

UK Operations Manager

Candidate Brief

May 2026



About the BDA

The British Deaf Association (BDA) is the UK's national representative organisation for Deaf people who use British Sign Language (BSL) and Irish Sign Language (ISL)—the first or preferred language of approximately 87,000 Deaf people.

We exist to advance human rights and equality for Deaf people. Working in partnership with our members and stakeholders, we influence governments and drive systemic change to achieve sign language equity across the UK.

The BDA has played a pivotal role in securing legal recognition for sign languages, including the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015, the BSL Act 2022, and more recently the BSL (Wales) Act 2026 and Northern Ireland Sign Language Act 2026. These landmark achievements recognise BSL and ISL as protected minority languages—an important step towards addressing long-standing inequality and enabling Deaf people to participate fully as equal and valued members of society.

We are proudly Deaf-led: all of our Board of Trustees and 88% of our staff are Deaf, and our working languages are BSL and ISL. Our lived experience shapes everything we do, and we invest in sign language development across our workforce, including a comprehensive and inclusive onboarding programme.

As a membership organisation, we are deeply rooted in Deaf communities across all four UK nations. This ensures our work is informed, representative, and responsive to the communities we serve.

Trusted by Deaf communities and respected by governments, the BDA is a leading voice for change—protecting and promoting the language, culture, community, diversity, and heritage of Deaf people across the UK.

Representation

Founded in 1890, the BDA has a long history of advocacy and leadership. We are an Ordinary Member of the [World Federation of the Deaf](#) (a United Nations consultative organisation) since 1957, and a founding member of the [European Union of the Deaf](#) (a participatory body of the Council of Europe) since 1985.

Our BDA Youth Committee represents young Deaf people at both national and international levels, including within the [World Federation of the Deaf Youth Section](#) and [European Union of the Deaf Youth](#).

As a Deaf-led membership charity, we are led by and represent Deaf signers. We advocate for the right of Deaf people to fully participate in society as equal and valued citizens.

The passage of sign language legislation across all four UK nations marks a defining moment in our history—and a foundation for future change. We are now delivering our 2022–2032 Strategic Vision, setting out our ambitions for the next decade and beyond.

Find out more: <https://bda.org.uk/strategic-vision/>.

Our work

Our work is delivered through four key programmes:

1. Community & Advocacy

We work alongside our members and the wider Deaf community to ensure their views are heard, valued, and acted upon. By bringing Deaf people together, we support collective action to challenge inequality and drive change.

Through training and workshops, we build confidence, leadership, and collective power—supporting Deaf people to influence decision-making and secure representation at every level.

At the heart of this work is a simple principle: *nothing about us, without us*.

2. Training & Consultancy

We deliver Human Rights and Capacity Building training to empower Deaf people with the tools to advocate for their rights.

We also support organisations to become BSL-inclusive through our flagship BSL Awareness training and tailored consultancy, helping participants develop a deeper understanding of BSL and Deaf culture.

We established the independent BSL Alliance, a coalition of Deaf organisations working together to strengthen and promote BSL across the UK.

3. Human Rights & Equality

As the representative body for Deaf people in the UK, we equip Deaf people with the knowledge and strategies to claim and defend their rights, including:

- Recognition and respect for BSL/ISL and Deaf culture
- Securing equitable access and opportunities across all areas of life

Through the BSL Charter, we connect Deaf people with public services—enabling them to raise concerns, influence service delivery, and access clear, accessible information.

We work with Deaf leaders and policymakers to implement key frameworks, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and UK sign language legislation. Alongside this, we deliver Equality & Rights training and lead national advocacy to drive systemic change.

4. Sign Language & Culture

We promote and celebrate BSL and ISL through campaigns, events, and national initiatives.

Our work includes leading the award-winning *BSL Act Now!* campaign and launching *BSL in Our Hands*, calling for free access to sign language for families of deaf children.

We host annual events including the BSL Conference and AGM Weekend, and lead national and global campaigns such as Sign Language Week and the International Week of the Deaf—bringing communities together and raising awareness of Deaf culture and rights.

**“The BDA is the Deaf community.”
– Roundtable participant, 2022**

JOB DESCRIPTION



Job title:	UK Operations Manager
Salary:	Band C from £37,000 to £55,000 per annum
Hours:	35 hours a week
Reports to:	Head of Finance
Manages:	External service providers and contractors
Location:	Hybrid - part-home and part-office base at BDA's London office. Occasional travel across the UK.
Contract:	Permanent
Holidays:	25 days a year plus 8 Bank Holidays (pro rata)
Pension:	The BDA operates a contributory pension scheme and will auto-enrol you into the scheme in accordance with its auto-enrolment obligations



Overview

The BDA is entering a critical phase of its 2026–2029 strategy, with a strong focus on strengthening internal operations, systems, and organisational capability to support increased impact across the UK.

This role will play a central part in building the infrastructure required for a modern, Deaf-led organisation, ensuring that systems, processes, and ways of working are efficient, accessible, and aligned with our mission and values.

Working across all four nations, the Operations Manager will help create a more connected, responsive, and resilient organisation—supporting teams to deliver high-quality work and drive meaningful change for Deaf people and Deaf communities.

Ultimately, this role will ensure that the organisation behind the BDA's advocacy is as strong, effective, and sustainable as the change it seeks to create.

The role

The Operations Manager will lead and deliver day-to-day operations across the BDA, overseeing internal services including administration, HR, IT, facilities, and organisational systems.

This is a hands-on role, combining operational delivery with leadership responsibility. The postholder will ensure that systems and processes run smoothly and efficiently, while identifying and implementing improvements that strengthen organisational performance.

Working closely with internal teams and external providers (including HR and IT), the Operations Manager will coordinate and deliver high-quality operational support across the organisation. The role will also play a key part in developing a BSL-first operational environment, including the implementation of accessible tools and systems to improve internal communication and collaboration.

As part of the wider leadership team, the Operations Manager will contribute to organisational planning, governance, and performance, supporting the BDA's long-term sustainability and growth.

Key Responsibilities

1. Operational Management & Delivery

- Lead and coordinate day-to-day operations across the organisation, ensuring effective and efficient delivery of internal services
- Provide operational support to staff, ensuring queries and issues are resolved in a timely and effective manner
- Work with external providers (e.g. HR and IT) to ensure reliable, high-quality operational support
- Identify and implement improvements to systems, processes, and ways of working

2. People, HR & Organisational Support

- Act as the key liaison with external HR providers
- Support recruitment, induction, and workforce development processes
- Maintain and update HR policies, procedures, and the Staff Handbook
- Support performance management processes and staff development
- Ensure HR practices reflect BDA's values, including a Deaf-led and inclusive workforce

3. Governance, Risk & Compliance

- Oversee operational governance, risk and compliance processes
- Maintain and regularly review the organisational risk register
- Ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, including GDPR, safeguarding, charity governance and contractual obligations
- Oversee the development and review of organisational policies
- Support staff training and awareness in key compliance areas

4. Systems & Operational Infrastructure

- Oversee organisational systems and infrastructure, including CRM, internal platforms and communication tools
- Coordinate with IT providers to ensure systems are maintained, secure and effective
- Lead the development and implementation of accessible, BSL-first systems (e.g. intranet)
- Ensure systems support organisational efficiency, collaboration and growth

5. Financial & Operational Planning

- Work with the Head of Finance to develop and monitor operational budgets
- Support financial planning, forecasting and resource allocation
- Ensure operational activities are delivered efficiently and provide value for money

6. Facilities & Health and Safety

- Oversee facilities management, including maintenance, utilities, and supplier coordination
- Manage relationships with external contractors (e.g. maintenance, compliance and safety providers)
- Act as Designated Health and Safety Lead, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation

7. Organisational Collaboration & Strategy

- Work closely with the Senior Leadership Team to support organisational planning and delivery
- Strengthen internal communication, coordination and decision-making processes
- Support delivery of operational priorities within the BDA Business Plan
- Contribute to building a culture of continuous improvement and shared responsibility

Values and Accessibility

At the BDA, our values shape how we work, collaborate, and lead change. We are committed to creating an inclusive, empowering, and values-driven organisation that puts the Deaf community at the heart of everything we do.

- **Purpose-driven** – We believe in what the BDA stands for and are motivated by a shared commitment to advancing Deaf people’s rights and equality. <https://bda.org.uk/history/what-we-stand-for/>
- **Community-led** – We recognise that Deaf people’s lived experiences of inequality, injustice, and marginalisation must inform our strategies, campaigns, and services.
- **Collaborative and engaging** – We work together, share knowledge openly, and build strong partnerships and alliances to maximise our impact.
- **Courageous and independent** – We value our independence, enabling us to challenge poor practice, policy, stigma, and discrimination with confidence and integrity.
- **Inclusive and respectful** – We create an environment where people feel valued, supported, and able to be themselves, respecting diverse perspectives and experiences.
- **Empowering and accountable** – We support others to contribute their views, take ownership of our actions, and learn openly from our mistakes.
- **Driven by impact** – We are passionate, proactive, and committed to making a meaningful difference for the Deaf community.

The BDA is a Deaf-led organisation. We actively encourage applications from Deaf and disabled candidates. We are committed to providing reasonable adjustments throughout the recruitment process and in the workplace.

BSL users are welcome to submit applications in BSL (video format), and interviews will be fully accessible.

BDA General

- Participate as and when required in team and one-to-one meetings, and undertake, as appropriate, courses/training/other developmental activities, relevant to the role.
- Ensure, in the course of employment, complete confidentiality is maintained in respect of the Charity, its dealings, transactions, affairs and all other information relating to clients, participants, associates, staff and other subsidiaries etc.
- Keep up to date with developments within the BDA and other sector-wide practices that influence the day-to-day activities within the role, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and any other relevant internal/external factor(s).
- Ensure all activities comply with appropriate legal requirements and with BDA policies and procedures.
- Demonstrate commitment to the aims and objectives of the BDA.
- Support the work of volunteers and other placements as required.

Why Join Us

This is a unique opportunity to play a pivotal role at a defining moment for the BDA. As we move into the next phase of our strategy, you will help build the internal systems, infrastructure, and ways of working that enable our organisation to grow, adapt, and increase its impact.

Your work will ensure that our operations are strong, accessible, and sustainable - supporting our mission to advance sign language rights and improve the lives of Deaf people across the UK.

Person Specification

The candidate will have strong operational leadership, organisational, and communication skills, with the ability to drive systems and process improvements across a complex organisation.

Essential

- Demonstrable experience in an operations, service management, or organisational development role.
- Experience of developing and improving organisational systems, processes, and ways of working.
- Ability to plan and prioritise workloads, manage multiple priorities, and meet deadlines in a fast-paced environment.
- Strong organisational and problem-solving skills, with a proactive and solutions-focused approach.
- Experience of working collaboratively across teams and building effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
- Good IT skills, with confidence using systems to support operational delivery and efficiency.
- Strong communication skills, with the ability to present information clearly and appropriately to different audiences.
- An understanding of governance, compliance, or organisational policy frameworks.

Desirable

- Knowledge and understanding of Deaf issues, including Deaf culture and communication methods.
- Experience of working in the charity or membership sector.
- Experience of working with outsourced service providers (e.g. HR, IT).
- Sign Language (BSL/ISL) skills or willingness to learn.

This list is not to be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive, as there may be other duties and requirements associated with the post, which BDA may call upon the post-holder to perform from time to time.

Acceptance

I understand that my signature below indicates that I have read and understood the above job description for my position.

I understand that the job description is not an exhaustive list of duties and that I will be expected to perform different tasks as necessitated by the organisation. I also understand that the job description is subject to change at the discretion of my employer at any time.

Signed:			
Name:		Date:	

How to Apply

Please submit:

- A CV (or equivalent experience statement)
- A brief supporting statement (max 1 side A4, min font 11) explaining how you meet the role requirements OR a video statement in British Sign Language
- Deadline 22nd June 2026 9am
- Send to recruitment@bda.org.uk
- To discuss the role, please email Rebecca Mansell, CEO on rebecca.mansell@bda.org.uk

Applications in British Sign Language are welcomed.

The BDA's Vision and Mission

Our vision is Deaf people fully participating and contributing as equal and valued citizens in the wider society.

Mission

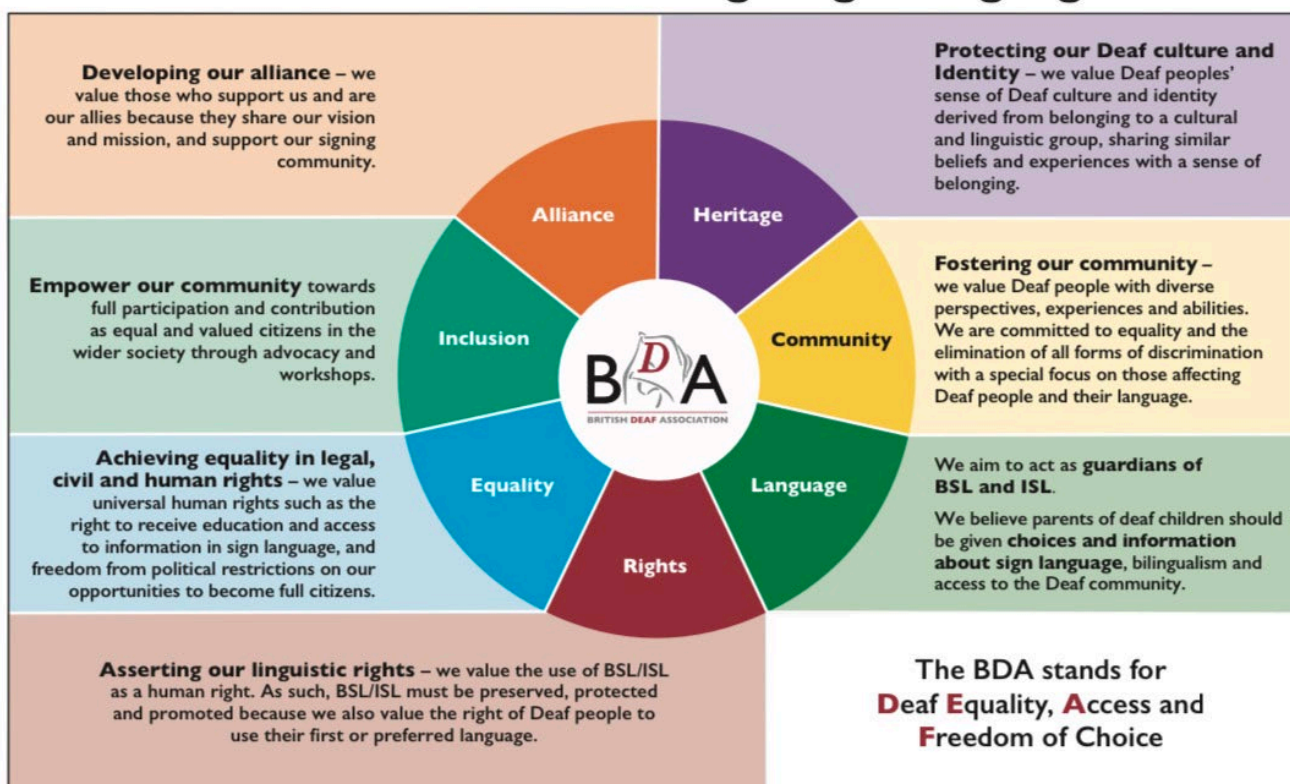
Our Mission is to ensure a world in which the language, culture, community, diversity, and heritage of Deaf people in Great Britain and Northern Ireland is respected and fully protected, ensuring that Deaf people can participate and contribute as equal and valued citizens in the wider society.

This will be achieved through:

- Improving the quality of life by empowering Deaf individuals and groups;
- Enhancing freedom, equality and diversity;
- Protecting and promoting BSL and ISL.

Our social values

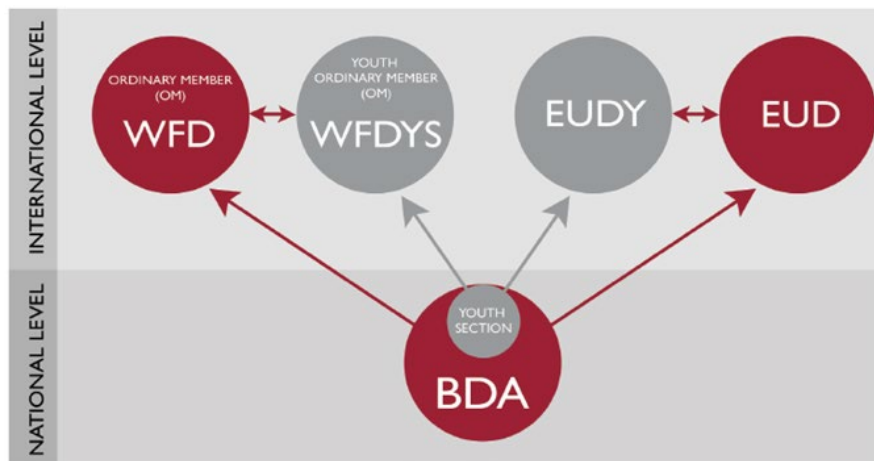
Our Social Values through Sign Language



Human Rights

Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world, from birth until death. They apply regardless of where you are from, what you believe or how you choose to live your life. They can never be taken away, although they can sometimes be restricted – for example if a person breaks the law, or in the interests of national security.

These basic rights are based on shared values like dignity, fairness, equality, respect and independence. These values are defined and protected by law. In Britain our human rights are protected by the [Human Rights Act 1998](#).



The BDA has been an Ordinary Member of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) since September 1957, **and a Full (and founding) Member of the European Union of the Deaf (EUD)** since 1985.

WFD is an International Non-Governmental Organisation in official liaison with ECOSOC (Economic & Social Council), UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation), ILO (International Labour Organisation), WHO (World Health Organisation) and the Council of Europe (CoE). It also has a consultative status in the United Nations (UN) and is a founding member of the International Disability Alliance (IDA).

EUD is a supranational organisation representing Deaf people at European level and is one of the few ENGOs representing associations from all of the 27 EU Member States, in addition to Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. EUD aims to establish and maintain EU level dialogue with its relative institutions and officials, in consultation and co-operation with its member national associations of the Deaf (NADs). EUD is a full member of the European Disability Forum (EDF) and is a Regional Co-operating Member of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) to tackle issues of global importance. It also has participatory status with the Council of Europe (CoE).

The BDA remains a permanent member of EUD; the UK's withdrawal from the EU has had no impact on BDA's membership of the EUD, which is not limited to member states of the European Union.

BDA Youth is a committee of the BDA which represents young Deaf people across the UK and is a member of the World Federation of the Deaf Youth Section ([WFDYS](#)), and European Union of the Deaf Youth ([EUDY](#)).

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2006 and ratified in June 2023 by 186 UN Member States, is the latest international human rights convention emanating from the UN. It is also one of the most ratified conventions in the UN legal system.

The motto of the CRPD, **“Nothing About Us Without Us.”** places persons with disabilities, including Deaf people, and their representative organisations - national associations of Deaf people - at the forefront of the decision-making processes related to them.

CRPD Article 4.3 requires national governments to actively consult and collaborate with national representative associations of Deaf people regarding any legislation, programme or policies related to Deaf people and national sign languages. The BDA is the official National Representative

Organisation of the UK representing the Deaf and BSL/ISL community, and holds this status at WFD, WFDYS, EUD and EUDY.

Read more about the WFD's Guidelines for Achieving Sign Language Rights here:

<https://wfdeaf.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Guidelines-for-Achieving-Sign-Language-Rights.pdf>

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