JOB TITLE:	**Head of Major Gifts**
DIVISION/DEPARTMENT:	**Development**

1. OVERALL PURPOSE OF JOB

BirdLife International is seeking a strategic and hands-on Head of Major Gifts to lead and grow its major and principal gift fundraising globally. This role is based in the UK with a global remit, and will be both player and coach: personally developing and managing a portfolio of donors and prospects from £250k up to £1m+, working closely with the Chief Development Officer on principal-level (£1m+) relationships, and leading a team spanning the UK and US markets.

Reporting to the Chief Development Officer, the Head of Major Gifts will play a critical role in growing BirdLife's high-value individual giving income, providing the hands-on role-modelling, coaching, and personal fundraising credibility needed to develop both the team and the portfolio.

2. STAFF RELATIONSHIPS

REPORTING TO (LINE MANAGER):
Chief Development Officer
REPORTING TO JOB HOLDER (LINE MANAGED STAFF):
Associate Director of Development, Individuals (US), Major Gifts Manager (UK), Major Gifts Officer (UK)
PRINCIPAL STAFF RELATIONSHIPS/RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN SECRETARIAT
Provision of information to all levels of BirdLife staff both in the UK and overseas.
PRINCIPAL STAFF RELATIONSHIPS/RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN BIRDLIFE NETWORK
Provision of information to all BirdLife Partner's staff.

3. KEY WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

- Chief Development Officer – partner on principal gift (£1m+) cultivation and solicitation, and on overall Major Gifts strategy.
- Head of Trusts & Foundations – partner on transformational, cross-team opportunities and joint prospect management via the Principal Gifts Working Group.
- Head of Institutional Funding – partner on "smart" restricted fundraising and build an ecosystem of lightly restricted donors to complement Institutional funding
- Prospect Research & Insights Manager – development reporting, pipeline insights, and prospect identification for major and principal gifts.
- Head of Stewardship & Development Comms – partner on donor stewardship and donor-facing materials for major and principal gift audiences.
- Deputy Chief Development Officer – partner on reporting, impact, and organisational change.
- Development Management Team – Partner with fellow Heads of teams to steward the Development programme at BirdLife and collectively lead transformational change, especially the shared delivery of the Development strategy
- Conservation, Regions, Science, and Policy teams – partner on fundraising proposals and aligning donor interests with programme needs.

Contact	Level (1-3)	Contact	Level (1-3)	Contact	Level (1-3)
BirdLife Network Organisation Staff	2	General Public	2	Institutional policy makers /Politicians/ Corporations	1
BirdLife Advisory Groups, Committees, Reg. Councils	2	Press & Media	1	Institutional Funders	1
BirdLife Global Council	2	Regulators/Legislators/ Auditors	1	Individual donors/ members	3
Suppliers/Service Providers	2	Scientific Community	1	Royalty/VIPs/ High worth Individuals	3

Level of Contact
1.= General Informing. "Appearance, first impressions". May have some independent outside exposure and contact, primarily informative.
2.= Presenting/Representing/Reporting "Relationship management". Frequent exposure representing BirdLife. Maintaining individual contacts. Frequently managing information flow.
3.= Justifying/Negotiating - "Influencing decision makers". Frequent exposure as lead contact, representing Birdlife to highly influential people. Responsible for complex and sensitive/high risk communications.

4. MAIN DUTIES/WORK PROGRAMME RESPONSIBILITIES

By main work area:

Key Responsibilities

Fundraising Strategy & Leadership

- Develop and execute a major and principal gifts strategy to grow high-value individual giving across the UK, US, and other global markets, in partnership with the CDO.
- Lead, coach, and develop the Major Gifts team — Major Gifts Manager, Major Gifts Officer and Associate Director of Development, Individuals (US) — providing direct, hands-on role-modelling in cultivation and solicitation.
- Represent Major Gifts on the Development Management team to steward the Development programme at BirdLife and collectively lead transformational change, especially the shared delivery of the Development strategy
- Represent Major Gifts on the Principal Gifts Working Group, working with the CDO, Deputy CDO, Head of Stewardship & Development Comms, Head of Trusts & Foundations and Prospect Research & Insights Manager to address growth barriers and progress the organisation's highest-value opportunities

Donor Portfolio and Engagement

- Identify opportunities to grow BirdLife's donor base in key regions, particularly in the U.S. and Europe
- Personally develop and manage a portfolio of £250k–£1m+ donors and prospects, and provide direct, hands-on support to the CDO on principal-level (£1m+) relationships and proposals.
- Cultivate, solicit, and steward relationships with high-net-worth individuals and major donors to secure transformational gifts.
- Ensure each member of the team undertakes new business activity to build a robust pipeline within designated markets and giving levels, feeding future portfolio growth for the team.

- Work closely with the Associate Director of Development, Individuals (US) to concentrate US growth efforts on the highest-capacity prospects, expanding market coverage as growth targets are met.
- Develop and deliver compelling donor proposals, reports and materials for major and principal gift prospects.
- Work closely with the Chief Development Officer, senior leadership, and programme teams to align fundraising efforts with BirdLife's global conservation priorities.

Performance and Reporting:

- Set and monitor major gifts income targets and performance goals; track progress and pipeline health and provide regular reports to leadership on revenue generation and donor engagement and take corrective actions as needed
- Partner with the Deputy CDO on development team reporting including annual work plans, Finance Committee and Council Reports and the Fundraising Approach Implementation Plan
- Manage the Major Gifts team budget, recruitment, and resource allocation.

Development team culture

- Embody and demonstrate BirdLife values and a high performing team culture
- Meet commitments and ensure ethical compliance with BirdLife policies and procedures, financial standards, and legal requirements

5. LIMITS OF AUTHORITY/RESPONSIBILITY FOR RESOURCES

RESPONSIBILITY AREA	LEVEL OF AUTHORITY
Financial/Budgetary	Yes, Major Gifts budget
Contracts – Funders	Yes.
Contracts – Staff/Consultants	Yes
Contracts – Service providers	Unlikely
Legal Responsibility	Yes, to work with Legal Team on any due diligence concerns with respect to donors
Other	Handling confidential information.

6. EDUCATION/SKILLS AND OTHER SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

REQUIREMENTS	KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS/ATTRIBUTES
Minimum General Education	- Bachelor's degree and 7–10 years' related experience, or equivalent experience in a relevant field (Essential).

Job Specific Education/ Qualification	- Experience with Raiser's Edge or a comparable fundraising CRM (Desirable). - Strong financial and IT literacy (Essential).
Job Specific Knowledge	- Expert knowledge of current and evolving major/principal gifts fundraising practice (Essential). - Good understanding of climate, biodiversity, civil society, and nature conservation issues, or willingness to learn (Essential). - Solid knowledge of fundraising databases, data strategy, and analytics (Desirable). - Willingness to learn relevant UK/US data protection legislation and industry regulations (Essential). - Expert knowledge of best practices in development and non-profit management (Essential). - Knowledge of gift planning (Desirable).
Experience	- Experience personally raising six- and seven-figure gifts from individuals (Essential). - Experience building and maintaining long-term relationships with major and principal gift donors (Essential). - Experience of successfully developing and delivering a major gifts/principal gifts strategy (Essential). - Experience coaching or line-managing fundraisers to develop their own donor relationships (Essential). - Experience working in an international, complex, not-for-profit environment (Essential). - Experience working at a local, national or international conservation organization (Desirable). - Experience managing a geographically dispersed team, in particular the United States (Desirable). - Experience explaining complex, scientific issues to varied audiences (Desirable). - Multi-lingual skills and multi-cultural experience desirable (Desirable).
Management & organisational skills	- Experience managing a small major gifts team, including budgetary responsibility (Essential). - Highly organised, evidence-based, results-focused self-starter (Essential). - Strong project management skills, including delivery to timescales and budgets (Essential). - Excellent problem-solving skills and a solutions focussed approach (Essential). - Keen attention to detail balanced with excellent time management (Essential). - Ability to work independently and as part of a team (Essential). - Experience and interest in partnering with Development leadership on strategy (Desirable)
Communications skills	- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, and able to present complex information clearly to varied audiences (Essential).

	- Ability to work collaboratively across teams and with external stakeholders using a partnerships approach (Essential). - Ability to work well with people from a wide variety of backgrounds (Essential).
Creativity & Initiative	- Positive, open-minded attitude embracing continuous improvement (Desirable). - Adaptable to using varied and changing approaches to solve problems (Desirable).
Computer Literacy	- Proficient use of MS365 suite of applications with advanced MS Excel skills (Essential). - Proficient use of Raiser's Edge or a comparable fundraising CRM (Essential).
Languages	- English (Essential); additional languages (Desirable)
Travel requirements	- Willingness to travel for donor meetings and organisational events, including to the US (Essential).
OTHER DESIRED/HELPFUL KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS/ATTRIBUTES	
- Understanding of tax rules related to charitable donations in UK, USA and other countries.	

Prepared by:	**Date:**
Emma Bolton	August 2026