been successful on this occasion. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide individual feedback.

If you have challenges with written communication, please call us on 020 7247 8891 to discuss alternative application options for you.

Queries
If you would like to arrange an informal discussion about this role, require any further information or have any queries regarding the recruitment process, please contact recruitment@sogb.org.uk

Safer Recruitment
Special Olympics GB is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The suitability of all prospective employees or volunteers will be assessed during the recruitment process. The successful candidates will be required to complete regular safeguarding training and undertake a DBS/PVG check relevant to the requirements of the role.

Equal Opportunities
Special Olympics GB is committed to and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion and encourages all sections of the community, particularly those living with a disability, who meet the role requirements to apply.

Other
We request no contact from agencies.

For more information on Special Olympics GB please visit www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk

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Charity Registered in England & Wales:
800329 and Scotland SC052090

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