



## **Take the lead. Shape the future. Make a difference to the lives of women.**

Are you looking for your next challenge in an exciting and varied environment that works across the charity sector, military agencies and communities, the world of performing arts and commercial entities?

The Military Wives Choirs is a charity that brings women in the military community closer together and empowers them through our ethos of Sing, Share and Support. It is made up of over 70 choirs and nearly 2000 members across the UK and overseas.

As we approach our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we are incredibly proud of our progress so far, but we have big plans for the next decade too. If you are an experienced senior leader who has successfully managed an enterprise and believe you have the passion and skills to help us grow and deepen our impact, we'd love to hear from you. As well as leading a multi-disciplined team and embedding an open and inclusive culture, your key focus over the next 5 years will be:

- strengthening our choir networks and musical capability
- enhancing our brand and
- developing new income streams to drive long-term sustainability.

This is a fast-paced leadership role, so you'll need to be resilient with the vision and drive to deliver ambitious plans, backed up with great interpersonal skills to influence and build trust. When the need arises, you'll also be adaptable enough to step in and roll your sleeves up, working alongside your team.

In return we can offer you a genuinely exciting opportunity to work with some talented and inspiring people, shaping the future of a unique charity, and playing a meaningful role in the ongoing empowerment and wellbeing of women.

For further information on the role and how to apply, please read this pack.



## Introduction from the Chair

Thank you for your interest in the Military Wives Choirs and this key role.

We are a charity that brings women in the military community closer together and empowers them through singing, friendship and support. It is made up of over 70 choirs and nearly 2000 members across the UK and overseas. Its origins can be traced back to 2010 in Catterick, North Yorkshire where the first choir was created. Twelve months later, aided by the BBC documentary series 'The Choir', a network of choirs began to grow across the country and the charity was born.

This year we are incredibly proud to be celebrating our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We've come a long way since 2010 and in that time, we've worked hard to steadily grow our network to nearly 2000 members, positively impacting the lives of many women and their families. We're passionate about the work we do and always proud to share the music of our choirs. In 2018, we released a commemorative album followed two years later by a single. Across our choirs, we estimate our network spends over 150,000 hours making music together each year and in 2019 took part in over 800 performances. We work with exciting composers to commission new music and in 2019 we were asked to feature in the major film and soundtrack 'Military Wives' starring Kristin Scott Thomas and Sharon Horgan.

The next decade is planned to be equally as transformative and will focus on building our position through strengthened choir networks and musical capability, an enhanced brand and developing new income streams for long-term sustainability.

As Director, you'll play a crucial role in leading these important changes. We're looking for an experienced senior leader; someone who has the vision, drive, and resilience to help us deliver challenging plans over the next 5 years. You'll be commercially astute, have a passion for our work and, given that we're a small charity, not be afraid to get involved in some of the operational detail when the need arises.

If you're excited by this opportunity and have the background and skills we're looking for, we'd very much like to hear from you.

**Maggie Pedder**  
Chair of the Board of Trustees

## About our organisation

### Background

The Military Wives Choirs is a community of nearly 2000 women in over 70 choirs across the UK and internationally. We come together to celebrate a love of singing and a communal understanding that comes from our members' shared experiences of the Armed Forces. We welcome all women whose lives are currently impacted by their military connection; our network supports each other and forms life-changing friendships that lead to new and uplifting experiences through singing. As both an independent charity and subsidiary of SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, we work collaboratively with SSAFA in their mission to provide support to our Forces and their families who have been providing support since 1885.

### Impact of our work

Military life across the services has its challenges. Some families regularly need to move to a new posting, while for others deployments mean long periods of separation. Through our international network, many of our members join a new choir when they are posted. This enables them to become part of a familiar community built upon the joy of singing which leads to a sense of belonging and life-changing friendships.

It is scientifically proven that singing in a choir reduces social isolation, increases wellbeing, and improves mental and physical health. With no auditions and no pressure to perform, the Military Wives Choirs gives the women we support confidence, a positive outlook and a community of women who understand the unique challenges they face.

### How we operate

Our work is funded from a range of earned and voluntary income sources. This includes grants (31%), member subscriptions (30%), donations (28%) performance fees (9%) and other sources (2%). Like all other charities, we operate in an increasingly challenging environment and creating longer-term financial sustainability is requiring us to look at increasingly innovative ways of engaging new audiences and generating income.

### Delivering our service

Our work is delivered through a small, multi-disciplined team of staff backed up by a range of volunteers, from our Board of Trustees and Choir Committee members to Musical Ambassadors. This allows us to operate expertly while making every penny count, so that spending is always directed to the point of greatest need. Specifically,

- Choir development, training and support (including wellbeing and welfare provision)



- Delivering quality artistic output and
- Raising awareness of what we do.

### **Our values**

Our work is centered on our values:

#### *Unspoken understanding*

Our shared experiences of military life inform the way we look after one another

#### *Ongoing support*

We value time for ourselves and enjoy our time with each other

#### *Musical inclusivity*

It's not about being *able* to sing, it's about being *there* to sing

#### *Wellbeing through singing*

We create choirs that bond us together and allow us to share unique achievements and experiences

#### *Diverse Community*

We welcome all women whose lives are currently impacted by their military connection

## Job description

**Job Title:** Director

**Reporting to:** Chair of the Board of Trustees

**Direct reports:** Choir Support Team (CST), comprising:

- Digital Engagement Officer
- Artistic Planning & Engagement Manager
- Welfare and Organisational Development Officer
- Fundraising Manager
- Fundraising & Campaigns Coordinator
- Finance & Administration Assistant
- Secretary to Board Committees

## Job purpose & key responsibilities

To provide senior strategic leadership so the Military Wives Choirs always perform at its best - growing our impact through a vibrant network of choirs across the military community, building our brand, nurturing key relationships in support of our aims and enabling financial sustainability. You will do this by:

### Supporting organisational performance

- Provide leadership and day to day management of the charity within the operating framework set by the Board of Trustees
- Provide regular reporting to the Board against agreed standards and measures
- Ensure all aspects of legal and charitable governance are carried out in line with best practice
- Act as Data Governance lead, championing best practice in all aspects of information management
- Work with the Chair of the Board of Trustees to support induction for all new trustees.

### Growing and supporting our Choir network

- Lead the development and delivery of tools, resources and training to meet current and future needs of choirs, use research and insight to grow the network and underpin new interventions
- Proactively visit choirs and provide support when complex issues arise
- Work with the Finance committee to ensure all choir finances are managed and reported in line with best practice
- Work with key partners, and particularly SSAFA to signpost and develop welfare offerings

- Work with the Artistic Engagement & Planning Manager and the Music Direction committee to ensure performance opportunities are optimized and musical standards are upheld across the network
- Ensure all music-related contracts are legally and commercially robust.

#### **Delivering plans for change and growth**

- Work with the Board to create relevant strategy in key areas of music development, income generation, brand positioning, service delivery and financial sustainability
- Deliver the business, financial and operational plans to agreed standards and measures
- Ensure all operational activities align with overarching strategies and that efforts and resources are focused on where the greatest impact can be achieved.

#### **Growing a sustainable source of income, managing financial performance and forecast**

- Working with the Board, develop and manage income generating plans to achieve financial sustainability by 2025
- Play an active role in engaging with fundraising plans and building external networks to open new channels of giving
- Continually explore, and be agile enough to respond to, new and more efficient ways of generating income
- Set and manage budgets, provide regular and effective reporting to the Board on financial performance and forecasts.

#### **Relationship building and advocacy**

- Build and nurture relationships with key SSAFA stakeholders, keeping them informed of ongoing plans and potential resourcing demands
- Work with relevant partners to build professional alliances and share best practice
- Cultivate relevant partnership and development opportunities to grow choir membership, enhance our brand and develop new income channels in support of our aims
- Act as an ambassador and spokesperson for the charity and work closely with the CST and designated MWC Ambassadors to ensure opportunities for brand promotion and supporter acquisition are maximized.

#### **Leadership and management**

- Act as a leadership role model for the CST, playing an active part in supporting individual development as well as building a cohesive, high performing team
- Build and sustain productive working relationships with the Artistic Director and the charity's Musical Ambassadors ensuring there is alignment between their work and wider plans

- Embed a culture where people feel included and where different perspectives are valued and celebrated.
- Demonstrate awareness and sensitivity in the management of volunteers, supporting their needs and preferences and recognizing they are giving their time and expertise freely.

## Person Specification

### Essential

#### Knowledge and experience

- Sound senior leadership experience gained from successfully managing an organisation
- Experience of income generation, evidence of building strong relationships with funders and donors and inspiring new supporters to give
- Experience of setting and managing budgets and reporting to boards on financial performance.
- Demonstrable experience of successfully developing and implementing strategies with regard for commercial outcomes
- Experience of working in the charity or performing arts sector
- Strong project management experience, ensuring key deliverables are successfully achieved.

#### Skills and Personal Attributes

- Empowering leadership style, someone who knows when to get involved and when to delegate
- Trusted and credible leader, an ambassador for the charity who can confidently articulate and build vision
- Effective relationship builder who can quickly establish rapport and engage constructively with key stakeholders inside and outside the organisation
- Shows a genuine passion and commitment for our work and mission
- Strong written communication skills; able to produce clear, compelling information
- Experienced in budget preparation and financial management reporting
- Demonstrates a commercial mindset in interpreting finance and ensuring value for money. Able to provide regular and effective reporting to the Board on financial performance and forecast.
- Agile and resilient in responding to changing circumstances.

### Desirable

- Experience of the military community, either personally or through a close connection and an ability to draw relevant insight from that experience
- Experience of working in the charity or performing arts sector
- Volunteer management
- Working knowledge of Events management
- Educated to degree level or equivalent
- Musical literacy and/or experience of working with choirs or music groups
- Full driving licence and access to own vehicle.

## Terms of appointment

<b>Salary</b>	Circa £50k pa, depending on experience
<b>Place of work</b>	Flexible, but you will be required to work in London at least one day a week, and on some occasions, work multiple days
<b>Type of contract</b>	Permanent
<b>Hours</b>	37.5 hours per week. This role also requires some evenings and weekend working for which time off in lieu will be given.
<b>Annual leave</b>	26 days pa rising to 30 days after 2 years





## How to apply

Please email your CV along with a one-page covering letter explaining why this role excites you and what you can bring to our organisation.

Completed applications should be emailed to Maggie Pedder at:

[mpedder@militarywiveschoirs.org](mailto:mpedder@militarywiveschoirs.org)

The closing date for applications is **Tuesday 31 May 2022** by close of play

Interviews will be held on **Tuesday 14 June** and **Wednesday 15 June 2022**.

If you'd like an informal conversation about the role, please get in touch with **Melanie Nightingale**, Director of Military Wives Choirs, by email in the first instance. Her contact details are:

[mnightingale@militarywiveschoirs.org](mailto:mnightingale@militarywiveschoirs.org)