



Chief Executive

Candidate Brief [▶](#)

June 2023

Blesma
THE LIMBLESS VETERANS

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Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the post of Chief Executive of Blesma, the membership association that looks after the interests of limbless Service Veterans. Blesma Members have been providing each other with comradeship and mutual support since they first got together to found their own organisation in the aftermath of the First World War, from the horror of which so many Veterans returned with life-changing injuries.



From our early beginnings we have evolved into a thriving charity of scale, influence and with national reach, which keeps in our own lane, specialising in fighting for better, more fulfilling lives for those who have lost limbs in Service to our Nation. We work hard to persuade government to provide the services to limbless Veterans that they deserve, and we ourselves provide our Members with practical support with prosthetics, mobility aids and adaptations, and more generally with the challenges that coping with life as a limbless Veteran present. We remain a big family of Members and their loved ones, helping each other with comradeship and practical assistance, and ensuring that each Member is able to live life to the full.





We organise frequent group activities designed to bring our Members and their families together in a variety of pursuits, some more challenging than others. We provide opportunities to take part in a number of hobbies, sporting and physical activities, and for those who wish to stretch themselves, and prove to themselves and others that living with limb loss need not exclude them from the most demanding of challenges, we provide opportunities for Members to climb mountains, row oceans, fly planes, sail boats, and any number of other sports and activities.

The Member to Member ethos that inspired our foundation still prevails today. Our defining purpose and enduring mission is to assist our Members to live independent and fulfilling lives in order to help realize their fullest potential.

Should you decide to apply, and if you are successful, you will play a critical role in leading our dedicated staff team in the provision of the best possible continuing support to our Members, protecting and sustaining the values of service and mutual support and respect that we hold so dear, and ensuring that Blesma can look forward to a thriving future for as long as our services are required.

I hope this pack will be useful in helping you to decide if you have the passion and skills for this post. If so, we look forward to hearing from you.

General Sir Adrian Bradshaw OBE KCB DL | Chairman



About Blesma

Blesma – The Limbless Veterans is a national charity and membership association for those who have lost limbs or the use of limbs, or their eyesight, speech or hearing in service or as a result of service in Her Majesty's Forces, and for ex-Service men and women who lose limbs or eyes, or lose the use of a limb through a traumatic incident after service. We help our Members to rebuild their lives by providing rehabilitation activities and well-being support. The Association also assists the dependants of its Members, in particular their widows and widowers.

Blesma campaigns for our veteran's rights and looks after individuals and their families by offering a comprehensive grants and welfare system. Rehabilitation, support, counselling and care are the four principal foundations of our organisation. Together, we can help our men, women and their families face the challenges ahead with renewed confidence and self-belief.



OUR HISTORY

The First World War led to the birth of nearly 18,000 charities supporting veterans, of which around 10 exist today. Blesma is one.

Forty thousand Service men lost limbs or eyes during the First World War – and lived to return to a “land fit for heroes”. They were swiftly disillusioned. Amputation techniques were in their infancy, artificial limbs primitive and, with mass unemployment the order of the day, 90% of the nation’s war limbless could not find work.

During this period the limbless gathered together in groups determined that if society would not help them, they would help themselves. So the Limbless Ex-Service Men’s Association was born and grew, finally achieving national status in 1932 as the British Limbless Ex-Service Men’s Association – Blesma.

Since its creation Blesma has lobbied successive governments to achieve improvements in pensions, in standards of artificial limbs and in the provision of suitable mobility, transport and employment opportunities. Members have benefitted from personalised support delivered by a team of dedicated specialists, each with their own area of responsibility. Wide ranging health and well-being services have been initiated, sporting and adventurous activities undertaken and innovative research commissioned, all helped by the ceaseless fund-raising activities of devoted members and supporters.

Blesma has helped over 64,000 amputees since its foundation in 1932 and we have been the only national Armed Forces Charity that supports limbless veterans for the duration of their lives. Modern medicine transforms the physical injury, but it is a complicated process to treat the emotional trauma and related lifelong health problems that impact on Members and their families.





OUR MISSION

ENABLING LIMBLESS VETERANS TO LEAD INDEPENDENT AND FULFILLING LIVES

Blesma, The Limbless Veterans aims to:

- Be relevant to every **limbless veteran** and their family
- Be a **strong advocate** on behalf of Members
- Ensure **Members' needs** are met
- Draw on **our history** and heritage to build a successful future for our Members
- Be supported and cherished by Members
- Retain its position as the **expert armed forces charity** on living with limb loss



OUR ETHOS

Blesma is a specialist Service charity, an Association.

We work tirelessly to meet the challenges of injury, to bring comfort, and to help realise individual potential. We are not a charity provider that has beneficiaries in the normal sense; we are an Association with the Membership (contributors and beneficiaries) central to our existence and purpose.

Each year we support up to three thousand Members, Widows and dependants.

As a matter of principle and as far as practicable, Member is encouraged to help Member; this is applied from Board level where over half of the trustees are amputee members.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

There is a wealth of information about what we do on our website: blesma.org

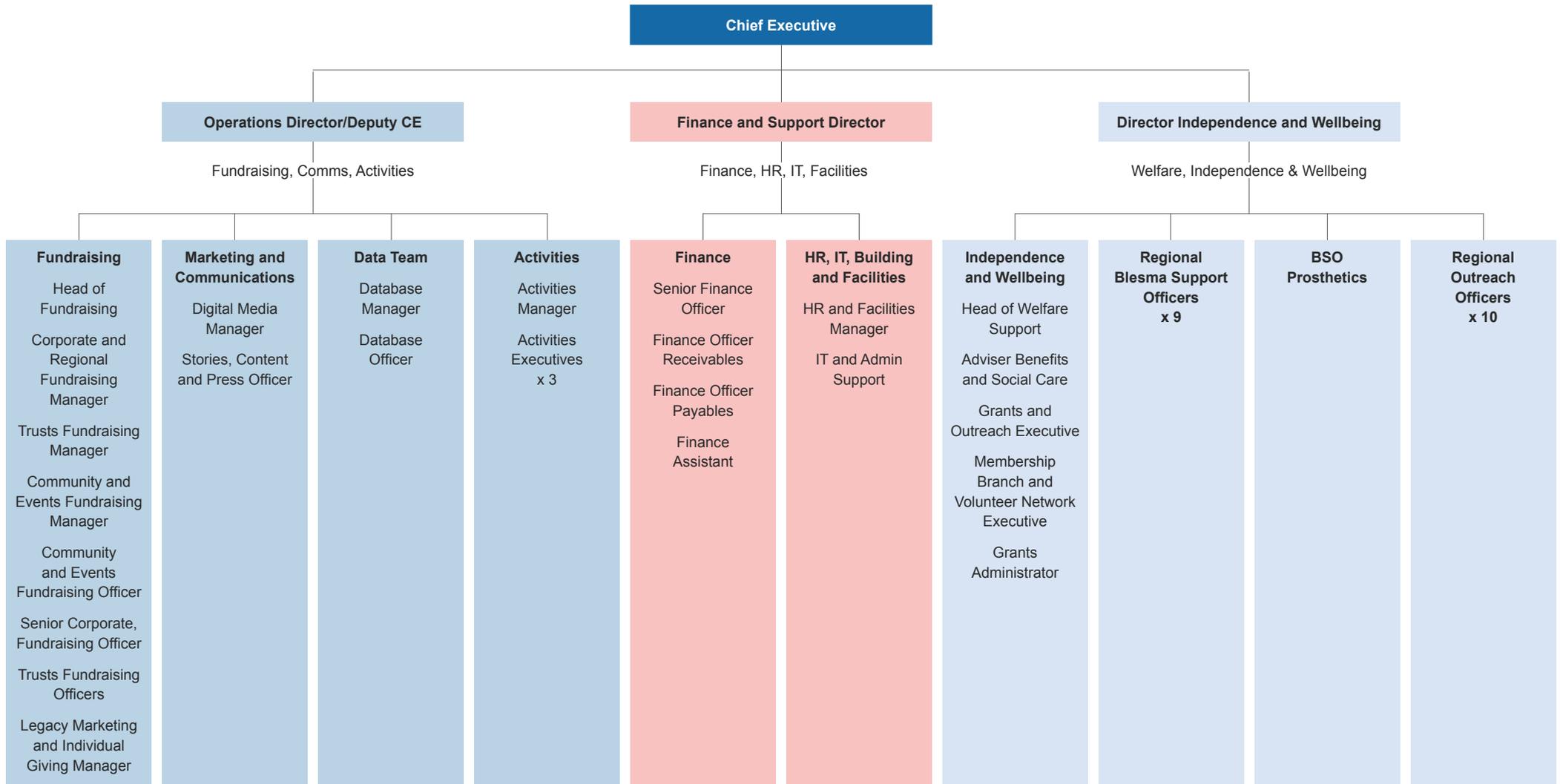
You can also read our latest Annual Report:

blesma.org/news-media/annual-report





Organisational chart





Job description

Role	Chief Executive
Salary	£90,000 plus car
Contract	Full time, permanent
Hours	35 per week
Location	115 New London Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 0QT (Hybrid working with two days/week working from home)
Responsible to	The Board of Trustees
Directly responsible for	The Operations Director, Director Independence and Wellbeing and Finance and Support Director
Budget responsibility	Directly responsible to the Board of Trustees for the financial health of Blesma, including developing, overseeing and monitoring an effective programme of income generation

MAIN PURPOSE

The Chief Executive provides leadership to Blesma and is responsible for the management and administration of the Association within the strategic, policy and accountability framework laid down by the Board of Trustees. Together with the Chairman, the Chief Executive enables the Blesma Board to fulfil its duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of Blesma and ensures that the Board receives timely advice and appropriate information on all relevant matters.



SPECIFIC AREAS OF OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

This will include:

- Translating strategic intent into workable operational plans and programmes.
- Along with senior executive team colleagues, fostering a culture of excellence in Member care.
- Representing Blesma as an ambassador for the Association.
- Ensuring that all plans and programmes are compliant with relevant legislation, regulation and guidance.
- Overseeing the systems and processes necessary to record decisions, actions taken and accountabilities and ensuring that data is stored in compliance with data protection responsibilities.
- Keeping up to date with relevant regulatory and best practice frameworks governing the delivery of charitable services.
- Keeping abreast of sector trends, practices, emerging strategies and priorities.
- Submission of external reports to major funding bodies in line with the appropriate reporting protocols.



GENERAL AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Leadership

- To lead, inspire and motivate staff and volunteers.
- To assist the Board by ensuring that Blesma's values, ethos and policies are relevant, fair and consistently implemented.
- To develop an Association that is constantly seeking ways to learn and to improve its performance.
- To develop and maintain an environment that attracts and retains the best staff and volunteers.

Strategy and planning

- In partnership with the Chairman, to ensure that the trustees set the values, ethos, vision, strategic objectives and strategic priorities for Blesma.

Plans and programmes

- To assist the Board in setting the strategic vision for Blesma.
- To take primary responsibility in developing the consequential plans and programmes necessary for delivering the strategic vision.

Management

- To develop plans and programmes within a rolling 5 year strategy, defined as part of a structured iterative process between the executive and the Board.
- To be accountable to the Board for the proper and effective administration of Blesma, by ensuring that the Association has an appropriate management structure and systems in order to fulfil its strategic objectives and to carry out its work.
- To ensure that all management policies and decisions support the agreed strategic vision values and philosophy of Blesma.
- To identify appropriate methods for monitoring the performance of Blesma and to report back to the Board on the performance of the Association against its strategy vision, operational and annual plans; and against the annual budget as approved by the Board.
- To ensure that the recruitment, management, training and development of staff reflect good employment practice and are directed towards achieving the Association's objectives.



Governance

- To ensure that the Blesma Board receives all necessary advice, guidance and information on matters relating to current performance, the short and long-term future of Blesma, regulatory and legal compliance and other appropriate issues; making sure that such advice, guidance and information are timely, honest, balanced and relevant.
- To ensure that the staff understand and support the governance role of the Board and that there is a positive and constructive working relationship between the Board and the Executive.
- To ensure, with the Chairman and through the Governance Sub-Committee, that the Board reviews regularly the Association's governing instruments, the governance structure and to assist with the Board's assessment of its own performance.
- In partnership with the Chairman and the Governance Sub-Committee, to ensure that the Board's delegated authority is recorded in writing, understood fully by the staff and volunteers and that all agreed reporting procedures are followed.
- To ensure that the Board has access to relevant external professional advice and expertise.
- To assist the Chairman and the Governance Sub-Committee in ensuring that there is a systematic, open and fair procedure for the recruitment or co-option and the subsequent election of trustees, future Chairman of the Board and future Chief Executive.



- To ensure that the Board is given the information it needs to perform its duties in a timely fashion.
- In partnership with the Chairman, to develop an annual programme of Board and sub-committee meetings and Board away-days.
- In partnership with the Chairman to ensure that the right and appropriate items reach Board agendas and that high-quality papers support each item on the agenda.
- To assist the Chairman in ensuring that the Board focuses on its governance role by making sure that the Board agenda and papers do not draw the Board away from governance and into unnecessary detail and management issues.
- To report to the Board regularly on the performances of Blesma, progress towards strategic priorities and the achievement of Board policies.
- To ensure the Charity meets all statutory reporting requirements.
- To submit high-level policy proposals for the approval of the Board, or assist the Board in the development of these policies and to be responsible for the efficient and effective achievements of these policies.
- To implement Board decisions.

Finance and risk

- To ensure finance and risk is regularly reviewed by the Board and the Senior Management Team (SMT); that systems have been established to mitigate these risks; and to ensure that a risk analysis is automatically carried out when taking on new work.
- To have in place effective mechanisms to ensure the robustness of external and internal controls (both financial and non-financial).

External and internal relations

- To foster good communications throughout the Association and externally.
- To develop Blesma's public profile and foster good relations with the Government (particularly the Ministry of Defence, Office of Veterans Affairs and Department of Health and Social Care), devolved administrations, the NHS, COBSEO, Service charities and other external stakeholders.
- To set up mechanisms for listening to the views of current and future Members and their dependents on the performance of Blesma, as well as on areas for future development.
- To monitor the external environment for changes which might affect Blesma, to advise the Board pro-actively and to take necessary action.



Legal and regulatory compliance

- To ensure that Blesma fulfils all its legal, statutory and regulatory responsibilities.

Relationship with the Chairman

- To have regular one-to-one meetings with the Chairman of the Board in order to mutually discuss progress and issues, agree expectations of each other, plan the Board's annual programme together and prepare together for meetings; and hold similar meetings with the relative chairman of each sub-committee.
- In close consultation with the Chairman, to agree respective roles in representing Blesma and acting as spokesperson at public functions, public meetings and to the media.

Person specification

Essential knowledge and experience

- Substantial senior leadership experience in contexts and settings that are directly relevant to the social care, welfare, health and wellbeing support that Blesma delivers to its members.
- Knowledge and understanding of the regulatory framework for health and social care delivery, best practice and current trends.
- A successful track record of working effectively with Boards, Trustees, Committees or similar governing bodies to develop and deliver the vision and mission of an organisation, presenting strategic and operational information and reporting impact.
- Experience of strategic planning and delivery, implementing organisational change and setting and managing budgets.
- Experience of Project and Programme Management, working with external partners and managing relationships/agreements.
- Knowledge of, and highly competent in, MS Office, including Excel and other programmes.

Desirable knowledge and experience

- Experience of working within the charitable sector at CEO/director level.
- Experience of supporting the Armed Forces Community and a thorough understanding of the challenges faced by serving personnel and veterans, particularly those living with disability.
- Experience of planning and delivery of strategic communications.
- Previous service in HM Forces.

Skills and abilities

- **Leadership** – strong leadership and motivational skills with a track record of success in building effective teams and leading a diverse group of staff with the ability to lead and deliver in a climate of continuous improvement.
- **Empathy** and a genuine interest in the work and ethos of Blesma. A deep awareness of the needs of the membership.



- **Communications** – first class communication skills, both written and verbal, with the ability to have a strong impact across a wide range of audiences. Skilled at producing concise and comprehensive reports and proposals.
- **Influence and persuasion** – well-developed interpersonal, representational and influencing skills. Well-developed negotiating and influencing skills, with the ability to persuade in a complex stakeholder environment and act as an effective ambassador for Blesma.
- **Analysis** – analytical and organised, able to deal with a range of complex issues across Blesma’s internal and external environment.
- **Resilience** – A robust, resilient, resourceful leader able to work under pressure compassionately.
- **Numeracy** – well-developed financial skills to ensure that resources are channelled effectively to achieve the organisational goals of Blesma.
- **Innovation** – a shrewd, creative and strategic thinker open minded and a willingness to learn, the ability to identify opportunities for improving services and the facility to think beyond traditional boundaries and ways of doing things.
- **Credibility** – models high standards of personal conduct, credibility, honesty and integrity that encourages and inspires colleagues, members and stakeholders alike.
- **Team-working** – an inclusive team player who can work across boundaries, harnessing and valuing individual differences, and achieving results through others.

- **Relationship development** – the ability to foster and maintain effective relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders, e.g. members, funders, donors, supporters, partners, staff and volunteers.

Qualifications and training

- Evidence of education, training or professional development relevant to the scope of responsibilities or evidenced by experience.
- Relevant professional qualification or memberships, e.g. a member of Institute of Health & Social Care Management or Chartered Management Institute.

Equalities

- » Proven and demonstrable commitment to the principles and practice of equal opportunities and diversity.

General

- » Willingness to work flexibly and sometimes outside of office hours.
- » Commitment to uphold Blesma's reputation, values, and Mission.
- » Commitment and professionalism at all times.

This job description covers the main tasks expected to be involved in undertaking the job and the main characteristics and qualities required of the jobholder. It is not meant to be all embracing and other tasks may be assigned to the jobholder as necessary and/or operational needs dictate.





How to apply

For an informal conversation about the role, please contact our recruitment partner, NFP Consulting:

Simon Lloyd Director | NFP Consulting
07961 988 523 simon.lloyd@nfpconsulting.co.uk



Apply online at www.nfpconsulting.co.uk/blesma

Application is by way of CV and a Supporting Statement.

CLOSING DATE: MONDAY 26TH JUNE

First interviews: Week beginning 3rd July (remote)

Second interviews: 10th, 11th or 12th July on-site at Blesma's offices in Chelmsford

ACCESSIBILITY

Please let us know if you have any special requirements which we might need to consider in relation to the selection process. Any requests will not affect the decision making itself. Please let us know if you would like to receive this information in a different format.

