

ThinkForward

Director of Fundraising & Strategic Partnerships

Job information pack



About ThinkForward

ThinkForward exists to support young people to create better and brighter futures. We want them to be able to identify, realise and shape their aspirations and be ready to make a successful transition into work.

Young people experiencing barriers such as challenging relationships, living in low-income households, or growing up in areas with a lack of access to opportunities can be confronted with hurdles. Without the right support, these barriers can lead to a high risk of unemployment and long-term effects on career and life chances.

There are more than one million 16-24-year-olds in the UK who are not at school or college, or don't have a job or training place. Our ambition is to prevent young people becoming one of these statistics.

In 2026, we are supporting more than 1,500 young people.

For more information on ThinkForward, our vision and mission, our programmes and equalities manifesto, please visit [our website](#).



Our values

Our values are more than words; they are the principles that guide our actions and decisions every day. By embodying these values, we create a positive and empowering environment for ourselves, our colleagues, and the young people we serve.

Read more about how our values are embedded in our work [here](#).



Authentic



Collaborative



Compassionate



Inclusive



Innovative



Our EDI manifesto

ThinkForward is committed to being a place where all can thrive. We place equity, diversity and inclusion at the heart of all we do as an employer, in our work with young people and within our sphere of influence. We value authenticity, compassion, collaboration, inclusion and innovation, and are intentional about underpinning these values with equity, diversity and inclusion practices.

We are working to create a world where our young people are more likely to thrive, and the absence of uniformity is considered a strength. We are wholeheartedly committed to continuously learning, challenging the status quo and creating a space where people's ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, disabilities, learning abilities or socio-economic origins are not the defining characteristics of their potential for success. We ensure that all voices are heard and that each person's strengths are valued and utilised.

To embed our manifesto into ThinkForward practices, our EDI group is committed to continuous implementation and monitoring of key areas including representation, learning and education, policies and procedures, and accountability.

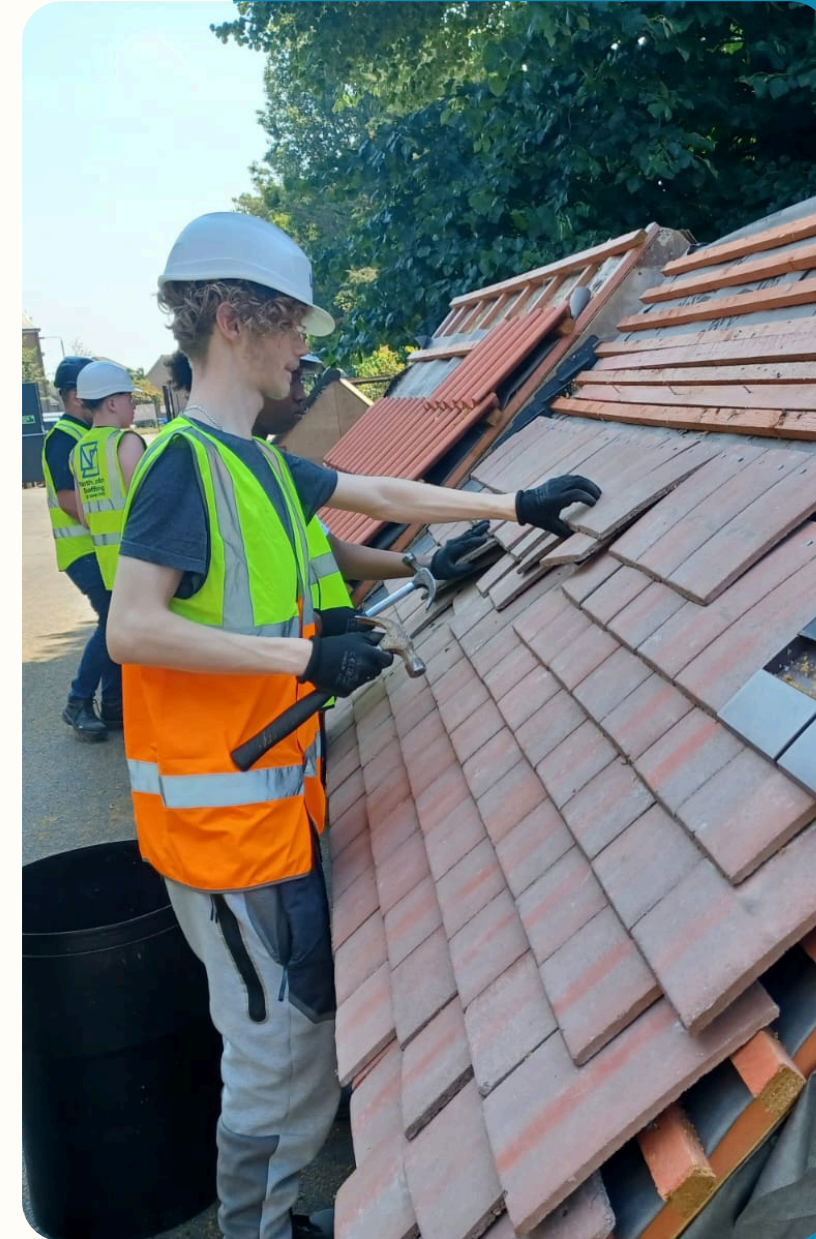


About our programmes

FutureMe

The FutureMe programme provides five years of personalised coaching and employability activities to get young people ready for the world of work. Coaches build trusted relationships, supporting young people to take control, find solutions to challenges, develop skills and create a positive vision for their future.

Specialised ready for work activities support young people to get familiar with the workplace, become inspired and identify a pathway to their chosen career. We run this programme in 15 schools in North and East London, Nottingham and Kent.



About our programmes

Work Forward

The Work Forward programme operates in London, Kent, and Nottingham, working with young adults aged 16 – 24 who reside in low-income households to support them into sustainable paid employment.

The programme provides young people with a specialist Progression Coach for up to one year. Coaches offer support through one-to-one coaching sessions, group workshops and facilitating employer connections.

Young people on the programme have access to a range of support to help them identify their future aspirations, develop their skills, access peer support, and ultimately secure paid employment.



About our programmes

Future Leaders

The Future Leaders programme works with young Black men and young Black and Asian women that are at risk of exclusion or have been excluded from mainstream school.

In London, young Black students are more likely to be excluded from school than white British students and young Black men experience disproportionately high unemployment rates.

To tackle these issues, Future Leaders supports Black students in alternative provisions and schools to make a successful transition into a post-16 destination, overcome the barriers they may face such as a lack of networks, social capital and soft skills, and prepare them to be ready to find a fulfilling career.



About the role

Our Director of Fundraising and Strategic Partnerships is a pivotal executive leadership role, that will transform income generation into a partnership-led growth engine for ThinkForward.

Purpose:

To lead and embed a strategic partnership ecosystem that delivers sustainable, diversified income growth; access to commissioned and place-based funding; scalable delivery routes; and increased influence in policy and practice.

The post holder will personally originate, shape and close major funding and partnership opportunities with senior stakeholders.

Strategic focus:

- Act as executive relationship lead for government, local authorities, commissioners and major stakeholders.
- Increase access to public-sector funding, commissioning and multi-year partnership agreements.
- Diversify income across statutory, corporate and trusts and foundations funding streams.
- Turn system-level partnerships into delivery settings, national reach and more young people supported.

Why it matters:

The role enables ThinkForward to move from transactional partnerships to system-level influence and secure a share of £1bn+ public funding flows linked to youth outcomes.



For the full job description, please [click here](#).

What we're looking for



Experience

Senior leadership in fundraising, partnerships or public-sector engagement; securing six- and seven-figure multi-year partnerships; Board-level influence across public, private and voluntary sectors.



Executive capability

Exceptional relationship-building, commercial thinking and the ability to shape complex funding propositions in political, policy and commissioning environments.



Leadership

Able to lead high-performing teams, build pipeline and CRM discipline, and balance strategic thinking with hands-on execution.



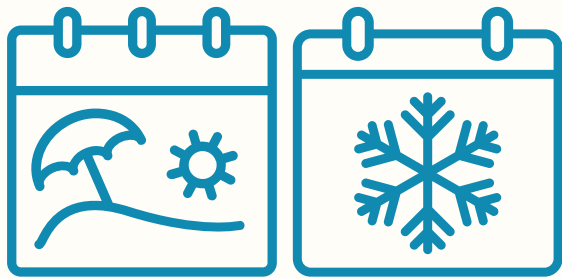
Knowledge & attributes:

Understands public-sector commissioning, place-based funding and the charity funding landscape; outward-facing, entrepreneurial, values-driven, collaborative and systems-oriented.



For the full job description, please [click here](#).

Benefits



Leave

- 25 days annual leave, increasing after 2 years
- Flexible bank holidays
- Christmas office closure



Employee experience

- Staff Engagement Group
- EDI working group
- Regular staff feedback survey
- Regular team away days



Wellbeing support

- Wellbeing leave
- Confidential 24/7 helpline through our Employee Assistance Programme
- Eyecare scheme



Financial schemes

- Employee loans
- Cycle to work scheme
- Employee discounts & rewards scheme



Employer pension contributions

- We provide 4.5% pension contributions

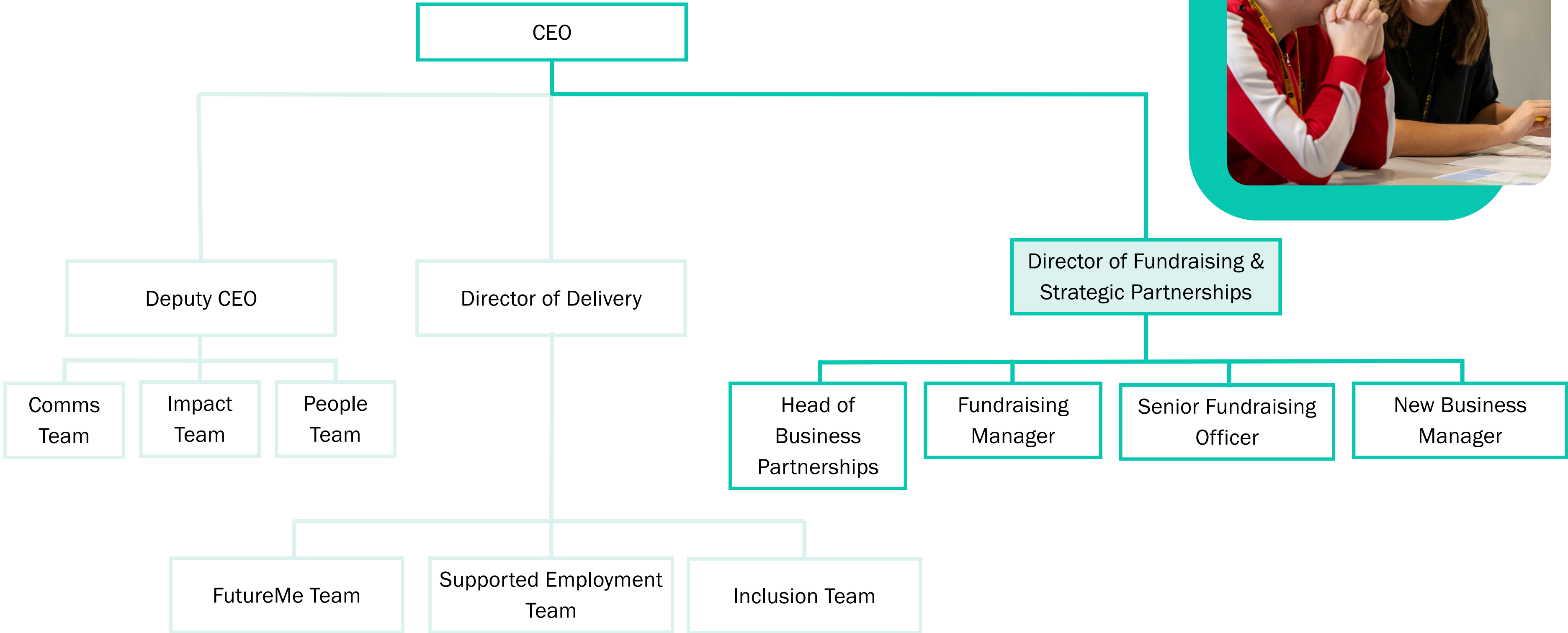


Training & development

- Regular CPD opportunities including coaching qualifications



Team structure



Application details

Contract: Permanent, full-time
Salary: ca. £75,000 (depending on experience)
Location: London / Hybrid

How to apply

Please send your CV and a covering letter (maximum two pages) to jobs@thinkforward.org.uk.

Your covering letter should tell us why you're interested in the role and how your skills and experience match the person specification outlined in [this job description](#).

If you'd like an informal conversation about the role before applying, we'd be delighted to arrange a confidential discussion with our CEO, Ashley McCaul.

We are committed to making our recruitment process accessible. If you require any reasonable adjustments at any stage of the application process, including submitting your application in an alternative format, please contact jobs@thinkforward.org.uk and we'll be happy to help.

At ThinkForward, we might use technology to help us to manage the recruitment process, but we don't make decisions based on AI. We have a human approach to hiring and all applications are reviewed and assessed by our team. Similarly, what we are most interested in hearing about is your individual motivation, experience, skills and values. AI may be a helpful tool, but typically leads to generic answers, not stand out applications. Please make sure that your responses reflect your own thoughts and experiences.

Please note: We are managing this recruitment process directly and are not seeking support from recruitment agencies or consultants. We kindly ask that you do not contact us about this vacancy. Thank you for your understanding.



Our principles

ThinkForward is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and post holders to share this commitment.

ThinkForward is committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and applications from individuals are encouraged regardless of age, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships.

As a registered Disability Confident employer, ThinkForward has an accessible recruitment process. We offer interviews to all applicants who meet the job requirements and who declare themselves as having a disability. If you need support, such as materials in larger print, dyslexic-friendly fonts or adjustments for the interview, please contact jobs@thinkforward.org.uk and we will ensure you have what you require to successfully complete this process.



ThinkForward



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www.thinkforward.org.uk



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ThinkForward is a charity registered with the Charity Commission.
Registration number 1152862.