



UNIVERSITY
of HULL

Candidate brief for the appointment of
Director, Philanthropy and
Alumni Engagement



dixon walter

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Welcome from Fridley Cordingley, Executive Director



Dear candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the Director, Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement position. Founded in 1927, the University of Hull has a long and proud history. Through our teaching, research and civic engagement, we are helping to shape and deliver the future prosperity of our region and far beyond. The global perspective and expertise of our talented people and our dynamic collaborations with partners locally, nationally and internationally enable us to bring communities together – to enrich lives, address the challenges facing our region and share solutions that are transferable across an increasingly connected world. This union between education, research and knowledge exchange, and between the local and the global, defines our internationally engaged civic University.

Our global alumni community, now numbering more than 190,000, is an integral part of our community. The Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement team is the link between the University and our alumni and supporters, providing bespoke engagement opportunities that build connections and raise philanthropic funding. The team sits within a newly formed directorate bringing together our external engagement activities across Marketing, Communications, Student Recruitment and Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement.

We welcome our new Vice-Chancellor in summer 2026 and celebrate our centenary in 2027-2028, and we recognise the significant opportunity this milestone, under new leadership, presents the institution as we enter our second century.

In common with all universities, we continue to navigate the changing landscape of today's higher education sector. We are proactively balancing the need for responsible financial management with our ambitions for growth and excellence. Our new identity and brand, significant investment in sector-leading digital transformation and the changes we have made to our professional service and academic structures have all been designed to ensure that we are in the best position possible to deliver our plans. Importantly, our staff and students are engaged, positive and passionate, focused on achieving our ambitions. Our values of being inclusive, empowering and progressive are critical to our community, and we are committed to appointing a Director who embodies these values.

While the higher education landscape is inescapably complex and challenging, we are excited about our future. We hope that you are too, and very much look forward to engaging with you through the appointment process in the coming months.

Fridley Cordingley
Executive Director

About the role

Leading the Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement team, the Director will drive the design and implementation of the University's inaugural comprehensive fundraising campaign, launching it at the culmination of our centenary celebrations in summer 2028. Building on progress made to date, the Director will leverage the centenary to elevate the roles of philanthropy and alumni engagement in support of the University's future ambitions.

With demonstrable experience in philanthropy and alumni engagement, preferably within higher education, the Director will have a track record of delivering fundraising campaigns, managing major donor relationships and achieving ambitious income targets. In addition to fundraising, the Director will recognise the integral link between alumni engagement and philanthropic and institutional success. Strong leadership and people management skills are essential, along with the ability to foster an inclusive, high-performing culture. The Director will lead effective fundraising, alumni engagement and donor stewardship activities, ensure robust fundraising compliance measures are in place and model excellent communication and relationship building skills. They will be a trusted advisor to senior leaders, capable of championing philanthropy and alumni engagement across the University and externally.



Reporting to the Executive Director and working closely with the Vice-Chancellor and Senior Executive members, the Director will provide strategic leadership to the Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement team. As part of the leadership team of the new directorate, the Director will play an integral role in ensuring our alumni and supporter communities remain engaged and central to our wider strategy.



Person specification

Along with the knowledge, experience and competencies outlined below, the appointee will demonstrate a genuine commitment to our values and the roles of philanthropy and alumni engagement in shaping our future.

Knowledge and qualifications

- Extensive knowledge of philanthropy including fundraising best practice
- Extensive knowledge of alumni engagement and its role in building connections and supporting wider institutional priorities
- A relevant degree and preferably knowledge of higher education policies and practices

Experience

- Demonstrable track record of working with prospects and donors to secure gifts at the six-figure level and above
- Experience of leading philanthropic campaigns and exceeding fundraising targets
- Experience of leading and managing teams carrying out philanthropic and/or engagement activities
- Experience of strategic and data-driven operational planning and performance management
- Experience of resource management including budget preparation, monitoring and control

Competencies

- Ability to build and maintain strong relationships internally and externally
- A positive, inclusive and collegial leadership style with the ability to inspire, motivate and develop others to achieve results
- An innovative approach and genuine enthusiasm for engaging alumni and supporters, both domestic and international, in advancing higher education
- Ability to work across complex organisations and functional boundaries to gain support for initiatives
- Tenacity, drive and passion for education and its impact on the lives of individuals and communities
- Capacity to represent the University at home and overseas
- Excellent written and oral communication skills to engage people effectively with complex issues and ideas
- Ability to build effective partnerships and collaborations between individuals and teams to leverage resources, expertise and capacity to execute strategic projects
- Ability to negotiate with and influence key stakeholders across the University to inform strategies and plans, and to obtain agreement to proposals



How to apply

For an informal discussion about the role please contact Mike Dixon at Dixon Walter at: mike@dixonwalter.co.uk or on 0787 6751896

To apply please submit:

- An up-to-date CV with details of your current or last remuneration.
- A covering letter of no more than 2,000 words that addresses the requirements in the person specification.
- Details of three referees (one of whom should be your current employer), including name, nature of your relationship, position and contact details. References will not be taken up without prior consent.
- A completed equal opportunities and diversity form (also available to download from the campaign site).

These documents should be emailed to:

mike@dixonwalter.co.uk >

Key dates for your diary:

- The closing date for applications is Sunday 15 February 2026.
- Final stage assessment and selection will be held in mid-March 2026.



About the University of Hull

The University of Hull is one of England's oldest universities. We've been challenging the world to think differently for almost 100 years and have a proud history of life-changing research and education.

Our students thrive in a dynamic and inclusive learning environment where they are inspired by exceptional teaching, supported by dedicated staff, and equipped with the skills, confidence and values to become the freethinking future makers of tomorrow. Our graduates, over 190,000 across more than 170 countries, are taking the skills and experience they gained at the University to make a positive impact on their communities and the world.

An inspiring student experience

In 2024/25 over 10,700 students studied on campus, with 79% of these being undergraduate students; 15% postgraduate taught, and 5% postgraduate research.

Our outstanding National Student Survey (NSS) results reflect the positive opinions students have of their experience.

We are committed to delivering excellent educational opportunities that transform the lives of individuals and communities in our region and provide the knowledge and skills to drive economic growth and enhance social wellbeing. Working with partners such as IntoUniversity and the Children's University, we work to increase access to higher education in a region with comparatively low participation rates.

We support students from the moment they join us through to graduation and beyond. Our experts in mental health, disability support and finance, offer advice and guidance to nurture students' wellbeing and support their academic success and career readiness. Our graduates are equipped with the creativity and adaptability to thrive and lead in a rapidly changing world.

We have a long history of collaboration – we work with partner universities and colleges to deliver outstanding teaching and learning opportunities both in the region and internationally. In May 2024, working with our partner Cambridge Education Group (CEG), we opened our London Study Centre to offer University of Hull taught postgraduate programmes to international students, and replicate our learning environment in the professional hub of the capital.





Research, innovation and impact

We aspire to be an outstanding research-led University, placed in the top 50 UK universities, with a focus on achieving significant increases in research quality, income and impact.

Our research delivers measurable benefits for our communities, locally and globally. 82% of our research was assessed as world-leading or internationally excellent in the 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF). We're helping to build some of the largest wind farms in the world, and we are shaping UK national flood policy and investment, helping to protect hundreds of thousands of homes across the UK. We are transforming the lives of those living with chronic wounds and exploring tangible solutions to the complex issues around addiction and mental health. We're advising the UK Government on tackling exploitation. Through the Humber Modern Slavery Partnership, we are working with our partners and regional police forces to protect human rights. Together, we're helping to support victims, disrupt organised crime and bring the perpetrators of modern slavery to justice.



We're making sure our research delivers measurable benefits for our communities, locally and globally. We are:

- Accelerating the UK's drive towards energy security: The Aura Innovation Centre has supported over 1,000 businesses to deliver low-carbon innovations.
- Improving health outcomes: The £48m Wound Research Institute is transforming care for millions of people affected by chronic wounds worldwide. Our £11m Centre for Addictions and Mental Health Research is working to improve provision and delivery of essential community services to improve access to treatment.
- Promoting justice and fairness for all: The internationally recognised Wilberforce Institute is working to eradicate modern slavery, helping to build ethical, transparent supply chains with partners like Waitrose, Aldi and Yorkshire Water.
- Learning to live sustainably with water: led by the Energy and Environment Institute, we're driving resilience in a changing climate, improving flood protection for more than 300,000 homes.



Supporting local growth and regeneration

The 2024 Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) results place the University of Hull as one of the top performing universities in the country when it comes to supporting local growth and regeneration and working with the public and third sector.

We work with local authorities, healthcare providers, businesses and community groups to address shared challenges and grasp opportunities for inclusive growth.

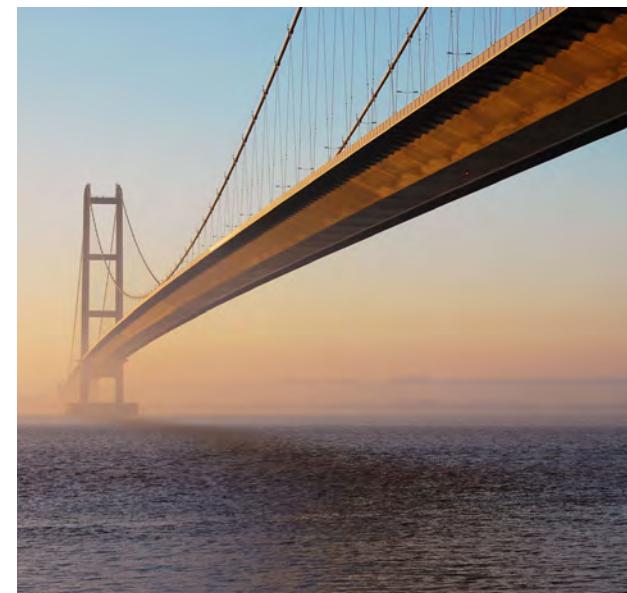
Through targeted collaboration with industry, we're aligning our academic programmes to real economic need, from green energy and advanced manufacturing to digital transformation. In collaboration with the Freeport, Future Humber, and the Hull and East Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority we're delivering a high-value talent pipeline aligned to business needs.

As the region's trusted think tank, we offer a neutral space for dialogue and strategic insight, helping regional leaders, partners and the community navigate complex challenges and co-create evidence-based solutions. And through our outreach with schools and colleges, specialist training provision and focus on social mobility we're making sure that local people have the skills investors seek so that opportunity and prosperity reach every corner of the region.

As a major regional employer, we support thousands of jobs both directly and indirectly, strengthen local supply chains, and contribute to the success of businesses across the area. Our staff and students live, work, and actively engage in communities throughout the region.

As the only university in the Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority, we are at the heart of our city and region. We work in partnership to deliver economic growth through targeted skills development and innovation, to support the transition to clean energy generation, and to improve the health and quality of life of our local communities.

Our most recent economic impact report showed that in the academic year 2023/24, the University contributed £562m GVA and 6,900 jobs in our wider region. Nationally our contribution was £1billion and 10,890 jobs.





Our campus and the city

Our beautiful campus is home to red brick buildings, thousands of trees and rose-covered lawns alongside modern facilities, structures of steel and glass and virtual learning environments to support teaching and learning.

Our seven-story library is a superb learning space with more than 400 open access PCs and over a million books and journals. Elsewhere, we have a 12-court sports hall, 120-station gym, dance studios, strength and conditioning suite and floodlit 3G pitches. Middleton Hall is our world-class concert venue, with industry-standard recording studios and rehearsal spaces, including a leading digital cinema.

Off campus you'll find a beautiful marina, independent shops, bars and restaurants, art galleries and museums and music venues to explore. East Yorkshire and Lincolnshire's wonderful countryside and coastline are all less than an hour away.

At the University of Hull, we believe that diversity fuels creativity, innovation and excellence.

We are committed to equality of opportunity, to being fair and inclusive, and to fostering a community where everyone feels they truly belong.

We actively welcome applications from individuals who are underrepresented in our workforce, including people from global majority backgrounds, those with a declared disability, LGBTQI+ individuals and women. By bringing together a wide range of perspectives, experiences and talents, we can make a real difference together.

Useful links

[University Website >](#)

[Alumni and Giving >](#)

[Annual Report and Accounts >](#)

[Our identity and brand >](#)





Graduate

Class of 2023



UNIVERSITY
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