

FIRST STORY

RECRUITMENT PACK

HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT

- FTE salary £48,000-52,000
- Full time or 4 days option
- FTE 25 days annual leave + public holidays
- Hybrid working

Closing date 19 February 2024

Interviews 29 February 2024

firststory.org.uk/vacancies





Thank you for your interest in joining the First Story team. This recruitment pack offers more information about the role and our organisation to help you make the most of your application.

About First Story

First Story was founded in 2008 by a state secondary teacher and a published author, both of whom recognised that students from low-income backgrounds deserved fairer access to enriching creative learning experiences, beyond the classroom curriculum. From a pilot project in a west London comprehensive, we have grown to work across Greater London, the East Midlands, Yorkshire and Manchester.

Our flagship Young Writers Programme places inspiring professional writers in residence in non-selective secondary schools in low-income areas, where they work intensively over an academic year with a consistent group of students, towards publication of a printed anthology. Regular national competitions and events, plus resources, training and support for teachers, complement our core provision. Participants in a First Story group are encouraged to develop their own unique voices and taught to tell their own stories with confidence and skill. Our growing portfolio of exclusive opportunities for First Story alumni provides a progression pipeline for talent.



Our vision

We believe there is dignity and power in being able to tell your own story, and that writing can transform lives. Our vision is a society that encourages and supports young people from all backgrounds to write for pleasure, self-expression and agency.

Our mission

Every young person deserves to reap the benefits of a rich creative education. Society benefits too, when we nurture a greater diversity of voices and support young people from underrepresented backgrounds to flourish and be heard. Our mission is to assist young people experiencing disadvantage to advance in life and realise their potential, by providing extracurricular support and enrichment activities that foster their creativity, literacy and talent, whilst developing their confidence, skills, and cultural capital.

It's also within our charitable purpose to promote the value of arts and culture, and specifically creative writing. We do this, in part, by commissioning talented professional writers to deliver our programmes.

“ First Story is a fantastic idea. Teenagers are under increasing pressure to tailor their work to exams, and to value themselves in terms of the results. First Story offers young people something else. It helps them find a voice. Creative writing can change people's lives; I've seen it happen. It's more than learning a skill. It's about learning that you, your family, your culture and your view of the world are rich and interesting and important, whoever you happen to be.

Mark Haddon, author



Our values



- We value the agency and authentic voices of young people. Empowering and amplifying young people's voices is at the heart of our work; we want them to be heard in society and to inform what we do.
- Inclusion is our driving force. We champion equality of access and opportunity. We are committed to providing support and opportunities that help to 'level the playing field' for young people from underrepresented communities. Our people and partners should represent diverse experience too.
- We are an agile, open, and collaborative organisation. Delivery partners, sharing our values, are essential to the quality of our offer for young people; we embrace working with others to achieve the best outcomes for the young people we serve.
- Our young people deserve the highest standards. We support them to be rigorous in their writing and ambitious. We commit to professional presentation of their work.
- We value the talent and commitment of the professional writers who deliver our programmes. We pay writers fairly for their services. We are committed to promoting the arts and, in particular, literature, poetry and creative writing.



Our team

First Story has a small permanent staff spread across four regions: London, East Midlands, Greater Manchester and Yorkshire. The team bring diverse perspectives and knowledge, with a friendly, dynamic culture. We are used to working together virtually. Some staff have always worked from home, while some are based at our office in Waterloo, London—sharing a character-filled building with two other charities, also working in literacy and education.

We contract a wide range of freelancers to help deliver our programmes, including our community of professional writers, copywriters, editors, and proof-readers.

Our board of trustees is very engaged, experienced and committed. We also benefit from insights and expertise provided by volunteer advisory panels in our regions.

This is an exciting time to join First Story, as we recently won a grant from Mercers to focus on oracy in our Young Writers Programme. We're ambitious with our live events, developing progression routes for young people, and building on 15th birthday celebrations.



Role description

HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT

Reports to: *CEO*

Direct reports: *1 x Development Manager*



This post plays a crucial strategic role in First Story, working closely with the CEO to shape the charity and deliver our four-year Strategy Reach and Impact, which aims to increase our reach, especially in the Northwest and in Alternative Provision, deepen our impact through new progression routes for young people and develop youth voice across the organisation. We aim to increase our income by an additional £100k across generated and voluntary sources.

You will be a key member of the senior management team, working closely with the Head of Programmes and CEO to deliver and monitor our ambitious strategy effectively. The post holder will contribute to the strategic development of First Story over the next period, presenting to the board. As a leader, you will model our values and organisational culture across the team.

The role oversees First Story's fundraising with trusts and foundations, corporate funders and individual donations, including major donors. This includes working with the CEO to develop the fundraising strategy, putting in place the right balance of funding to deliver First Story's strategic plan.

The post holder will work collaboratively with the First Story team who will also support fundraising across the Programme and Communications teams.

Key relationships

INTERNAL

- The Senior Management Team (CEO, Head of Development, Head of Programmes)
- Direct line management of the Development Manager and any consultants
- Operations Team, Programme Team and Comms Manager
- Board and trustees as related to fundraising

EXTERNAL

- Major grant funders and corporate donors
- Major donors and individual donors, including prospects
- Development networks
- External agencies, such as pro bono supporters and the media



Key responsibilities

FUNDRAISING

- Work with the CEO and wider team to develop and implement First Story's fundraising strategy and annual income targets. Take responsibility for the fundraising target and build a pipeline of activities to ensure targets are met. Our business model aims for 35% generated income and 65% voluntary income of £550k in 24/25, the majority of which is trusts and foundations (40%) with healthy proportions of philanthropic and corporate income.
- Work closely with the CEO and board to maximise the right use of their time, cultivating and making asks to major donors and potential donors.
- Oversee the development and submission of grant applications and reports to trusts and foundations and corporate funders.
- Work with regional colleagues and the CEO to identify local or regional funding prospects and to develop local or regional proposals as appropriate.
- Oversee Development content management on our CRM database.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Work closely with the Communications and Marketing Manager to raise our profile and ensure effective communication with donors and prospects.



SMT AND LINE MANAGEMENT

- Contribute to the Senior Management Team to ensure the coordination of development activities with the core programme, communications and operations to deliver First Story's operational plan.
- Work closely with the CEO and SMT to develop long term strategy for the organisation, production and monitoring of three-year business plan and operational plan.
- Review, lead, motivate and manage the development team, ensuring appropriate skills are in place (the Development Manager role is currently vacant, providing an opportunity to build the team as appropriate). Ensure performance reviews are undertaken and monitored, and staff are supported and developed.
- Fulfil other responsibilities as agreed with the CEO and contribute to the organisation's overall work as required.

Person specification



The successful candidate will demonstrate the following:

ESSENTIAL

- A commitment to First Story's vision and ethos.
- The successful candidate will have demonstrable experience of working effectively in a charitable, private or public environment, leading on an area of work.
- A strong track record of raising funds in a small to medium arts/educational charity or a department of a larger charity including demonstrable experience of working with Trusts and Foundations at all scales, and a working knowledge of major gifts.
- Confidence in relationship-building.
- Strong entrepreneurial skills, tenacity and a track record of being a self-starter.
- The ability to plan and prioritise workload and manage time across multiple projects, with evidence of meeting deadlines.
- Strong communication skills, both written and oral.
- Demonstrable experience of working collaboratively in teams.
- Strong organisation, administration and IT skills including a CRM and Microsoft Office.

DESIRABLE

- Line-management experience.
- An eye for design, presentation and visual storytelling.



Benefits include

- Opportunity to work in a committed and diverse team
- 35 hour week (28 hour week for 4 days)
- 25 days Annual Leave per annum plus pro-rated public holidays including office closure between Christmas and New Year
- Your birthday off
- Flexible/hybrid working
- Defined contribution pension scheme for all employees
- Bike to work scheme

Location and hours

Our office is at 44 Webber Street, London, SE1 8QW. We share the premise with two other literacy charities—CLPE and English and Media Centre. London office staff work hybrid, with a commitment to work 2 days per week in the office. (There is an option for home working in one of our regions for an exceptional candidate.)

Flexible working with core hours 10-4pm.

Please note you will be expected to travel to London regularly (at least monthly) to attend meetings in person. Frequent travel to each of First Story's operating regions is also a requirement of this role. Occasional evening and weekend working will be required, for example to attend events.



How to apply



If you would like more information, or an informal conversation, please contact Vicki Grace at vicki@achates.org.uk.

Please email your CV and a brief cover letter, outlining how you fit the person specification and why you want the role, to Olivia@achates.org.uk (with ref. 'Head of Development, First Story' in the subject line), by **10am on Monday 19th February**.

Please also complete our Diversity and Inclusion Recruitment Survey online [here](#).

First Story is an Equal Opportunities Employer and a Registered Charity. We promote equality, diversity and inclusion in our workplace and actively encourage applicants from all backgrounds to apply for vacancies, particularly candidates self-identified as having a disability and/or from a global majority background. We guarantee to interview all disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria for our vacancies. If relevant to you, please inform us of this in your covering letter.



England's leading creative writing
charity for young people, empowering
students experiencing disadvantage
with the skills and confidence to tell
their own stories.

Find out more at firststory.org.uk
and follow our story



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