

Director of Learning

APPOINTMENT BRIEF
JANUARY 2019

Introduction from the Chief Executive

Thank you for your interest in the new role of **Director of Learning** at Access – The Foundation for Social Investment.

Dear Applicant,

Over our ten year life we want to change the way charities are supported to be more resilient, and the way social investment works. This role will be at the heart of us achieving that change. This is a new role with enormous scope to develop the learning function within a pioneering organisation. If you share our vision we would love to hear from you.

Access is at an exciting time in its development. We have a new strategy focusing on enterprise development with a £40m commitment over the next five years, and are developing a new £10m blended finance programme with funds from dormant accounts. The Growth Fund is also entering a crucial period of portfolio management with more than a dozen social investment funds lending across England.

Over the last year we have been working with our learning partners, the TI Group, to develop an ambitious vision for learning and advocacy.



This new role will refine that strategy and lead its implementation. Building and sharing learning is key to Access's legacy and a core reason for our establishment in 2015.

This role will play an active part as a member of the Access management team, working in close collaboration across all areas of Access's work and specifically with the Director of Programmes to help achieve programme objectives and delivery.

I am looking for someone with considerable experience in leading a learning or research function, preferably in the social sector. You should have the ambition and capability to be a thought leader and have a track record of using learning to actively advocate for and bring about tangible change.

You should be able to make learning practical and relevant and be able to evidence an engaging and

exciting written style.

If you thrive working in an environment without significant pre-existing structures and processes, are collaborative and have a passion for supporting charities and social enterprises, then get in touch.

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.

Seb Elsworth
Chief Executive

Background



AN OVERVIEW OF OUR ROLE

Access works to make charities and social enterprises in England more financially resilient and self-reliant, so that they can sustain or increase their impact.

We do this through supporting the development of enterprise activity to grow and diversify income, and improving access to the social investment, which can help stimulate that enterprise activity.

Access will be around for a decade, but the need for this work will continue well beyond that. Our approach is to work through others to create partnerships which can outlive us, test and learn from new approaches, and generate knowledge

which improves the work of others seeking the same goals.

We are in the second phase of Access's ten-year life and have an ambitious strategy in place. We have learned a great deal from our first few years, and have made a significant and ambitious commitment to spend the majority of our endowment over this main middle phase of our life.

Over the next five years, we will have three strands to our work:

Theme One: Enterprise Development

The most significant area of development in this strategic plan is our approach to growing the capacity of charities and social enterprises to engage with social investment.

Access have committed £40m over the next five years to a programme supporting enterprise development for charities and social enterprises in England. The programme will provide a broad range of support to help organisations make a transition to new enterprise models, or grow existing ones, with a focus on the models which are best enabled by access to finance, and on enabling organisations to utilise social investment as part of that transition.

This support will be built on a foundation of growing the information and knowledge base across the sector about the enterprise models which are working and their financing needs.

On that foundation we are building a suite of support products such as peer mentoring and learning opportunities, grant support at various stages of the journey and professional advice where required.

We are committed to taking a responsive and iterative approach to designing and delivering these products. We are therefore running two year-long pilot programmes (a grant programme and a learning programme), initially focussing on two sectors (Homelessness and Youth) which we believe have significant untapped potential for enterprise development and therefore a latent requirement for social investment.

We are taking this sub-sectoral approach because, based on what we have learned from our work so far, we believe that it is the best way to build a practical knowledge base about which enterprise models work best in specific contexts and to provide support which can be appropriately tailored.

We will learn from these pilots, iterate where necessary and our intention is to broaden the programmes to further sub-sectors.

Rather than describing this support as “investment readiness” as has happened in the past, we are focusing on enterprise development, because it is the growth of earned income which allows charities and social enterprises to be more resilient and self-reliant, and social investment is a tool which can help to achieve that.

Theme Two: Blended Finance

Blended finance can bridge the gap between charities and social enterprises on one side and social investors on the other, to help make the social investment easier to find and more relevant for charities and social enterprises, and help social investment reach parts of the sector which are yet to benefit. In this middle period of Access’s ten-year life, we will focus on three elements to our work on blended finance:

- Actively support and manage the portfolio of social investors in The Growth Fund.
- Develop a new £10m blended finance programme funded by dormant bank accounts in partnership with Big Society Capital, and seek opportunities to supply more grants into blended finance models which help expand the reach of social investment, actively working with a range of partners.
- Lead the case for blended finance and convening the discussions with other potential providers of subsidy around the value of the approach, based on our learning and that of others.

Background

Theme Three: Listening, learning and sharing knowledge

With our fixed life we know that sharing learning and knowledge is central to Access's impact and legacy. We want to be remembered for more than having run some useful programmes. We want to change the way the sector is supported and financed, for good. Our learning will centre on what works for charities and social enterprises when it comes to enterprise development and social investment; what we call "leading with the need".

Over the next five years, Access will build its role as a learning organisation. We will focus on listening to the changing needs of charities and social enterprises, extracting as much knowledge as possible from our programmes and that of others, making that knowledge available in a way that is useful for charities and social enterprises, and influencing key actors in the social investment value chain and beyond.

To enable this to happen we need to build the systems and tools to make data about enterprise models which work, and about real social investment deals meaningful for charities and social enterprises.

We need to develop our reputation as a centre of this knowledge, but will focus on embedding knowledge in the voices of other partners which will reach well beyond our own networks.

We have identified three parts to this area of our work, which will contribute to answering three questions:

1. How can we tell if it's working?
2. How do we learn best?
3. How do we share our learning to shape practice?

HOW WE ARE FUNDED AND GOVERNED

Following extensive consultations with the sector, Access was launched by the Big Society Trust (BST) in 2015 with the support of our partners the Big Lottery Fund (BLF), Big Society Capital (BSC) and the Cabinet Office (responsibility has now moved to DCMS).

Each of these organisations shares the same vision to expand the reach of social investment, and each organisation brings its own resources and expertise to support Access in delivering on its mission. BST has a Board made up of members with broad experience in the social and financial sectors. It is the sole member of Access and is the company, which ensures BSC remains true to its social mission.

OUR CONTEXT AND ECOSYSTEM AND THE ROLE WE HOPE TO PLAY

Although we have significant resources at our disposal, Access is a relatively small organisation and one which will only be around for ten years. To have real impact we must work with and through others who share our broad goals, to help charities and social enterprises to be more resilient in order to sustain or achieve greater impact.

We therefore deliberately take a network leadership approach. In serving the needs of charities and social enterprises, we see our key collaborators as:

- Other funders and foundations
- Sector networks and membership bodies
- Specialist consultancy and advisory organisations
- Social investors and intermediaries

The principles of Network Leadership will underpin our work:

- Trust not control
- Humility not brand
- Node not hub
- Mission not organisation



Highlights for 2018

In 2018, we continued to see the impact of our work on the ground, and most significantly, investments being made at scale in charities and social enterprises. Our Capacity Building programmes significantly increased their activity and we launched two one-year pilot programmes (Enterprise Grants and Enterprise Learning) supporting enterprise development activity, working in the Homelessness and Youth sectors. We shared our learning via a number of publications and high profile events and we have continued to invest as much as possible of our endowment into charities and social enterprises, with 46% invested in this way at year-end.

1. CAPACITY BUILDING & ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Our Capacity Building programmes are aimed at growing the capacity of charities and social enterprises in England to engage with social investment.

The Reach Fund (run by the Social Investment Business)

The Reach Fund was extended in October 2018 for a further three years, following the success of the initial two year pilot programme. It provides development grants for charities and social enterprises seeking to raise social investment. The grants are available via a range of approved social investors who act as 'Access Points'. By the end of 2018:

- 24 Access Points had been appointed, who can refer charities and social enterprises into the programme.
- Since the fund launched in 2016, 256 grants have been awarded, with a total value of £3.4m, at an average of £13.4k per grant.
- A learning report evaluating the first two years of the programme and its design has recently been completed with a learning event due to be held in February.

The Impact Management Programme (IMP) (run by New Philanthropy Capital and a group of partners)

IMP Offered grants for organisations to develop their impact management strategy to help them raise investment and also developed a "Pathway to Impact" to make it easier for charities and social enterprises to use existing tools to develop their impact approach in a self-service way. By the end of 2018:

- £1.8m of grants had been awarded to 40 charities and social enterprises.
- Following a co-design process with more than 100 charities and social enterprises, launched impactsupport.org to support organisations to get started with impact management techniques with minimal external input. This will be launched in Q1 2018.

The Connect Fund (run by Barrow Cadbury Trust)

Launched in June 2017, the Connect Fund was set up to strengthen the social investment market in England to better meet the needs of charities and social enterprises. The £3m fund provides grants and investments to develop shared resources for a market that supports this mission.

By the end of 2018:

- Since the fund launched, 44 grants have been awarded, with a total value of £1.97m.
- The Connect Fund made their first social investment, a £50k convertible loan note, testing the provision of patient capital within the social investment market.

Enterprise Development Programme

The Enterprise Development Programme provides a broad range of support for charities and social enterprises, helping them make a transition to new enterprise models, or grow existing ones. We launched two year-long pilots (Enterprise Grants and Enterprise Learning) in September 2018 for organisations in the Youth and Homelessness sectors.

Enterprise Grants is administered by Social Investment Business and will award grants of £1.85m over the course of the pilot. Enterprise Learning is a leadership peer-learning initiative which will offer business support and expert guidance to 40 leaders of charities and social enterprises, and will be run by the School for Social Entrepreneurs.

By the end of 2018:

- Enterprise Grants awarded 27 grants totalling £366k.
- 40 leaders were selected from across the Homelessness and Youth sectors to take part in Enterprise Learning from January 2019.

2. BLENDED FINANCE

The Growth Fund

Our current Blended Finance programme, The Growth Fund, tackles the gap in the supply of small loans, of under £150k, for charities and social enterprises.

By the end of 2018, £50m had been committed across 16 different funds (14 of which were live by end 2018). These funds cover a wide range of different places and sub-sectors, seeking to support charities and social enterprises in different ways.

The live funds had made over 200 investments in charities and social enterprises worth an excess of £13m. We expect to see a peak of lending activity under The Growth Fund during 2019 as funds continue to ramp up their activity, with loans continuing to be made until at least 2021.

Place-Based Blended Finance Programme

Access was granted an additional £10m from dormant account money to blend with circa £20m of Big Society Capital funds, to create a Place-Based Blended Finance Programme. Together with BSC, we have been in the design phases of this programme during 2018 and expect to go live in early 2019.

Highlights for 2018

3. LISTENING, LEARNING AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE

Sharing learning and knowledge is central to Access's impact and legacy.

So far we have:

- Developed the way we share our data and the performance of our programmes, including the publication of quarterly dashboards:

<https://access-socialinvestment.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Quarterly-Dashboard-Q3-2018.pdf>

- Published specific learning on the levels of subsidy in The Growth Fund to date and on our reach so far. We also published our first learning report which reflected on the lessons on how Access was set up.
- Co-funded and helped coordinate The Gathering, a major event bringing together over 130 leaders in the UK social investment market to discuss the challenges and opportunities faced by the sector. This has led to a number of key initiatives across the social sector being taken forward.
- Published research on the impact readiness fund, risk finance in the social sector, subsidy in social investment and data maturity in the sector.
- Published the lessons learned from our work via regular blog updates.
- Supported Good Finance - it was fully launched in April 2017 and is establishing its role as a key resource for the sector in navigating the market.

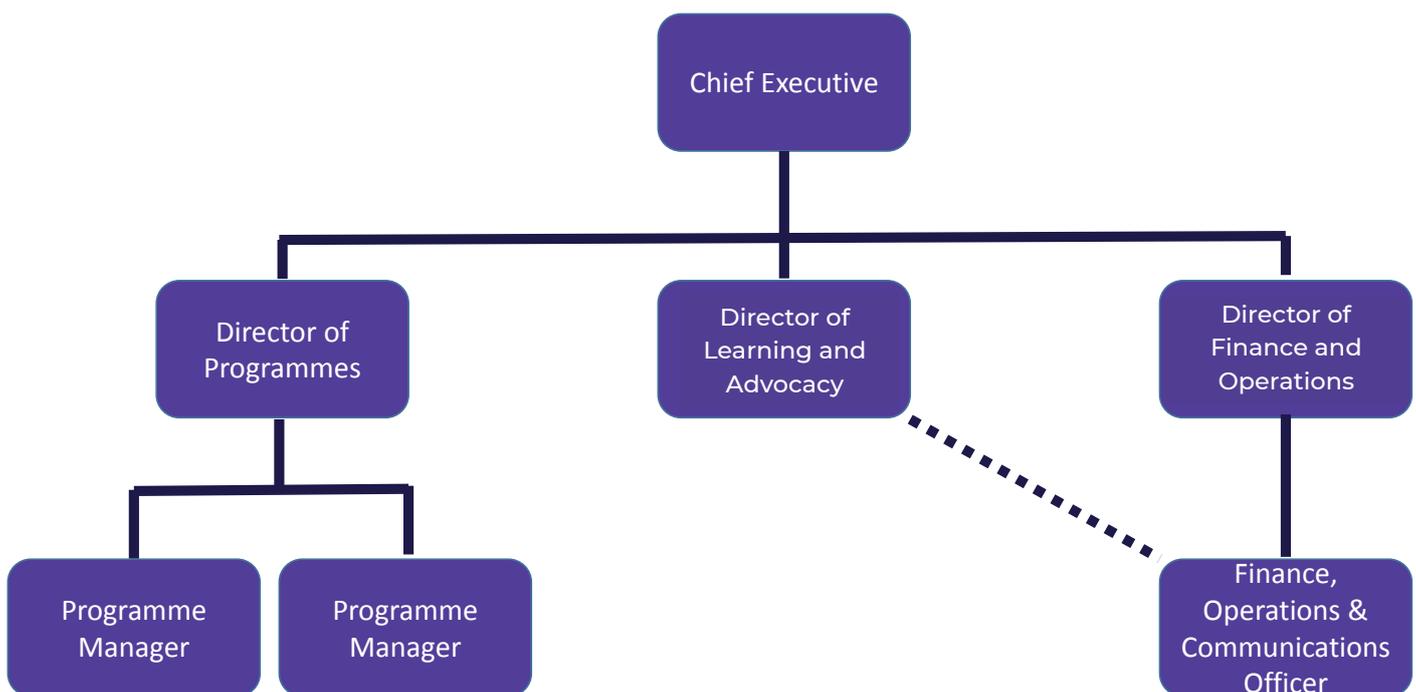
4. TOTAL IMPACT

The trustees are committed to investing the £60M expendable endowment from DCMS to achieve total impact. This means investing each pound to achieve the maximum social impact and, at the same time, ensuring our financial objectives and liquidity requirements are met.

By the end of 2018:

- Published our investment policy statement for use by other organisations interested in taking a similar approach.
- Rathbones had invested £43m in funds and bonds on our behalf to transfer back to Access to fund our enterprise development (capacity building) programmes.
- Of the Rathbones investment, 46% was invested in charities and social enterprises delivering social impact in the UK, 19% was in other organisations delivering social impact, and 34% was in other bonds and funds considered best in class for a range of environmental, social and governance (ESG) indicators.

Organisational chart



Job description

Role title:

Director of Learning

Accountable to:

Chief Executive

Role purpose:

To lead the building and sharing of learning from Access's work and the broader needs of the sector, and to use this learning to influence key stakeholders within and beyond the social investment market. Play an active role as a member of the Access management team, working in close collaboration across all areas of Access's work and specifically with the Director of Programmes to help achieve programme objectives and delivery.



Job description

CORE RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

Building the learning from Access's work:

- Lead on the development and delivery of Access's learning strategy, critically to ensure that we are posing the questions which will provide us with the greatest opportunity to improve our work, and offer the most significant opportunities to influence others in line with Access's mission, and have the correct data and information available to be able to answer them.
- Lead the relationship and work in close collaboration with Access's independent learning partner, to ensure that the value of their role is maximised.
- Work closely with the Director of Finance and Operations to ensure that Access's data infrastructure is fit for purpose and allows data on which learning from our work will be based to be effectively collected, while being mindful of the burden placed on front-line charities and social enterprises.
- Provide one to one and group support to our programme partners to support the development of their learning capability, both to support Access's learning and their own.
- Work closely with the Big Lottery Fund to lead Access's input into the major evaluation of The Growth Fund, and ensure that this contributes as much as possible to Access's broader learning objectives and improves our ability to shape future blended capital programmes.

Building learning from and listening to charities and social enterprises:

- Identify the networks of charities and social enterprises to which Access needs to listen in order to best understand need, how need is changing and how our work needs to evolve. Seek direct contact with and feedback from charities and social enterprises as much as possible.
- Seek to participate in those discussions, test our evolving approach and hypotheses, and draw out the key lessons for Access's work.
- Correlate this direct experience with learning from other foundations, social investors, broader sector research and the guidance of infrastructure organisations.

Working alongside our CEO to share our learning and influence:

- In the context of Access's mission and theory of change, identify and prioritise the most significant audiences for Access to influence.
- Develop narrative(s) about Access's work which will have salience with our key stakeholders.
- Develop clear, meaningful, relevant and visually creative ways to regularly share data and information about the performance of our programmes and the impact we and our partners are having, building on the work we have already undertaken in developing our dashboard.
- Write engaging think pieces, blogs, and articles, and contribute actively to social media discussions about relevant areas of Access's work. These should both be hosted by Access and more significantly other organisations and publications to share more detailed insights from our work.

Job description

- Seek public speaking opportunities to share learning from our work with relevant audiences.
- Identify aspects of our learning which are especially relevant to key stakeholders, and seek over the long term to build better understanding from them of the learning from our work, and where relevant and possible change practice.
- Identify where the lessons from our work are relevant beyond the world of foundations and social investment, and seek to identify opportunities for platforms to share that learning further.

Using learning to improve our practice:

- Make available data, learning and insight to the Access management team and Board, and working with the Director of Programmes, lead discussion and reflection on that insight in order to identify current impact, and areas in which Access's work needs to change.
- Continually seek to improve Access's ability to capture meaningful data, in particular relating to social impact, from our programmes and the work of our partners.

Research

- Work with a wide range of partners, including the Social Investment Research Council, to identify areas relevant to Access's work which may require additional research, and where relevant, commission and manage those research projects.

Building resources for the market:

- With our learning partner, lead on the development of data platforms and other learning resources which help charities and social enterprises to better understand, be better connected to, and have more influence over the design of social investment.
- In the context of Access's capacity building work, support our delivery partners across the social sector to build the evidence of viable business models, in particular those which can most benefit from taking on investment.
- Work with partner organisations to support more charities and social enterprises to use impact data to manage their impact more effectively.
- Through leading Access's learning function, seek to inspire others in the sector to learn better, and be better at sharing that learning.

Person specification

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

- Considerable experience in leading a research or learning function, preferably within the social sector.
- Extensive knowledge and experience of working within the social sector.
- Track record of using learning to bring about tangible change internally and externally.
- Experience of working and delivering in partnerships across organisations, and in successfully managing extensive consultancy contracts.
- Knowledge of a wide variety of impact measurement and management approaches and their applicability to the social sector.
- Experience of successfully embedding approaches for the measurement and management of social impact data into a complex organisation or programme.
- Knowledge of relevant research approaches.
- Demonstrable experience of advocacy, exerting influence to successfully change the behaviours of external stakeholders would be desirable.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Ability to work in a small team which requires significant flexibility and in an environment without significant pre-existing structures and processes.
- Evidence of an exciting and engaging written style, through which you can explain complex principles in a straightforward way. (Evidence of a bibliography to be provided through the assessment process.)
- Ability to make learning practical and relevant to a wide range of audiences including practitioners.
- Ability to handle and manipulate significant amounts of data, and identify patterns and meaning within it.

Person specification

PERSONAL STYLE AND BEHAVIOUR

- Practical and rigorous
- Demonstrates clarity of thought and communication
- Collaborative
- Demonstrates characteristics of network leadership
- A passion for supporting charities and social enterprises

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- This role attracts a salary of up to £65,000 depending on experience
- 28 days annual leave
- Contributory pension
- Other benefits include a travel loan
- Probationary period six months
- Notice period three months (on completion of probationary period)
- The role is ideally full time however we will consider 3 or 4 days per week for the right candidate. Flexible working can also be supported.

How to apply



If you wish to have an informal discussion about the opportunity, have any queries on any aspect of the appointment process, or need additional information please contact our retained advisors

Ami Jenick or Eva Farina at Prospectus on 020 7691 1920, or e-mail:

ami.jenick@prospect-us.co.uk

eva.farina@prospect-us.co.uk

To apply for this position, please forward a comprehensive CV together with a supporting statement (the statement should be no more than two sides of A4).

We would also be grateful if you could let us know if you will require any special provision as a result of any disability should you be called for interview.

Finally please ensure that you have included mobile, work and home telephone numbers, as well as any dates when you will not be available or might have difficulty with the indicative timetable.

Applications should be made via the Prospectus website at:

www.prospect-us.co.uk/jobs/details/hq00174346

RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE

Published closing date:

24th February 2019

Preliminary interviews with Prospectus:

1st - 15th March 2019

First interviews with the Foundation:

25th March 2019

Second interviews with the Foundation:

1st April 2019

These dates may be subject to change and candidates will be advised in advance should this happen.

Should you decide to make a formal application, you will receive feedback within seven working days of the closing date. Shortlisted candidates may be required to undertake additional assessment prior to the final interview.

Created by the Prospectus
Talent Attraction team.

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