



POSITIVE FUTURES

ACHIEVING DREAMS. TRANSFORMING LIVES.

An Assignment Brief...

For the position of:

Chief Executive Officer

With:

Positive Futures

Prepared For:

Dr. Agnes Lunny OBE, CEO

Prepared By:

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Foreword

Thank you for the interest you have shown in the role of Chief Executive at Positive Futures.

I trust this Assignment Brief will prove to be a useful tool in helping you to discover more about Positive Futures and this exciting role.

If you are interested in this opportunity and believe you possess the exceptional skills, experience, drive, values and enthusiasm required for the role, we would be delighted to receive your application.

Positive Futures was established in 1995 with the sole aim of providing individually tailored innovative, community-based services to people with a learning / intellectual disability, acquired brain injury or autism and their families across Northern Ireland.

In 2016, we established a sister organisation in Ireland, bringing our innovative approach and behavioural support expertise to individuals and families across the island of Ireland. In August 2022, we acquired through a membership transfer arrangement, a small, parent-led service and approved housing body, the National Association of Housing for Visually Impaired (NAHVI) supporting adults with an intellectual disability and visual impairment.

Where others see problems, we see possibilities. Positive Futures has transformed lives and continues to do so. In addition to providing services to individuals, families and carers we are strong advocates, speaking out for equal rights and lobbying at local and national level to ensure that public services are the best they can be for the individuals and families supported. We are committed to working in partnership and have delivered a number of projects in collaboration with a range of organisations from the statutory, community and voluntary sectors.

Our headquarters are in Bangor, Co Down, and, across the island of Ireland, we have almost 800 employees and support over 450 people. We receive funding from statutory organisations, charitable trusts and individuals.

John Alexander, Chair of Trustees NI and Fiona Keogh, Chair of Trustees, IRL & NAVHI.

The Organisation

Since its establishment in 1995, Positive Futures has provided a wide range of innovative services for children and adults with a learning/intellectual disability, acquired brain injury or autism, and their families. Co-founded by Dr. Agnes Lunny OBE, whose values, vision and passion have continually shaped the organisation, Positive Futures has expanded its services in terms of scope and geography across the island of Ireland and has gained a formidable reputation both as an innovator in the sector and for its authentic commitment to improving the lives of those individuals it supports.

Positive Futures supports hundreds of people including children, young people and adults, as well as their families and carers and the organisation has a turnover of circa £23 million. Everything Positive Futures does is tailored to the individual, because Positive Futures knows that one size doesn't fit all and that no two people are the same. With over 30 years of delivering support to those most in need, Positive Futures remains deeply committed to delivering more and better support across the island of Ireland.

This commitment is reflected in their forward-looking [Corporate Plan](#), which sets out clear ambitions for the coming years, focusing on delivering excellent person-centred support, attracting and developing the best staff, growing and diversifying services, strengthening systems, and ensuring long-term sustainability. Central to this is a strong belief that people are most important, alongside a focus on innovation, sustainability, and continuous improvement. We invite applicants to watch this short [video](#) to learn more about Positive Futures and some of the people the organisation supports.

Positive Futures is both a charity and a company limited by guarantee, meaning its Trustees not only guide the organisation's direction but also take an active role in ensuring it is well-governed and true to its purpose.

Across the island of Ireland, Positive Futures employs almost 800 dedicated staff who support circa 450 people and their families. Alongside delivering high-quality support, the organisation continues to invest in its people, strengthen its governance, and build financial resilience to ensure it can fulfil its long-term vision.

Positive Futures has grown significantly over time. In 2016, it expanded into the Republic of Ireland, establishing a sister organisation to share its approach and expertise more widely. In 2022, the [National Association of Housing for Visually Impaired](#) (NAHVI) (formed to address the long term needs of young people with a

visual impairment who also have an intellectual disability) joined the Positive Futures Group.

By 2025, care and support services had formally transferred to Positive Futures, allowing NAHVI to focus solely on its role as an Approved Housing Body within the Group. Today, the Positive Futures Group brings together Positive Futures (NI), Positive Futures (Ireland), and NAHVI-working as one connected organisation, with Positive Futures (NI) as the ultimate controlling body and Positive Futures (Ireland) overseeing NAHVI.

What does Positive Futures do?

Driven by a strong set of values, the organisation provides innovative services across the island of Ireland to support people of all ages with a learning / intellectual disability, acquired brain injury or autism, as well as their families and carers. In addition to learning / intellectual disability, a number of people supported by Positive Futures are deaf or visually impaired.

The support Positive Future provides is individually tailored so that it enables people to have as much choice and control as possible over what they do.

All across Ireland, the organisation is innovating, addressing critical gaps in provision, and speaking up for the rights of the people they support while striving to change the bigger picture (society's attitude to learning / intellectual disability), making significant changes in people's lives every day.

Range of Services:

Positive Behaviour Support

Positive Futures believes that, regardless of complexity of need, anyone can be supported to live a good life in the community. The key is getting the right support from the right people at the right time.

Positive Behaviour Support involves a structured approach to include functional assessments, a comprehensive positive behaviour support plan and bespoke consultancy. All of these components are tailored to the needs of the individual and, where appropriate, families who are supported by Positive Futures.

The organisations also offers expertise on the creation of robust and reactive behaviour support plans to families at an individual level, via self-funding, or self-directed support.

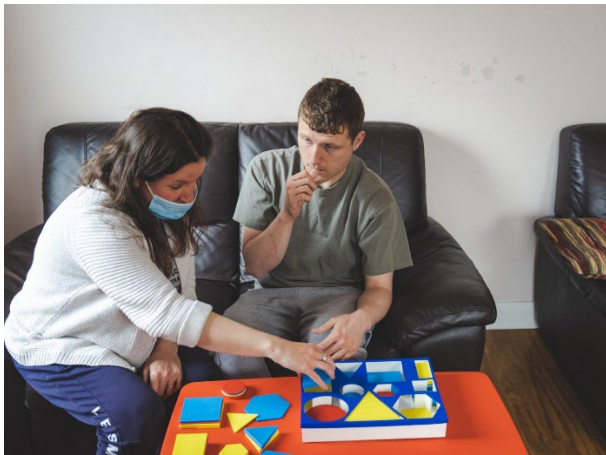
Adult services

Supported Living



Supported Living offers people the opportunity to live where and how they choose – in a home of their own or with people they choose to live with. We work with housing providers to make this possible.

Residential Short Breaks



Residential short breaks offer opportunities to spend time away from family and give families a break from caring.

Peripatetic Housing Support



Peripatetic Housing Support Services are provided for people who already have their own tenancy.

These services generally offer a lower level of support than that offered by our Supported Living Services and sometimes for a shorter term.

Shared Lives / Home Share Services



The Shared Lives Services give children and adults the opportunity to be supported by another family or individual either on a short term or long term basis.

Children and families services

Family Support Services



Family support is a specialist service providing flexible, tailored support to the whole family. Staff and volunteers from these services provide opportunities for children and young people to become more involved in the community and make it possible for parents, brothers and sisters to enjoy fuller lives.

Autism Outreach Service



The Autism Outreach Service is for autistic children and young people (aged 4–18). The service supports children and young people to help realise their dreams and ambitions including participating in community activities. In so doing, parents get a break from their caring responsibilities.

30 years of transforming lives

As Positive Futures celebrates three decades of work, the organisation is proud to launch a series of videos showcasing "30 years transforming lives". This series highlights how Positive Futures has been a force for change, enabling real choice and control for the people it supports and their families. From pioneering person-centred care to bringing Shared Lives Services across Ireland; the organisation has never believed in simply maintaining services; but rather it continues to ask what is missing and how Positive Futures can fill the gap. In the video series below, you will learn more about some of the incredible stories of support the organisation has delivered in partnership with individuals and families over the past 30 years.

In addition to the video series below, we invite applicants to read through two recently published blogs which will provide insight into Positive Futures' history, key milestones and its person-centred focus. You can access these blogs [here](#) and [here](#).

[Adrian's Story](#)

[Timothy's Story](#)

[John's Story](#)

Vision, Mission & Values

Vision

A force for change, enabling real choice and control.

Mission

Positive Futures for people with a learning / intellectual disability, acquired brain injury and autism – working together to achieve dreams and transform lives.

Values

Positive Futures' values are tailored around the support the organisation provides. These values make Positive Futures a transparent organisation, whereby honesty and integrity are at the core.

People First	Our people are at the heart of everything we do
Opportunities	We seek out opportunities that enrich lives and empower people

Sustainability	We strive for positive social, economic and environmental benefits for now and in the future
Innovation	We embrace creativity and continuous learning to reimagine and refine our unique person-centred support
Tenacious	We don't give up - we believe in making the impossible, possible
Inclusion	Our staff and people we support are our strength, we listen and learn together
Value for Money	Delivering impactful, life changing results with efficiency and integrity
Expertise	We look beyond limitations in our pursuit of excellence

Positive Futures' promise to all its staff

When people work with Positive Futures, you're part of the family. As a member of the Positive Future's family, we can promise you the following:

People - In Positive Futures, people are more important than processes. We want to be the very best employer and we trust you to be an ambassador for the organisation in the kindness you show to others.

Communication - We value your views and opinions, we listen to you and encourage your involvement in decision making.

Training - The best available, together with support and coaching to help you do your job to the best of your ability.

Professional development - We'll support you to identify and, where possible, obtain the qualifications you need and build the career you want.

Flexibility - We believe in a good work / life balance and will strive to offer you the working hours that suit you best.

Showing appreciation - We aim to treat you not just fairly, but with appreciation. When you do something well or go the extra mile, we'll show that appreciation and celebrate your efforts.

Life outside work - We understand that you have a family and commitments outside work. That's why we'll work with you, where possible, to accommodate time off when you need it.

The Position

Job Title:

Chief Executive Officer.

Reporting to:

The Chairs of the Boards of Trustees.

Direct Reports:

- Executive Director.
- Finance Director.
- Operations Director Northern Ireland.
- Human Resources Director.
- Operations Director Ireland.
- Head of Marketing and Communications.
- Executive Assistant.

Location:

Negotiable, with a clear expectation that the postholder will maintain a regular presence across Positive Futures' services throughout the island of Ireland. Positive Futures HQ is located in Bangor, 2b Park Drive, Bangor, Co Down, BT20 4JZ.

Salary:

Attractive salary and benefits package

Role overview:

As CEO of Positive Futures, the successful candidate will provide visionary leadership and have overall responsibility for steering the direction and growth of the Positive Futures Group - Positive Futures NI, Positive Futures Ireland, and NAHVI (National Association of Housing for the Visually Impaired).

You will guide the organisation in reflecting its vision, mission and values in every aspect of its work. With a strategic focus on expanding the charity's impact, you'll

ensure financial health while driving initiatives that promote lasting, positive change and value for money. As the champion of Positive Futures' values, you will lead by example, ensuring these are clearly demonstrated across all activities and services, fostering a culture of purpose and integrity.

Key responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

This is an exciting leadership role where you'll shape the organisation's long-term vision and drive fulfilment of its mission. Collaborating with the Boards of Trustees, you'll oversee the development and implementation of a strategic plan that ensures every initiative aligns with our core values and goals. You'll lead in discovering new opportunities, developing impactful partnerships, and spearheading innovative initiatives that enhance the lives of individuals with a learning / intellectual disability, acquired brain injury and autism. As a key driver of growth, you'll elevate the organisation's profile and reputation, ensuring its sustainability and lasting impact for the people we support and their families and carers.

Governance and Compliance

You'll work closely with the Boards of Trustees, promoting good governance, risk management, and compliance to ensure the provision of high-quality support and services. You'll be at the forefront of ensuring that the Positive Futures Group meets all legal and regulatory obligations, while regularly reporting on performance, risks, and achievements. With a clear focus on safeguarding, legislation and regulation, you'll lead the way in maintaining strict adherence to health, safety, and security measures. In this role, you'll also strategically deploy human, physical, and capital resources to make a meaningful impact in the lives of those we support, our staff and volunteers.

Financial Management

In this pivotal role you'll shape the financial future of the Positive Futures Group, overseeing budgets and financial performance to ensure long-term sustainability and impactful use of resources. You'll drive efforts to secure new funding through partnerships, grants and donations while building and maintaining strong relationships with key funders across the island of Ireland. By ensuring compliance with funding agreements and reporting requirements, you'll keep the Group on track for continued success. Additionally, you'll ensure robust financial systems and controls are in place, while leading the approval of the organisation's budgets to maximise our ability to make a lasting difference.

Stakeholder Engagement and Advocacy

This is a high-profile, inspiring role. As the public face of Positive Futures, you'll passionately advocate for the rights and needs of people with a learning / intellectual disability, acquired brain injury and autism. You'll forge and maintain vital relationships with key stakeholders, including politicians, government agencies, service providers, and the media. As a powerful voice for change, you'll represent the Group at events, conferences and meetings, raising awareness and driving action on the issues that matter most to the individuals we support, their families / carers and our staff.

Team Leadership and Development

In this dynamic leadership role, you'll provide clear and inspiring direction to the Directors' team, driving Positive Futures toward delivering exceptional services. You will oversee the effective management of the Group's financial, human, and physical resources, ensuring every asset is optimised for success. You'll inspire and motivate a diverse, passionate team of staff and volunteers, fostering a positive and inclusive work culture that embraces our values and celebrates contributions from all. In addition, you'll ensure everyone has the training and support needed to deliver high quality, person-centred services that truly make a difference.

Finally, and of paramount importance all Positive Futures' staff are expected to have regular contact with the people we support and to be available to be available to them in order that their views and aspirations are made clear and are kept to the forefront of our work.

The above-mentioned duties are not exhaustive and the post holder will be required to carry out other duties as and when necessary. It should be noted that stated duties or location associated with the post may change to meet the future needs of the organisation.

The Candidate

Essential criteria:

The successful candidate will also have the following qualifications, skills and experience:

- Demonstrable commitment to the mission and values of Positive Futures.
- Educated to degree level or above.
- Professional or relevant management qualification in the field of Social or Health Care AND a minimum of five years' relevant experience, at CEO or Director level in the public, private or voluntary sectors, within a care and support organisation, large charity or social enterprise, developing and implementing strategic plans.
- Successfully completed large scale organisational change and growth programmes and service improvement initiatives within a highly complex organisation.
- Experience of supporting the annual budget setting process; ensuring the delivery of organisational objectives ideally with budget responsibility of £6M or more.
- Highly developed leadership and people skills in order to motivate and support staff to deliver desired business outcomes in an organisation of 300 or more staff.
- Highly developed communication skills with the ability to build relationships at all levels and across all sectors.

Desirable:

- Proven track record of commercial acuity and business acumen which has led to successful and diverse development opportunities and which make a real difference in the lives of people supported, their families and carers.
- Proven track record in working effectively with a wide variety of stakeholders including, the people we support, families, Trustees, service commissioners and funders, civil servants, politicians, and others.

Competencies

Work effectively with Chairs and Boards of Trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Able to communicate effectively with Boards of Trustees to ensure strategic clarity, good governance, and mission success.
Providing Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Able to understand organisational strategy and translate this into practice at a service level.- Inspires and influences team members and gains respect by creating a clear vision and demonstrating a passion to support people with a learning disability, acquired brain injury and autism.- Willing to listen to others, share knowledge and encourage creativity within team members.- Encourages an environment of continuous learning and self-reflection and openly reflects on own working practice with a willingness to take feedback from others.
Improving Service Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Able to deliver a high-quality service for the people we support by understanding the needs of individuals and developing a clear overall service development plan.- Ensures that the organisation's strategy and ethos is embedded in team culture and that regulatory and compliance targets are met.- Manage risk across all facets of the organisation's activity.

<p>Managing External Stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Able to develop and manage external stakeholder relationships, promoting Positive Futures' values positively. - Able to maximise business opportunities through existing networks and identify and secure new business opportunities. - Uses communication and engagement that is appropriate and relevant to specific stakeholders.
<p>Managing Your Team Effectively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manages a staff team which is engaged and motivated towards the achievement of organisational goals. - Ensures all staff members understand their responsibilities and perform to acceptable standards, with any performance issues being managed swiftly and appropriately. - Develops, mentors and coaches staff to ensure their personal development needs are met and managed.
<p>Managing Finances and Growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is accountable for the operational and financial performance of services. - Able to manage and deploy allocated resources appropriately. - Able to identify opportunities, threats and risks and develop plans to meet these.
<p>Personal Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Able to reflect on self-development needs from a business and personal perspective and address them. - Meets development action plans as agreed with the Chairs of the NI and IRL Boards. - Achieves positive feedback on performance from own staff team, peers, senior colleagues and external stakeholders.

Personal Attributes

- Capability and capacity to operate effectively in a fast-paced, highly demanding, challenging work environment.
- Demonstrable business and strategic acumen: ability to gather and translate internal and external intelligence into insights that shape strategy and decision making.
- Continuous assessment of the external environment and the organisation's readiness for change.
- Creation of innovative ways to effectively address business challenges.
- Lead with integrity, honesty and be ethical, fair, and principled.

Any Questions?

Please do not hesitate to contact **Pedro Torres, Senior Search Consultant** should you have any queries or questions.

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