

AUGUST 2021

# Head of Fundraising, The Polar Academy

Application Pack

*Prepared by Dixon Walter*



dixon walter

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# KEY DETAILS

**Organisation:** The Polar Academy

**Job title:** Head of Fundraising

**Annual Salary:** £50,000

**Location:** Home-based with remit for working across the UK

**Closing date:** 13th September 2021

## VISION



*We want to help even more children and their families, therefore our growth plan is realistically demanding. This year we are doubling the number of children we work with in Scotland. Going forward, in the next 2-3 years we aim to have established bases in Norway and England to help even more children. We are looking for the right person with the integrity and passion to get us there.*

**Craig Mathieson, Founder and Head of the Polar Academy**

# ABOUT THE POLAR ACADEMY

The Polar Academy, was founded by Craig Mathieson, Explorer In Residence at the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, in 2014. The idea behind the Polar Academy came from his experience of meeting hundreds of young people on his exploration speaking events where he realised that confidence and self-esteem issues were all too common. Craig is passionate about inspiring the next generation of leaders and explorers and using his own experience of 'inspiration through exploration' to do so.

The organisation was established with one clear aim: to unlock the vast potential within young adults and turn them into positive role models for their community and families. The Polar Academy is now internationally recognised as an organisation which really delivers true life changing opportunities to the children and families who need it the most. Working with the 'invisible' children - the victims of bullying, abuse or children crushed by the lack of self-esteem and confidence - the Polar Academy helps build them into leaders and role models, to truly inspire others so that they too can reach their full potential.

The Polar Academy identifies 14–17-year-old secondary school children, and motivates them positively to achieve their absolute potential and what they may have perceived as impossible. They are given a unique opportunity to redefine their physical and mental limits. The training is unapologetically demanding with the goals set often being beyond what most can dream of - our children always succeed.

Participants are put through a rigorous ten-month training programme before being immersed in the wilds of Greenland in the Arctic, navigating through some of the world's remotest terrain for ten days. Their confidence soars with every step. This expedition will be beyond anything that they have ever determined to be possible and will positively change the lives of the participants and their families. And on their return to Scotland, each pupil shares their experiences with their peer groups, speaking to more than 30,000 school children in their region. They are living, breathing proof that dreams are attainable and that ordinary pupils can achieve the truly extraordinary.

# FUNDRAISING AT THE POLAR ACADEMY

Since the inception of the Academy, the small yet highly successful team have created and delivered a number of successful programmes and expeditions relying on the support of Patrons, corporate supporters and trusts and foundations. In the last 10 years, Craig and his senior team have raised all of the money themselves to ensure thousands of children and young people in Scotland have this unique and life changing opportunity.

However, 2021 sees a new and ambitious phase in the Polar Academy's history. To enable this they are looking to appoint their first ever Head of Fundraising. This important role will be responsible for shaping and leading the strategic growth of the organisation's income generation and helping to realise the organisation's ambitious fundraising plans. The Head of Fundraising will play a vital role in expanding the Academy's activity in line with the organisation's ambitious international growth plan. This new role will play a pivotal role in pushing the physical boundaries of the organisation across the UK and Norway.

## THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

The successful candidate will be a proven leader and excellent hands-on fundraiser with a solid track record across a number of disciplines. Their skills will be a strong blend of business development, pipeline management, ability to understand and synthesise complex information, strong and values led communication skills, determination, integrity and getting it done attitude. They will need to thrive in all settings including working closely with new Patrons on an individual basis, meeting with and reporting to funders, communicating the work and impact of the Polar Academy to new audiences. Most importantly, working with the young explorers, their families and schools to gain a deep understanding of their experience and impact. This role is an opportunity for a serious, committed, talented, passionate and determined individual to join a thriving organisation at a crucial juncture.

# JOB ROLE, RESPONSIBILITIES AND PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

**This key appointment has leadership responsibility for these key areas:**

- Raising funds from a variety of carefully stewarded sources in support of all of the Polar Academy activities, both core and revenue
- Build lifelong relationships with Patrons, supporters and donors worldwide to enhance the organisations profile and strategy
- Provide leadership and expertise in all matters relating to increasing inward investment

**The key aims of the role:**

- Adhere to the highest possible personal levels of conduct ensuring the organisation's values are upheld at all time
- Lead the generation of significant income and develop a wide portfolio of sources that supports the Senior Team's and Trustee's vision
- Build the operational machinery and high-quality systems essential to support effective fundraising
- Play a key role in creating collective impact
- Build strong and enduring mutually beneficial relationships with donors and supporters
- Represent the organisation within the local community, nationally and internationally to ensuring strong civic relationships
- Ensure strict compliance with governance, GDPR and associated regulations

**Specific Responsibilities:**

Generating significant inward investment

- Alongside the Founder and Trustee Board set and achieve ambitious multiyear targets
- Manage existing and create new income streams including private philanthropy, corporate support, trusts and foundations, regular giving, legacy and community
- Create ambitious fundraising campaigns to support key areas
- Establish a robust programme of prospect research and prospect pipeline

- Continually create and develop innovative, relevant and personalised cultivation and stewardship
- Sound financial and budgetary control including modelling and forecasting

#### Building a global community

- Support the development, delivery and implementation of an engagement plan in support of Polar Academy
- Identify, open and reach new fundraising markets on a continual basis
- Manage all supporter data to ensure it is used and stored compliantly

#### Leadership

- At all times being a face and ambassador for the Polar Academy and acting accordingly
- Act as counsel and advisor to the Founder and Trustees on all matters relating to the office
- Uphold the values of the Academy and actively promote equality, fairness and diversity
- Manage the performance and impact of the office with regular evaluation and forecasting
- Establish and adhere to strict protocols around risk management

#### Personal effectiveness

- Thorough and up to date knowledge of professional and regulatory developments
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Employs professional judgment at all times
- Ability to think and plan strategically
- Highly practiced and nuanced communication skills – written and verbal
- Strong project management
- Innovative and entrepreneurial
- Technologically adept
- Energetic, determined and focussed
- Collaborative and able to bring people together
- Resilient

# APPLICATION PROCESS

Executive Search firm Dixon Walter has been retained to help us to find our new Head of Fundraising.

If you would like an informal conversation about this role please contact Liz Dean-Stevens at [liz@dixonwalter.co.uk](mailto:liz@dixonwalter.co.uk).

Applications must include and up to date CV and covering letter by the closing date of September 13th.