Director (Maternity Cover)

Recruitment pack

October 2026

Criminal Justice Alliance
88 Old Street, London, EC1V 9HU
Registered charity number: 1143038

www.criminaljusticealliance.org

Why join the Criminal Justice Alliance?

A message from our Chair

Thank you for your interest in the Criminal Justice Alliance (CJA). I'm delighted you're considering joining us.

We aren't just one organisation; we are a powerful collective of over 200 members spanning every corner of the criminal justice system. Our network brings together charities, academics and individuals with lived and professional experience.

We pride ourselves on being the only completely independent member body in the criminal justice sector. This independence gives us the freedom to speak truth to power, challenge the status quo, and advocate for a criminal justice system that is truly fair and effective.

This is a critical moment to lead the Criminal Justice Alliance as we approach our 20th anniversary in 2027. You will work closely with our members to operationalise our 2027–30 strategy, provide steady leadership for our small but mighty team, and ensure our ongoing financial sustainability through continued fundraising which is challenging in the current environment.

This is a varied and key leadership role responsible for maintaining CJA's profile, amplifying the work of our 200+ members, and driving systemic change across the criminal justice system.

We are committed to building a diverse team. We particularly encourage applications from Black, Asian, and minoritised communities, people who identify as LGBTQ+, disabled people, and those with lived experience of the criminal justice system.

If you have the experience, commitment, and steady hand needed to lead us through the next year, I look forward to receiving your application.

Dr Gemma Birkett, Chair

About the CJA

The Criminal Justice Alliance (CJA) advocates for a fair and effective justice system. Our insight comes from our members: over 200 non-profit organisations and academics with expertise across the UK justice system. We investigate key issues in criminal justice, co-produce evidence-led briefings and reports with our members to influence policy change. We connect practitioners, academics, the media, people with lived experience and policy makers from across the justice system to hold the government and other institutions to account and to promote power sharing. Read our latest Annual Report here.

Our vision and mission

Our vision is of a fair and effective criminal justice system that works well for everyone and leads to a more equitable society.

Our mission is to achieve sustainable, systemic change, through the collective power of our membership network.

Our strengths

1

The ability to guide change through a whole-system view

As a broad network, our members enable us to visualise the whole criminal justice system (CJS), connecting dots that are impossible for most to see. In turn, we formulate sensible ways to drive forward systemic change. Our strong links to policy makers, the bodies overseeing the system and those experiencing the CJS ensure that our proposals are sensible and sustainable. We also identify and share innovation, good practice and policy solutions both nationally and internationally.

2

The depth and breadth of our membership

We represent members from across the full spectrum of the CJS. This includes charities, research institutions and staff associations. By hearing a wide range of voices we are well-positioned to navigate change on issues including prevention, policing, courts, prisons, probation and victims' services. Our insights garnered from our members also enable us to tackle cross-cutting and intersecting topics such as racial inequality and gives us an important understanding of related social justice issues like housing and mental health.

3

The freedom to take action and raise issues on injustices

We take action against unfair, harmful and ineffective policies and practices. We hold key decision makers and public bodies to account because we do not accept any public funding.

Criminal Justice Alliance

Our Values

Our approach to work also ensures that our internal working reflects our external goals. We always aim to be:

Collaborative: We co-design and co-produce our work with members, people with lived experience and others in a meaningful and inclusive way.

Constructive: We find common ground, recognise positives, identify solutions and embed restorative principles.

Challenging: We take bold action against unfair, harmful and ineffective policies and practices. We challenge ourselves to reflect, learn and be ambitious.

Empowering: We build the capacity, confidence and influence of our members and people with lived experience to achieve positive change.

Evidence-led: We carry out research and draw on the expertise of our members, people with lived experience, academics and others to guide our work and inform the findings and recommendations we make.

Equitable: We embed principles of fairness, transparency, equality, diversity and inclusion in our work and organisation.

Role summary

Job Title:	Director (maternity cover)
Start:	January 2027
Management:	Fundraising and Impact Manager, Policy and Communications Officer (to be recruited) and Finance Administrator
Contract	One year, fixed term subject to funding
Location	Hybrid with at least 1 day a week in London office (EC1V) and attendance of external meetings and events as required.
Responsible to:	Board of Trustees
Salary:	£75,000
Hours:	Full time, 35 hours a week
Benefits:	25 days holiday per annum Flexible working. Employer pension contribution 7%. Cycle to work scheme. Christmas holiday closure.

Main tasks and responsibilities

Leadership and management

- Full day-to-day responsibility for management and administration of the charity, including management of the team of 3 people.
- Publishing and implementing CJA's strategy, including setting appropriate targets and reviewing progress against plans.
- Providing leadership to the CJA staff, ensuring a supportive, empowering environment where staff are inspired, motivated, valued and performing to their full potential.
- Maintain high standards of governance (including preparation of Board and Sub-committee meetings, papers and regular updates) and ensure the CJA complies with all financial, legislative and regulatory requirements.

Fundraising

- Drive the fundraising strategy and oversee income generation, working closely with the Fundraising and Impact Manager to maintain donor relationships, identify high-value opportunities, and secure long-term funding.
- Cultivate strong relationships with new and existing funders, championing the CJA's mission to increase, diversify, and future-proof revenue streams.
- Maintain oversight of impact monitoring and reporting to funders.

External relations

- Lead the organisation's external influencing work and profile-raising with a view to effecting long term systems change.
- Represent the CJA on public platforms, e.g. before Select Committees, and acting as a spokesperson for the organisation.
- Lead distinct influencing projects focusing on diversion from the criminal justice system and racial justice, alongside CJA members.
- Develop and maintain key strategic partnerships in line with the CJA's objectives.
- Oversee the management of events, including our annual Research Symposium and Awards.

Finance

- Work with CJA's external bookkeeper to ensure all accounting records, including management accounts and forecasts are accurate.
- Present management accounts, forecasts, budgets and cashflow reports to the quarterly Finance & Resources Committee and Board meetings.
- Ensure that statutory accounts are prepared and reviewed by the Board and the Independent Examiner.

Person Specification

The CJA is committed to achieving greater diversity in its staff and trustees. We actively encourage applications from people with protected characteristics and people with lived experience of any aspect of the criminal justice system, personally or through a close relative or friend. This includes having served a sentence. Please list any relevant experience in your supporting statement and explain why it strengthens your suitability for the role.

Essential Criteria

- Strongly motivated by and committed to the CJA's vision, mission and strategic objectives.
- Proven senior leadership experience with a demonstrable track record of operating at Director or CEO level (or equivalent) within a small-to-medium charity
- Deep understanding of charity governance, risk management, and working effectively with a Board of Trustees to ensure regulatory compliance and robust decision-making.
- Proven ability to step quickly into an established organisation, build trust with a small team, and maintain operational momentum and staff well-being.
- Track record of securing multi-year grant funding, stewarding high-value trust/foundation relationships, and working alongside specialist fundraising staff to diversify revenue streams.
- Strong experience managing organisational budgets, dynamic cash flow forecasting, and presenting management accounts alongside external finance professionals.
- Substantial experience driving policy change, campaigning, or public affairs initiatives within the criminal justice sector
- Confident public communicator with experience representing an organisation on national platforms, before parliamentary bodies (e.g., Select Committees), or in high-level coalition spaces.
- Strong experience of overseeing national events, ensuring deliverables are on time and within budget.
- Excellent networker with a collaborative mindset, able to build authentic partnerships across a diverse membership base and external stakeholders.
- Demonstrated commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion in both workplace culture and external influencing work

Desirable Criteria

- Understanding of the dynamics, governance, and engagement models specific to membership alliances or networks.
- Lived experience of the criminal justice system

No job description can cover every aspect of the post and the post holder is expected to carry out additional duties and responsibilities according to the needs of the organisation. Demonstrating agility and flexibility as a leader is a key requirement for this role.

Guaranteed Interview Scheme

As a Second Chance Charter employer, we actively encourage applications from people with lived experience of the criminal justice system.

We guarantee to interview anyone with lived experience whose application meets the minimum criteria for the role. The minimum criteria means the Essential criteria outlined in the Person Specification and at least one of the Desirable criteria.

Please indicate in your application that you wish to be considered under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme and provide us with evidence in your application which demonstrates that you meet the minimum criteria.

How to apply

Please send a copy of your CV (no more than four pages) and a supporting statement (of no more than 500 words) outlining your interest in joining the CJA, and the skills, experience and motivation you would bring to the organisation. Please also provide details of two referees, one of which should be current or former employer.

Applications – marked 'Application: Director (maternity cover) – should be sent to recruitment@criminaljusticealliance.org.uk. If you would like to discuss any reasonable adjustments you may need for interview, please advise us in your application.

Please also return this **Equity and Diversity Monitoring Form** **(click to download)**. This will be separated from your application upon receipt.

Queries

If you would like to have an informal conversation about the role please contact Nicola Dawn, Director at Nicola.dawn@criminaljusticealliance.org.uk or Gemma Birkett, Chair at Gemma.Birkett.1@citystgeorges.ac.uk to arrange a time.

Key dates

- Application deadline: 9am on 13th November
- First interviews (online): 20th November
- Second interviews (in-person): 25th November