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**Head of Philanthropy**

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| **Job level** | **6** | **Reports to** | **Director of Development** |
| **Directorate** | **Development** | **Function** | **Philanthropy** |
| **Contract** | **Permanent** | **Location** | **Regent’s Park** |

**Responsibility for resources**

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| **Direct line reports** | **2 direct line reports** | **Responsibility for other resources** | **Confidentiality of donors** |
| **Financial resources** | **Annual income target of £2m+ with expenditure budget of £200k. Accountability for annual target and delegation of individual targets to team members.** |

**Our vision and mission**

The Zoological Society of London (ZSL) is an international conservation charity, driven by science, working to restore wildlife in the UK and around the world. Our vision is a world where wildlife thrives and every role, every person in every corner of ZSL has one thing in common – we are all conservationists, and passionate about restoring wildlife.

**Purpose of the role**

The Head of Philanthropy is responsible for driving philanthropic income to support ZSL’s mission by identifying, cultivating, and securing major gifts of seven and eight figures from High-Net-Worth individuals in the UK and internationally.

This role leads the strategic development and management of ZSL’s fundraising pipeline for individual supporters, overseeing all giving levels from mid-value to transformational gifts. It includes direct engagement with high-value donors, working closely with the senior leadership team to secure significant contributions towards ZSL’s priority research and conservation areas. The post also oversees the successful delivery and growth of ZSL’s Patrons and Fellowship programmes, ensuring that all individual supporter groups are engaged, stewarded, and maximised for long-term value and impact.

**Key responsibilities**

**Fundraising & Strategy**

* Lead and deliver ZSL’s Philanthropy Strategy, developing ambitious annual implementation plans, income targets, and an expenditure budget, alongside a three-year growth plan to drive major gift income from UK and international High-Net-Worth Individuals (HNWIs).
* Build and manage a robust fundraising pipeline of around 100 high-value prospects, creating and implementing bespoke cultivation strategies to secure major philanthropic gifts of £500k+, including transformational seven- and eight-figure donations.
* Create compelling donor propositions and cases for support, using insight into ZSL’s priority research and conservation areas, and making strategic decisions about how, when, and by whom major asks should be made—including leading on asks and coaching others.
* Oversee and evolve ZSL’s individual giving programmes, including the mid-level Patron Programme and the Fellowship Programme, ensuring they deliver value, deepen engagement, and act as effective pipelines for major giving.

**Leadership & Collaboration**

* Act as a senior ambassador for ZSL, representing the organisation with authority, intellectual rigour, and authenticity in donor meetings and high-profile engagements, and building deep relationships that yield transformational philanthropic outcomes.
* Serve on the Fundraising Senior Leadership Team, shaping and influencing fundraising strategy and culture across ZSL, while leading the strategic development of individual supporter engagement.
* Establish and lead high-level Development and Campaign Boards, recruiting members, setting clear objectives, and driving their contribution to major gift cultivation and campaign delivery.
* Inspire and manage a high-performing team of fundraisers, providing leadership, mentoring and development, and creating a collaborative, inclusive, and ambitious environment that enables the team to meet and exceed targets.

**Relationship Management**

* Personally steward a portfolio of major donors and prospects, ensuring frequent, personalised, and proactive communication (in person, by phone and email), resulting in high-value asks and long-term commitment to ZSL.
* Collaborate across the organisation, working with senior leaders, Council members, the Executive Committee, and Campaign Boards to identify new opportunities, nurture relationships, and bring in major gifts.
* Maintain strong internal relationships with programme and research colleagues to ensure up-to-date knowledge of funded projects, enabling donors to receive timely updates and reporting that reflect the impact of their gifts.
* Partner with the Fundraising Operations team to produce high-quality proposals, events, briefings, and stewardship materials that support cultivation, engagement, and recognition of individual supporters.

**Performance, Reporting & Insights**

* Set clear, measurable annual targets for income generation, donor engagement, and prospect pipeline growth, and contribute to long-term income forecasting and planning for the organisation.
* Track and analyse performance data, producing insightful briefings, presentations, and reports for the Director and senior stakeholders to evaluate success and identify areas for improvement.
* Drive a culture of continuous improvement, working toward year-on-year increases in income, donor retention, and supporter lifetime value, informed by performance data and sector trends.
* Ensure robust data management using Tessitura, maintaining accurate and comprehensive records of prospect strategies, donor interactions, communications, and outcomes to support effective relationship management and audit compliance.

**Values and behaviours for people management**

* **Collaborative:** creates an engaging environment where people feel comfortable asking for help or support
* **Ethical:** creates a culture which ensures everyone is treated fairly with dignity and respect
* **Impactful:** delivers results on time and to the agreed standards
* **Inclusive:** makes decisions that promote transparency and inclusion
* **Innovative:** is forward thinking and able to see the broader picture when planning and organising work
* **Inspiring:** has self-awareness and seeks feedback to better understand own style, approach and impact on team/staff motivation

**Person Specification**

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| Experience | |
| Essential | * Evidence of success in setting strategy and delivering significant philanthropic income growth. * Demonstrable success in identifying and recruiting donors to achieve income and other measurable targets, with a track record of making and securing 6-8 figure asks. * Capital appeal fundraising experience. * Experience of building credibility and developing productive working relationships with senior volunteers, supporters and colleagues. * Experience in the development and implementation of an appropriate strategy and to manage the resources (including staff) required to ensure fundraising targets are met. * Experience of working across departments within a complex organisation in order to ensure appropriate personnel are kept abreast of progress and are brought into negotiations with funders as necessary. * Experience in the identification of opportunities for approaches, the co-ordination of approaches and the mobilisation of key individuals to ensure a steady stream of approaches to potential supporters. * Experience of managing a variety of diverse and complex approaches concurrently. |
|  | * Proven experience of effective line management, delegation and employee development. |
| Knowledge and skills | |
| Essential | * A degree or equivalent qualification. * Excellent relationship management skills, with the ability and confidence to operate at a high level with donors and senior stakeholders internally and externally. * A willingness to ‘make the ask’ personally where appropriate, and to coach/support others doing so. * Proven ability to think strategically, and manage a pool of donors to deliver growth and maximise opportunities. * In-depth knowledge and understanding of the major giving process and the various techniques used, including latest developments in trends, approaches and codes of best practice, and relevant legislation (eg tax-effective giving). |
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| Additional requirements | |
| Essential | * Intellectual curiosity, sound judgement, and the ability to operate effectively and credibly with senior internal and external stakeholders. * Understanding of the nuance and diplomacy required to build trust at the highest level. * Interpersonal skills to manage relationships across organisations and work with key personnel across ZSL, including Directors, any fundraising volunteer boards, and members of the education, communication, commercial, conservation, science and animal care departments. Well-developed ability to represent ZSL and communicate in a, persuasive and understandable way to colleagues, supporters, external contacts and the public, and to communicate ZSL’s mission and activities to supporters in an articulate, knowledgeable and passionate way. * Able to produce creative, imaginative and inspiring proposals, reports and other communications that encourage support of ZSL. * Able to deal sensitively and appropriately with confidential information. * Evidence of creating a high-performing team. |