



# Youth Development 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

<b>Job Title:</b>	Youth Development Manager
<b>Salary:</b>	Band C £37,000 - £55,000
<b>Reports to:</b>	Head of Community
<b>Responsible for:</b>	BDA Youth Committee, Youth volunteers, sessional staff and project activity as required.
<b>Location:</b>	Hybrid – Office/Remote working
<b>Contract:</b>	Permanent
<b>Holidays:</b>	25 days a year plus 8 Bank Holidays
<b>Pension:</b>	The BDA operates a contributory pension scheme and will auto-enrol you into the scheme in accordance with its auto-enrolment obligations

### About the Role

The Youth Development Manager will lead the operational development, coordination and delivery of Deaf-led youth work across the British Deaf Association.

Guided by the BDA Youth Strategy 2026–2029: “*NextGen Deaf! Our Turn to Sign*”, the postholder will ensure Deaf young people, aged 13–30, are supported, empowered and meaningfully represented through safe, inclusive and youth-informed approaches.

This role combines operational leadership, youth development coordination, safeguarding oversight and partnership development. The postholder will manage the delivery infrastructure required to support national youth activity, ensuring all youth work is delivered to high professional, safeguarding and inclusion standards.

The role will support Deaf young people to develop confidence, leadership, identity, participation and progression opportunities through safe, inclusive and Deaf-led youth development approaches.

Working closely with the BDA Youth Committee, BDA staff and external partners, the Youth Development Manager will support sustainable youth leadership while maintaining clear operational responsibility for delivery, safeguarding, administration and compliance.

The role will also contribute to the growth and sustainability of BDA Youth through partnership development, funding applications, monitoring and national youth engagement activity.

### Key accountabilities and responsibilities

This is a key operational leadership role within the BDA at an important stage of growth and development for national Deaf youth work.

The Youth Development Manager will translate the BDA Youth Strategy into practical, measurable and sustainable delivery across the UK.

The postholder will be responsible for:

- Coordinating national youth activity and programmes
- Supporting safe and meaningful youth participation
- Embedding safeguarding and safer practice across all youth work
- Supporting Deaf youth leadership and governance
- Building partnerships and opportunities for Deaf young people
- Ensuring inclusive, equitable and accessible delivery
- Developing systems, structures and processes to support long-term sustainability

The role requires a balance of operational leadership, organisational skills, relationship building and strong safeguarding practice.

### **1. Youth Strategy & Programme Delivery**

- Lead operational delivery of the BDA Youth Strategy 2026–2029
- Translate strategic priorities into practical youth programmes and activities
- Coordinate national youth events, projects and engagement opportunities
- Support the planning and delivery of the BDA Youth Conference and wider national activity
- Ensure all activity is Deaf-led, BSL-first, inclusive and accessible
- Support participation opportunities for Deaf young people across all four UK nations
- Develop systems and processes to support sustainable youth delivery
- Ensure activities align with BDA values, safeguarding standards and organisational priorities

### **2. Safeguarding, Safer Practice & Risk Management**

- Act as the operational safeguarding lead for BDA Youth activity
- Ensure safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented consistently across all youth activity
- Promote a culture of safeguarding, wellbeing and psychologically safe participation
- Ensure safer recruitment procedures are followed for staff, volunteers and sessional workers
- Coordinate safeguarding risk assessments for events, travel, online activity and residential programmes
- Maintain safeguarding records, reporting systems and incident management processes
- Respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns and escalate concerns in line with policy and legislation
- Ensure appropriate supervision, consent and welfare arrangements are in place for all youth activity
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding legislation and best practice
- Work collaboratively with external agencies and professionals where required

### **3. Youth Leadership & Participation**

- Work in partnership with the BDA Youth Committee to support meaningful youth leadership
- Facilitate inclusive and supported participation opportunities for Deaf young people
- Support Deaf young people to contribute to governance, campaigns and national representation
- Ensure youth participation remains sustainable, realistic and appropriately supported
- Develop progression pathways and leadership opportunities for Deaf young people

- Support succession planning and continuity within BDA Youth structures

**4. Governance & Administration**

- Coordinate meetings, agendas, papers and action tracking for BDA Youth activity
- Maintain accurate records, monitoring information and programme documentation
- Support reporting requirements for senior management, trustees and funders
- Ensure youth activity complies with BDA policy, safeguarding requirements and data protection legislation
- Support the development of operational guidance and delivery procedures
- Monitor programme delivery timelines and implementation progress

**5. Partnerships, Engagement & Representation**

- Build positive relationships with Deaf young people, families, schools, colleges and partner organisations
- Develop partnerships with organisations supporting Deaf young people and youth participation
- Represent the BDA at relevant meetings, conferences and forums
- Promote Deaf youth voice, rights and inclusion nationally
- Support opportunities for national and international youth engagement

**6. Funding, Monitoring & Sustainability**

- Contribute to funding applications and reporting for youth programmes
- Support the development of sustainable youth work opportunities and partnerships
- Monitor and evaluate youth activity to demonstrate impact and learning
- Gather and use feedback from Deaf young people to improve delivery
- Support budget monitoring and responsible use of project resources

**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.

<b>Signed:</b>			
<b>Name:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

## Person Specification

### Experience

#### Essential

- Experience coordinating or managing youth programmes, community projects or participation activity
- Experience implementing safeguarding procedures involving children and young people
- Strong understanding of safer recruitment and risk management principles
- Experience supporting participation groups, advisory panels or volunteer structures
- Knowledge of Deaf culture and BSL/ISL
- Strong organisational, administrative and project coordination skills
- Ability to manage multiple priorities and work independently
- Strong communication and relationship-building skills
- Understanding of equality, inclusion and intersectionality in youth work
- Commitment to Deaf-led, BSL-first and youth-informed approaches
- Ability to work collaboratively with Deaf young people and diverse stakeholders
- Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults

#### Desirable

- Experience working within Deaf community organisations or Deaf youth work
- BSL skills or willingness to undertake BSL training
- Youth work qualification or relevant professional experience
- Experience organising events, conferences or residential activity
- Experience contributing to funding applications or grant reporting
- Experience working within the voluntary or charity sector

### Safeguarding Competency Framework

The postholder will be expected to demonstrate:

- Knowledge of safeguarding responsibilities relating to children, young people and vulnerable adults
- Ability to recognise and respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns
- Understanding of professional boundaries and safer working practice
- Ability to assess and manage safeguarding risks in events and programmes
- Commitment to inclusive and trauma-informed practice
- Understanding of online safety and digital safeguarding
- Confidence in escalating concerns appropriately and maintaining accurate records
- Ability to contribute to a positive safeguarding culture within the organisation

### Values & Commitment

- Commitment to the BDA's mission, values and Deaf-led approach
- Passion for equality, inclusion and Deaf rights
- Willingness to travel across the UK

## Values & 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.

## Safeguarding Recruitment Statement

The British Deaf Association is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

This post involves regulated activity, and the successful candidate will be required to:

- Undertake an Enhanced DBS check
- Provide satisfactory references
- Complete safeguarding training
- Demonstrate suitability to work with children and young people
- Uphold safeguarding, equality and professional conduct standards at all times

The BDA is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion and welcomes applications from candidates from all backgrounds.

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.

## How to Apply

- Send your CV (including two referees) and a supporting statement (max 1 side A4, min font 11) explaining how you meet the role requirements OR a video statement in British Sign Language
- Closing date: 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2026 at 09:00am
- Send to [recruitment@bda.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@bda.org.uk)

- For an informal discussion, contact Jaz Mann, Head of Community, at [jaz.mann@bda.org.uk](mailto:jaz.mann@bda.org.uk) to arrange a BSL video call or email conversation.
- We strongly encourage applications from Deaf people.

All documents should be emailed to [recruitment@bda.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@bda.org.uk). Please include your name in the subject field.

## **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 values**

The BDA is the only national Deaf People's Organisation representing a diverse, vibrant, and ever-changing community of Deaf people. Our activities, promotions, and partnerships with other organisations aim to empower our community towards full participation and contribution as equal and valued citizens in the wider society. We aim to act as guardians of BSL and ISL.

#### **1. Protecting our Deaf culture and Identity**

We value Deaf peoples' sense of Deaf culture and identity derived from belonging to a cultural and linguistic group, sharing similar beliefs and experiences with a sense of belonging.

#### **2. Asserting our linguistic rights**

We value the use of BSL and ISL as a human right. As such, BSL and ISL must be preserved, protected and promoted because we also value the right of Deaf people to use their first or preferred language.

#### **3. Fostering our community**

We value Deaf people with diverse perspectives, experiences and abilities. We are committed to equality and the elimination of all forms of discrimination with a special focus on those affecting Deaf people and their language.

#### **4. Achieving equality in legal, civil and human rights**

We value universal human rights such as the right to receive education and access to information in sign language, and freedom from political restrictions on our opportunities to become full citizens.

#### **5. Developing our alliance**

We value those who support us and are our allies because they share our vision and mission and support our BSL community.

### **What we stand for**

#### **Deaf Equality**

This means that Deaf people are able to access information, services and support in their preferred language, to have the same opportunities to achieve the same life outcomes as anyone else. Legal recognition of both BSL in the Great Britain and Northern Ireland and ISL in Northern Ireland are key steps in raising recognition, awareness and respect, and achieving equality of access and opportunity for Deaf people.

### Access

Every Deaf person must have access to services from Government level down to their local council in their preferred language.

### Freedom of Choice

Every Deaf person should be able to use BSL and/or ISL without sanction and without obstacles.

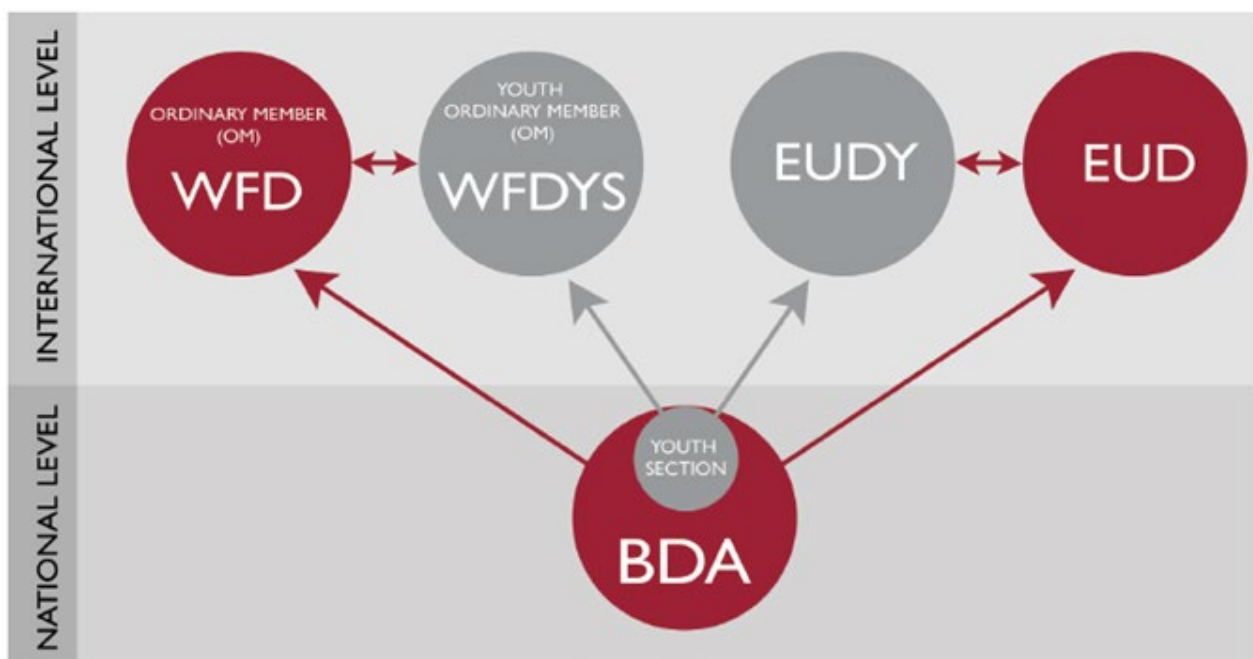
### We believe that every Deaf

- person has the right to communicate in their preferred language
- child has the right to bi-lingual education

### 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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