

Chief Executive Officer

Role	Chief Executive Officer
Pay	£100,000 - £112,000 per annum
Hours	RDS Four Day (32 hours) per week
Employment type	Permanent. We are happy to discuss a secondment from similarly minded organisations providing you have prior agreement from your department director or line manager.
Closing Date	October 30, 2026
Reports to	Chair
Direct reports	3 (Chief Operating Officer, Chief Data Officer, Chief Information Officer)

Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Lead the development and delivery of the organisation's vision, strategy, and long-term priorities.
- Translate strategy into clear, actionable plans with measurable outcomes.
- Anticipate external trends, risks, and opportunities to position the organisation for future success.
- Drive innovation and transformation where required and ensure the organisation remains agile and responsive to changing external environments.

Organisational Performance & Delivery

- Accountable for the overall success, sustainability and impact of the organisation
- Oversee effective resource allocation and organisational efficiency.
- Build robust performance management systems and accountability frameworks.
- Maintain a focus on continuous improvement and results delivery.

Leadership & Culture

- Lead, inspire, and develop a high-performing Leadership Team.
- Shape and role-model a strong organisational culture aligned to RDS values.
- Ensure equality, diversity and inclusion principles are embedded in strategy, decision-making and organisational culture.
- Ensure effective workforce planning, succession planning and talent development.
- Ensure leadership capability is developed across the organisation.

Governance & Board Engagement

- Work in partnership with the Chair and Board to:
 - Set strategic direction
 - Ensure effective governance and decision-making
- Provide timely, accurate, and transparent reporting to the Board.
- Ensure compliance with all legal, regulatory, and governance requirements.
- Support the Board in fulfilling its responsibilities.

Stakeholder & External Relations

- Take a whole system approach to strategy and delivery: actively developing wide networks across Scotland, UK and wider.
- Create the conditions for collaboration with other organisations to deliver shared outcomes.
- Monitor and influence policy developments relevant to the organisation's mission.
- Act as the principal ambassador for the organisation.
- Represent the organisation with external partners, funders, policymakers and the wider sector.
- Protect and enhance the organisation's reputation and brand.

Financial Stewardship & Income generation

- Ensure sound financial management and long-term sustainability.
- Oversee budgeting, financial planning, and risk management.
- Work with the board and leadership team to identify new funding opportunities and strengthen long-term system wide financial sustainability.
- Ensure strong internal controls and accountability.

Risk & Compliance

- Ensure robust systems for risk management and mitigation.
- Maintain compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements.
- Safeguard organisational integrity and ethical standards.

Person Specification

Knowledge, skills and experience

Essential

- Proven experience as a CEO, Managing Director, or senior executive leader
- Track record of leading strategy development and delivery
- Experience working with UK or Scottish Government bodies and departments
- Significant external stakeholder engagement and influence experience
- Significant strategic thinking and decision-making capability
- Strong Financial oversight
- Ability to lead complex organisations and manage competing priorities in ambiguous and uncertain environments
- Excellent communication and influencing skills
- Strong understanding of governance and risk management
- Demonstrates an authentic leadership style that motivates and enables others to perform at their best.
- High levels of emotional intelligence, integrity, judgement, and resilience
- Ability to build trust and credibility with diverse stakeholders
- Collaborative and inclusive approach
- Results-driven with a focus on impact

Desirable

- Knowledge and experience of the Scottish Data Landscape
- Experience of sustainably scaling services or organisations
- Experience working with or reporting to a Board or governing body

Qualifications

- Degree level qualification or equivalent professional experience

Benefits

- **Four Day (32 hours) working week.** The RDS Board have approved RDS to offer a Four-Day (32-hour) working week until at least 31 March 2027. As Chief Executive, occasional flexibility will be required to working days to address specific business needs, attend Board meetings and/or represent the organisation at key events.
- **Flexible working arrangements.** RDS is a remote-first organisation based in Edinburgh. Some flexibility would be expected around office attendance vs home working and so while it's not a requirement of the role to be Edinburgh based, it can be fairly anticipated that many of the in-person stakeholder relationship meetings will be in and around Edinburgh.
- **Pension:** employers' contribution 5% or 10% (dependant on employee contribution) rising to 15% or 20% (dependant on employee contribution) after probation completion.
- **Annual Leave:** Up to 33 days/annum (service related – starting at 30 days/annum with an increase after 2 years).
- **Flexible Benefits:** MyLifestyle (retailer discounts, cycle to work scheme, dental insurance, eye tests, discounted gym membership and more)
- **Employee Assistance** programme with counselling
- **Group Death in Service scheme** (2 x annual salary)