

**KIELDER
OBSERVATORY**
Infinite Inspiration



CEO Recruitment

A magical and unique location...
...under the finest dark skies in England.

**THE
HIRING
DEPT.**



Welcome

Thank you for your interest in joining our team as our new CEO at an exciting time for Kielder Observatory.

Like every other organisation, we had to dig deep to navigate the pandemic. We used the time wisely, keeping connected with our visitors and stakeholders, launching many new projects, and investing time in robust analysis to inform our future direction.

We have big ambitions and aim to extend the reach of our public events, and continue to develop programmes with impact, and we are actively seeking to develop partnerships with Dark Sky Parks around the world and replicate this success both here in the UK and globally.

We are so proud of what we have achieved, and what more we can achieve and we hope you'll join us as we develop new activities, projects, and programmes that convey that very special "Kielder moment" to as many people as possible.

Peter Standfield, Chair of Trustees
Catherine Johns, CEO





The Observatory

Kielder Observatory is a public outreach astronomical facility located in Kielder Forest, Northumberland, under some of the darkest skies in Europe.

It is in the largest Gold Tier International Dark Sky Park in Europe, as designated by the International Dark Skies Association. It is set in the largest man-made forest in Western Europe and near Kielder Water, the largest man-made reservoir in Europe.

The primary function of the observatory is outreach via public events. It hosts upwards of 40 of these events every month. Since opening in 2008, we have played host to tens of thousands of people to observe and engage with the night sky via talks, activities, and telescope observing sessions. We do this in a way that is friendly, informative, and interesting through our amazing team of astronomers, guest speakers, and volunteers.

A clear sky at Kielder is truly special: the air is crisp, the silence is bewitching, the stars are mesmerising. It is a reminder of how lucky we are to be alive on this tiny little planet near one of the billions of stars in one of the billions of galaxies that exist in the known universe. That's the Kielder moment, and it can transform people's lives.





What We Do

We create opportunities for people of all backgrounds and abilities to experience moments of inspiration, revelation, wonder, and hope through observing the cosmos.

We aim to promote an interest in the science of astronomy, facilitating the education of the science of astronomy, and maintaining a world-class astronomical observatory in Kielder Forest in which these activities take place.

Our primary activity is public outreach, inspiring people with our love of the night sky. We do this via events at the Observatory, hosting thousands of people a year.

We also deliver one of the most significant STEM schools outreach programmes in the North East, visiting hundreds of schools and inspiring thousands of students every year and we provide pathways into STEM at all ages, with work placements, paid internships, teacher CPD, and a thriving volunteer programme.

Many of our staff (and our trustees) started as volunteers, and many have come to us straight from university.

For more information, please have a look at our [Annual Reviews](#).





Our CEO

Our current CEO has been in post for 3.5 years, successfully guiding Kielder Observatory through the pandemic, supporting a thorough review of our business processes and creating a happy, vibrant, high-profile and high-performing organisation poised for sustainable growth.

We expect our new CEO to build on this legacy, come to the role with a vision for growth and impact and have exceptional skills in:

- Leadership: personal drive to maintain the organisation's momentum and its culture of learning and continuous improvement.
- Governance: as CEO of a charity, role modelling the Nolan principles and having experience with good governance.
- Advocacy and networking: skilful navigation of and contribution to a complex stakeholder and partner landscape, to maintain and grow our profile and deliver mutual objectives.
- Operational management: a sound understanding of all aspects of regulatory requirements, from facilities management to H&S to HR to budgets and more.
- Strategic judgement: ability to foresee risks and outcomes and exercise good judgement and entrepreneurial flair in choosing courses of action.





Role Profile

Salary: £50,000 - £60,000

Benefits: Car Allowance, Flexible Working

Terms: Permanent Contract

Location: Prestwick Park, Newcastle upon Tyne (hybrid)

Purpose

Reporting to the Board of Trustees, the post's primary purpose is to fulfill the vision, mission, and charitable objects of Kielder Observatory Astronomical Society, implementing the agreed strategy, leading the team, supporting the Board of Trustees, ensuring good governance and regulatory compliance, and overseeing the efficient operation of KOAS's events, arts, education, and science programmes, and other activities as they arise.



Responsibilities

Leadership

- Hold overall responsibility for the charity, its operations, infrastructure, the promotion of its equality, diversity & inclusion objectives and environmental responsibility, all major decision-making and reporting.
- Ensure the organisation's core offer is delivered to a standard of excellence.
- Develop new programmes of activity aligned to the organisation's strategic objectives and charitable objects.

Governance

- Support the Board of Trustees and subcommittees in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities.
- Provide regular and timely reports to the Board and prepare for and attend trustee meetings.

People

- Provide inclusive leadership, direction, and motivation to the senior leadership team, staff, and volunteers, creating a learning culture that enables everyone connected to the charity to develop and feel empowered and inspired by their work and the impact they achieve.

Strategy

- Lead and support the Board and wider organisation in the development and implementation of an agreed strategy and business plans.
- Maintain an awareness of risks and changes in the external environment that affect the organisation, proactively managing these risks across all areas of strategy and operations, liaising closely with the Chair and Board

Financial Management

- Ensure that the organisation's financial policies are regularly reviewed.
- Develop the organisation's annual budget for approval by the Board and closely monitor its progress.
- Work with the organisation's independent examiner to prepare quarterly and annual accounts, and the annual report for the Charity Commission.
- Ensure sufficient resources are available to deliver activities and support future growth.

Income Generation

- Lead the development and implementation of an effective long-term funding strategy to generate a diverse range of income sources through fundraising, earned income, and other sources.

Marketing and Communications

- Monitor the implementation and success of the organisation's agreed marketing strategy, ensuring we have broad representation across all communications channels.
- Maintain robust audience and market knowledge, developing existing and new activities to meet customer needs.

External

- Proactively promote and represent the organisation at events, science festivals, and exhibitions, in interviews with the media, as a guest lecturer, and in other public forums.
- Build new and develop existing relationships to maintain and amplify the charity's profile and reach.

Compliance

- Ensure the organisation fulfils its legal, statutory, and regulatory responsibilities and that management and HR policies are regularly reviewed and updated.

You will also participate in a “senior officer on call” rota to ensure the safe and smooth operations of the organisation at all sites and at all times.

The responsibilities referenced are not exhaustive, and you will be required to carry out other duties commensurate with the role.



Person Specification

Our expectations are high. As our new CEO, you will need to evidence and demonstrate commitment and be fully engaged and motivated by our vision and bring the necessary experience, expertise, and energy demanded by the role.

Qualifications

- Degree or equivalent in any subject, or progress towards a degree level qualification.

Skills

- Possess significant senior leadership experience.
- Evidence an ability to lead an agile and flexible organisation.
- Bring experience of change and transformation management.
- Evidence an ability to effectively manage risk and assess outcomes to come to sound decisions.
- Bring significant experience in budget management and accounting.
- Demonstrate a successful track record of fundraising and income generation.
- Possess significant experience of stakeholder management and working in collaboration.

Knowledge

Possess an excellent working knowledge of:

- Audience development, marketing, and communications.
- Facilities management and capital development.
- Good governance and board management.
- Health and Safety.
- IT and data management.
- HR good practice.

Attributes

- Self-motivated and disciplined, demonstrating commitment, resilience, and a positive attitude.
- High degree of integrity and commitment to the Nolan principles of public life.
- Ability to inspire and build rapport with people from all backgrounds, abilities, and ages.
- Ability to demonstrate entrepreneurial flair in a charity context.
- Commitment to continuing professional development.



How to Apply

If you would welcome the opportunity to apply, please forward:

- A CV outlining your career history, achievements, and academic and professional qualifications.
- A supporting statement (maximum 2 x A4 pages) demonstrating your motivation, skills, and experience and any other information relevant to the role.

Your completed application should be sent to Philip Nelson at philip.nelson@thehiringdept.com. An anonymised diversity monitoring form will also be sent to you for completion.

Please also let us know if you need any special provisions should you be called forward for an interview.

Closing Date: Sunday 2nd July

Preliminary Interviews: Thursday 13th & Friday 14th July

Final Panel Interviews: tbc

For an informal and confidential discussion, to ask a question on any ~~aspect of the appointment process~~, or for additional information, please contact our advising consultant Philip Nelson on 020 3590 9978 or via email at philip.nelson@thehiringdept.com.





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