



Livingston James



THE
DONALDSON
TRUST

Position Profile

Chief Executive



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Welcome Note



Thank you for your interest in this unique opportunity to lead and shape the future strategy of an organisation dedicated to transforming the lives of neurodivergent individuals.

Society does not always understand or meet the needs of neurodivergent people. This can leave them feeling invisible, socially and economically isolated, and can lead to discrimination. **This must change.**

As a Board, we are committed to supporting our Chief Executive and wider Executive Leadership Team to affect societal change to value neurodiversity. This will be achieved by encouraging understanding, driving excellent practice related to neurodiversity and giving neurodivergent people a voice.

Our new Chief Executive will be a visionary looking to build on strong foundations to confidently pursue the next phase of our strategic vision to deliver sustainable, impactful and ethical growth and amplify neurodivergent voices. Through partnership and collaboration, you will grow a community for neurodivergent people, including families, charities, support groups, individuals, businesses & organisations who want change.

We are seeking an inspiring, compassionate and forward-thinking leader, who is politically astute and willing to constructively challenge the status quo, to make a difference with, and for, neurodivergent people.

If you share our passion for a society in which neurodivergent people are understood, accepted, treated fairly and valued, we would welcome your application.

Sean Duffy, Chair



The Donaldson Trust (“Donaldsons”) is Scotland’s leading charity for neurodiversity.

Throughout our rich history, dating back to the 1850s, Donaldsons have been recognised and respected as a specialist provider of education and care.

As the **National Body for Neurodiversity**, we seek to lead by example. We exist to strengthen the public’s understanding of neurodiversity, develop excellence in practice, and help neurodivergent people find their voice.

Our Vision is for a society in which neurodivergent people are understood, accepted, treated fairly and valued.

We are a catalyst for change. We believe there is a genuine opportunity to change society for the better. We aim to be at the forefront of driving that change, making a difference with and for neurodivergent people and their families.

We continue to support children, young people, and adults through a variety of services based at our Linlithgow campus, where we enable every neurodivergent person to realise their goals and aspirations.

We improve outcomes and representation through our external training, consultancy and advice service, delivering neurodiversity training and development programmes, resources and support throughout the UK and beyond.

We write, campaign, and influence alongside neurodivergent people and our partners in order to shape the policies on the issues most important to neurodivergent people and families.

Together we’ll find your voice.



Our strategic priorities



The way we do things:

Our values help tell the story of who we are, where we've come from, what inspires us and why connecting with Donaldsons can be life changing for neurodivergent people.

Individual Capability:

Everyone has their individual capabilities; we find them. Help people reach their own potential. We loosen the confines, remove the barriers. We believe in every single person. Treating people as individuals shows we are flexible in our approach.

Creativity:

We are curious, forward-thinking, always looking for a better way. One day, we will be truly pioneering.

Human Dignity:

We have integrity. We treat everyone with respect. We listen.

Compassion:

We understand. We have empathy. We are kind and caring.

Openness and Honesty:

By being open and honest, we earn trust, and from that we build rewarding relationships.



Job Title:	Chief Executive Officer
Location:	Linlithgow/Hybrid Working

Reporting to the Board of Trustees, Donaldsons' new Chief Executive will be tasked with driving the future strategy of the organisation focused on extending our reach, societal impact and influence. Amplifying the voices of the neurodiverse community, you will ensure neurodivergent people remain at the heart of everything Donaldsons does, and our working culture reflects our core values.

This role represents an incredible opportunity for a dynamic leader to make a significant impact in an organisation dedicated to transforming the lives of neurodivergent individuals.

To have a **positive impact** in this role you will:

- Continue to build and further enhance Donaldsons' profile as the National Body of Neurodiversity, both across Scotland and the wider UK.
- Deliver sustainable, impactful and ethical growth across the three strategic goals, shaping the future considering both the current and future needs of neurodivergent people.
- Build and maintain effective networks with a diverse range of stakeholders, acting as the main ambassador for Donaldsons to effectively promote and raise awareness of neurodiversity, issues affecting neurodivergent individuals, as well as the organisation and its impact at both local and national levels.
- Ensure that Donaldsons actively leads and helps deliver positive change for neurodivergent people and their families by influencing policy and decision-makers and building partnerships.
- Collaborate closely with the Executive Leadership Team to cultivate and strengthen the organisation's culture, ensuring our core values are deeply embedded and consistently reflected across the organisation.



- Ensure Donaldsons continues to play an active role in the design of best practices for neuro-inclusion through thought leadership, the provision of guidance, advice and the amplification of the voices of neurodivergent people
- Ensure robust systems and processes for governance, safeguarding, statutory compliance and quality assurance across the organisation.
- Ensure the ongoing financial sustainability of Donaldsons by identifying opportunities to diversify income streams in alignment with our core vision and strategy. Actively seek innovative ideas that position the organisation at the forefront of delivering impact and making a meaningful difference with and for neurodivergent individuals.
- Develop effective relationships with the Board of Trustees, fostering an approach that encourages both constructive challenge and collaboration.





Duties and Responsibilities

- Provide leadership and support to ensure all staff work cooperatively and effectively to deliver Donaldsons' strategic priorities, promoting a culture of collaboration, respect, and continuous improvement.
- Lead by example, adopting a style which inspires, empowers and develops staff to fulfil their potential and deliver high levels of performance.
- Plan future strategies, policies and procedures to safeguard the organisation's ongoing and sustainable growth, ensuring all activities ultimately deliver better outcomes for neurodivergent people.
- Maintain and develop effective professional networks that will further the interests of the organisation and amplify the voices of neurodivergent people, so that Donaldsons is viewed as a pioneering leader within neurodiversity and as an influential and credible partner.





- As a key ambassador for Donaldsons, promote and enhance the positive profile of the organisation, effectively representing the charity's work and views to Government, the private and public sector, voluntary organisations and the media, ensuring recognition of its impact and influence on neurodiversity across Scotland.
- Lead Donaldsons' external engagement activities to champion neuro-inclusion and increase understanding, acceptance and respect.
- Ensure effective systems of robust governance and risk management are in place and regularly reviewed and that the Board and its Committees are fully informed, operate effectively and that relevant information is provided to all Board members.
- Provide professional advice to the Board and its Committees in all aspects of charity governance, including short- and long-term strategic planning for the ongoing fulfilment of the organisation's charitable objectives and financial welfare, as well as relevant environmental, social and governance considerations.
- Oversee the preparation of new Investment proposals for consideration by the Board, that embrace both creativity and innovation and encourage both internal and external stakeholders alike to think differently in relation to how neurodivergent people are supported more effectively.





As an inspiring, ambitious, compassionate, and forward-thinking leader, you will demonstrate a proven track record of achievement in a strategic senior leadership role. With exceptional communication skills, you will possess the credibility to represent the organisation to a diverse range of external stakeholders

Skills and Experience

- Proven track record of strategic leadership, with experience in leading, engaging, motivating and developing staff.
- Demonstrated expertise in effectively and efficiently managing resources and budgets, delivering long-term financial sustainability, and ensuring value for money.
- Extensive experience in strategic planning, change management, complex decision-making, and critically reviewing outcomes.
- Strong commercial acumen, with the ability to balance mission-driven goals alongside long-term financial sustainability.
- High political acuity and emotional intelligence with the capability to effectively advocate for neurodivergent individuals and their families.
- Exceptional interpersonal, communication (both verbal and written), and influencing skills.
- Strong stakeholder management experience with a proven track record of building and maintaining diverse and collaborative relationships and partnerships.
- Effective ambassadorial and presentation skills, with the ability to express views convincingly and coherently across a variety of media.
- Experience in high-pressure decision-making at a strategic level, where high risk and limited time and resources are factors.
- Solid understanding of positive governance, ideally with direct experience working alongside a voluntary board.
- Commitment to best practices, continuous improvement, and innovation.



Personal Attributes:

- Adaptable, innovative, and results-driven.
- The ability to deal with challenging and complex situations in a calm and professional manner, ensuring that clear supportive leadership is provided at all times.
- Intellectual flexibility to move easily between significant detail and the bigger picture.
- High levels of personal and professional integrity, and significant drive and resilience.
- Exercises good judgement, is confident in their own knowledge and can give advice to others (and be accountable for this advice).
- Willingness to listen and take the opinions of internal and external stakeholders into account.
- Passionate about making a positive impact in the lives of neurodivergent individuals.
- Commitment to promoting inclusion, diversity, and equity.





Basic Salary:	£95,000 – £110,000 per annum
Company Pension:	Group Personal Pension Plan (up to 12% employer contribution)
Holiday Entitlement:	39 Days (inclusive of Public Holidays)

The Recruitment Process

The recruitment process is being handled by our retained advisors, Livingston James.

Douglas Adam at Livingston James will conduct the first stage interviews prior to discussing candidates with Donaldsons at the shortlist meeting.

Interested candidates should provide a tailored CV and covering letter, outlining their suitability and motivation for applying to donaldsons@livingstonjames.com.

Recruitment Timetable

Closing date:	Monday 4 th November
Shortlist meeting:	Wednesday 27 th November
Panel Interviews:	Thursday 5 th December
Final Stage:	Tuesday 17 th December

Donaldsons is an equal opportunities employer and positively encourages applications from suitably qualified and eligible candidates regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital status or pregnancy and maternity.