Philanthropy lead

Location:	London, hybrid two days per week in our London office
Responsible to:	Head of Philanthropy
Sense salary points:	£57,671 (CHA55) plus £3090 inner London weighting
Responsible for:	Philanthropy Manager

About Sense

Sense is a leading disability charity, here to break down barriers alongside disabled people with complex needs. We use our knowledge and expertise to deliver personalised, creative and flexible support at every stage of life. Together, we drive change, building a future where everyone has the power, choice and control to live the lives we choose.

Our values

Our values shape the way we behave and work alongside disabled people with complex needs to break down barriers.

- We're creating change
- We're always learning
- We're better together

About the Sense Philanthropy team

This is an exciting opportunity to join Sense's ambitious Fundraising and Marketing directorate as part of the Philanthropy team. With a new organisational three year plan and fundraising strategy to support growth, now is a brilliant time to apply your philanthropy fundraising skills to raise vital funds to support disabled people with complex needs.

Description of the role

As Philanthropy lead your main focus will be on driving income from philanthropic donors, financial reporting and budgeting and building meaningful relationships with our highest value donors. You will manage a portfolio of new and existing donors and support the development of a strong pipeline of high-net-worth individuals capable of making significant gifts. You will engage prospective supporters with the help of research from our Prospect Research Manager, using their insight to develop tailored plans to cultivate and steward our donors with best practice relationship management methods. You'll create meaningful opportunities for engagement, compelling proposals and inspiring reports which demonstrate the difference a donor's gift has made to disabled people with complex needs.

Working closely with the Head of Philanthropy and Philanthropy Manager, you'll help grow Sense's major donor programme to support the charity's future plans. This is an external facing role, ideal for someone who enjoys networking, building relationships, making asks and taking ownership of generating new opportunities.

Key responsibilities

- Manage a portfolio of donors ensuring that each person receives tailored stewardship and cultivation journeys to deepen relationships and maximise their support to Sense
- Line manage the Philanthropy Manager, supporting them to deliver best practice donor relationship management and develop the philanthropy team's income and processes

- Develop and implement cultivation strategies that convert prospects into long-term philanthropic supporters
- Secure six and seven figure gifts from new and existing donors to achieve income targets
- Work with the Prospect Research Manager to gain insight into donors and prospects to create appropriate tailored donor plans
- Create compelling and memorable communications tailored to individuals to engage them with Sense's work and deepen their connection to the cause
- Represent Sense appropriately at donor meetings, networking, stewardship and cultivation events
- Work with the Head of team and Philanthropy Manager to lead on the organisation and delivery of stewardship and cultivation events for supporters as appropriate
- Work closely with colleagues across fundraising teams to identify and transition major donor prospects
- Promptly thank and record major gifts, monitor team income and liaise closely with the Head of team to manage the team's pipeline, financial reporting and KPIs
- Accurately update and record information on the CRM system and use data to inform fundraising activity

Person specification

- Knowledge and experience of the major donor fundraising cycle, from identification through to cultivation and stewardship
- Experience securing six-figure gifts from high-net-worth individuals
- Experience of developing major donor pipelines including securing new supporters as well as stewarding existing donors
- Excellent relationship building, networking and influencing skills
- Line management experience

- Confidence and experience in delivering face-to-face donor meetings, making funding asks and successfully closing negotiations
- Experience of finance reporting against budget and reforecasts and reconciling income on a monthly basis
- Experience of organising and delivering effective stewardship and cultivation events
- Knowledge of fundraising best practice and compliance across all relevant regulatory bodies
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills with the ability to communicate passionately and persuasively to a wide range of audiences.
- Excellent standard of numeracy
- Excellent level of IT literacy and ability to use standard Microsoft Office packages including Teams, Word, Excel, PowerPoint
- Ability to work collaboratively across an organisation to achieve objectives
- A commitment to disabled people with complex needs and Sense's vision and values
- A demonstrable commitment to enabling an inclusive and diverse workforce to reflect our community

Other information

- This job description does not form part of the employment contract.
- This post is not exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

October 2026