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Dear Candidate,

Thank you for considering applying to become the next Chief Executive of the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC). The vacancy has arisen due to Pamela Tulloch's future retirement.

SLIC is in a strong position, and we are seeking a new chief executive committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion who shares our values and will work to maintain and further develop everything that has been achieved.

We are excited about SLIC's future and ambitious in our plans. Our leadership reputation is well known within the library world, and we were the first in the UK to establish sector strategies for Scotland's public and school libraries. Our key priorities of advocacy, standards, innovation, partnerships, funding, and evidence-based research remain relevant in our role to promote, protect and develop the sector. However, we are currently reviewing our strategy, business and implementation plans. This presents a unique opportunity for the new Chief Executive to influence their development and take accountability for their delivery, shaping the future of SLIC.

Stakeholder relationships are the lifeblood of the organisation. As the new Chief Executive, your role in maintaining and building on these with our members across the Scottish libraries and information services footprint, the Scottish Government, Local Government, and their agencies is vital to our future success. This candidate brief tells you much more about SLIC, the Chief Executive role, and the application process.

I am proud to be Chair of SLIC and will miss my professional working relationship with Pamela. However, I look forward to supporting our new Chief Executive in our crucial work. You can expect the warm and full support of a highly knowledgeable, professional, and collegiate Board committed to the success of SLIC and its new Chief Executive.

We look forward to receiving your application as this is your opportunity to lead a national organisation and influence its future development.

Very best wishes,



**Alan Clarke**

Chair, The Scottish Library and Information Council



The Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) is an impressive and dynamic organisation which leads the way for Scotland's libraries. The Scottish library community is a healthy and vibrant sector which contributes to the wellbeing of national life.

Established in 1991, SLIC is the independent advisory body to the Scottish Government on library and information services. SLIC's vision is to enrich lives through libraries and its mission is to ensure Scotland's libraries reach their full potential through collaboration, innovation and national conversation.

SLIC nurtures and encourages innovation through its annual £1M+ grant making process. Many of these supported initiatives are groundbreaking and world leading. SLIC is a strong partner within the culture community in Scotland and collaborates with leading agencies to deliver Scotland-wide initiatives which support literacy and reading. SLIC manages Every Child a Library Member – a programme which encourages parents to register children with libraries from birth in recognition of the fact that children who regularly use libraries in early years achieve better attainment.

SLIC has amplified the role which the library sector plays with not only digital inclusion but also digital innovation. This has enabled people from all backgrounds to further their digital literacy and economic wellbeing journeys. Specifics include the roll out of 3D printers, the application of virtual reality within community settings and the emergence of AI for libraries. SLIC is an active member of the Scottish Digital Inclusion Alliance.

SLIC has pioneered the role which the library sector can play in the drive to Net Zero with the introduction of Lend and Mend Hubs and Shelf Life, a national climate engagement programme. This work has been showcased on a global platform and through the Green Libraries Network.

The NHS, The Alliance and SLIC collaborate to deliver A Collective Force for Health and Wellbeing which has seen libraries augment their role to support health and wellbeing in the community through programmes like NHS Near Me, Alzheimer's and Diabetes information hubs and audiology support.

SLIC leads on national policy for public and school libraries. Clear direction for the sectors has attracted additional funding, encouraged stronger participation and built communities of interest. This cohesive approach to library development is the envy of jurisdictions elsewhere.

Independent research to evidence impact of both initiatives and services within the community in which libraries operate is commissioned on a regular basis by SLIC. This evidence based research is used by the library sector, their employers, the Scottish Government and other library related agencies from around the globe to demonstrate the added value which libraries offer.

Although a small organisation with eight employees, SLIC substantially punches above its weight and serves as a beacon for Scottish Libraries. It is managed by a Board of Trustees and is a registered charity and limited company.



Reporting to the SLIC Board, the Chief Executive will be responsible for the operational and financial management of the charity ensuring it provides leadership, focus and support to its membership so that ultimately peoples' lives are enriched through libraries.

As Chief Executive you will liaise with Scottish Government Ministers and Officials, COSLA, key stakeholders, and library and information strategists across the UK and beyond to promote and advance the library sector whilst also ensuring SLIC is responsive to the external environment and changing needs of its members.

To have a **positive impact** in this role you will:

- Work with the Board and other key stakeholders to develop and implement SLIC's new strategic plan ensuring alignment with Scottish Government's National Performance Framework, current and future needs of Members, and Forward: Scotland's Public Library Strategy 2021-2025
- Working collaboratively with members and key partners to ensure both the wide range of activities and positive societal impact of libraries is understood and acknowledged by all key stakeholders and the public
- Ensure SLIC continues to encourage and promote innovation, collaboration and partnership working across the sector whilst also commissioning and undertaking sector leading research and robust independent evaluation
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with key external stakeholders, including, but not limited to, Scottish Ministers, Politicians and Senior Officials to promote and advance the library sector whilst also amplifying the important role libraries play in strengthening and empowering communities
- Maintain and further develop SLIC's profile, activities and impact to key decision makers, ensuring SLIC continues to play a leading role in developing and shaping policy as an independent and trusted voice within the library sector
- Ensure SLIC continues to effectively advocate on behalf of its members and the wider library sector
- Positively influence standards of practice and promote best practice across the library sector, utilising peer assessment as appropriate, through programmes such as *How Good is our Public Library Service?* and *How Good is Our School Library?*
- Ensure SLIC effectively responds to the changing needs of our member and external political landscape so that members feel supported to reach their full potential
- In response to the ongoing and challenging financial environment, identify opportunities to diversify income for SLIC aligned to our core mission and purpose whilst also maximising funding opportunities for the library sector





- Provide leadership and support to ensure all staff work co-operatively and effectively to deliver SLIC's key strategic priorities
- Lead by example, adopting a style which inspires, empowers and develops staff to fulfil their potential and deliver high levels of performance
- Develop and implement policies, services and activities that meet the needs of members and key stakeholders, including the Scottish Government and other grant funders
- Ensure effective systems of robust governance and risk management are in place and regularly reviewed so that the Board and its Committees are fully informed and can operate effectively
- Provide professional advice to the Board and its Committees in all aspects of charity governance, including short- and long-term strategic planning for the ongoing fulfilment of the organisation's charitable objectives and financial welfare, as well as relevant environmental, social and governance considerations
- Work with the Treasurer and SLIC's Finance Partner to ensure financial reports provide a fair and true record of financial performance, meet financial compliance, and achieve unqualified audits





- Ensure all government-funded programmes and projects are administered effectively, efficiently, and managed to a high standard within time, quality, and budget
- As an ambassador and champion for SLIC, promote and build the positive profile of the organisation locally, nationally and internationally and effectively represent SLIC's work and members' views to key stakeholders and partners, representative organisations, the media and the general public
- Work closely with SLIC's PR and Media partners to ensure a strategic approach to external communications that meets the needs of the organisation, supports positive PR on behalf of the sector and effectively positions SLIC with both its members and key stakeholders and ensures recognition of its impact and influence on the library sector across Scotland
- Encourage collaborative working across the library sector in Scotland and beyond whilst also identifying best practice examples and disseminate them across the library sector (Local Authorities and charitable trusts, Higher Education, Further Education, NHS Trust library services, Specialist Libraries, School Libraries and Information Services)
- Effectively engage with stakeholder groups, members, representative organisations, and local and national governments including, but not exclusive to, COSLA, the National Library of Scotland, the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals Scotland, Museums and Galleries Scotland, Scottish Archives Council, Scottish Book Trust, and Creative Scotland, to maximise collaborative working and initiatives
- Through the benchmarking of local and international practice, ensure SLIC plays a leading role in the world of libraries and information





Demonstrating a proven track record of strategic leadership and evidence of creative thinking, the successful candidate will bring strong communication and influencing skills coupled with the ability to work with a diverse range of stakeholders, create alliances and encourage increased collaboration.

## Skills & Experience

- A strong understanding of the current issues and relevant policy landscape within Scotland's library and information sector
- Relevant experience gained at a senior or executive level
- A proven track record of managing, motivating and developing staff
- Direct experience of effectively managing resources and budgets, as well as experience of delivering long-term financial sustainability and value for money
- Experience of leading both strategic and operational planning processes
- Strong stakeholder management experience coupled with a proven track record in building and maintaining a wide range of collaborative relationships and partnerships
- Relevant experience in delivering innovation and change and engaging staff around a culture of continuous improvement
- Strong ambassadorial and presentation skills with the ability to express views convincingly and coherently using a variety of media
- Strong political acuity and the ability to effectively advocate on behalf of its members and the wider library sector
- The ability to work effectively under pressure and to respond positively to challenge
- Intellectual flexibility to move easily between significant detail and the bigger picture
- A willingness to listen and take opinions of internal and external stakeholders into account
- Experience of dealing with a range of complex issues in both a political and demanding stakeholder environment
- A good understanding of positive governance; ideally direct experience of working with a voluntary board
- Exercises good judgement, confident in own knowledge, able to give advice to others and be accountable for that advice
- High levels of personal and professional integrity, and significant drive and resilience





The role offers a competitive salary and generous benefits package including either a Strathclyde Pension (Defined Benefit) or Workplace Pension (Defined Contribution) scheme and 37 days annual leave (including public holidays).

## The Recruitment Process

The recruitment for this position is being managed by our advising consultants, Livingston James.

Livingston James will conduct initial conversations prior to discussing candidates with SLIC at the shortlist meeting.

Interested candidates should provide a tailored CV and covering letter, outlining their interest and suitability, to [douglasadam@livingstonjames.com](mailto:douglasadam@livingstonjames.com).

### Recruitment Timetable:

Closing Date for Applications:	Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> May
Shortlist meeting (SLIC & Livingston James):	Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> June
Panel Interviews:	Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> June

*The Scottish Library & Information Council is an equal opportunities employer and positively encourages applications from suitably qualified and eligible candidates regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital status or pregnancy and maternity.*

