

# Job Description

---

<b>Job Title</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Reports to</b>	The Board, through the Chair
<b>Direct reports</b>	Chief Operations Officer, Policy & Communications Manager, Executive Assistant
<b>Main purpose of role</b>	The CEO is responsible for leading all aspects of PLS's strategy and day to day operations, with a view to satisfying key stakeholder expectations. The CEO leads engagement on behalf of PLS to its members, employees, publisher rightsholders, business partners, Government and regulatory authorities. The CEO is accountable to the Board of Directors.

## About PLS

Publishers' Licensing Services (PLS) was established and incorporated in 1981. The primary role of PLS is to manage collective licensing of copying from print and digital publications including books, journals, magazines and websites. PLS also offers a permissions service and other services to support publishers' rights and licensing.

Our vision is to provide efficient and effective copyright and licensing solutions to support publishers in providing access to their content.

PLS obtains the authority to license from publisher rights owners in the form of "mandates" and distributes licensing revenue to publishers for copies made of their publications. It holds over 4,000 mandates from publishers, primarily in the UK. PLS distributed over £41.7m to publishers in 2022/3.

PLS oversees the licensing of publishers' copying rights through licensing bodies, principally the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) but also NLA media access. PLS is a founding member of CLA and works alongside its other members, the Authors Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS) representing authors and DACS and PICSEL representing visual artists and photographers.

The PLS Board is comprised of 12 publishers and officers from our member organisations - the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, the Independent Publishers Guild, the Professional Publishers Association and the Publishers Association - as well as the Independent Chair and the CEO.

PLS is a not for profit organisation with a team of seventeen full time staff. We are based near Tower Bridge in central London and we occupy the same office building as CLA and ALCS.

## Person Specification

Core skills and attributes needed to fulfil this position are:

- Proven experience of leading a high performing team.
- Strategically focused with a strong commercial/operational acumen and experience of developing and implementing successful and innovative revenue and service strategies.
- Able to partner with external stakeholders at all levels to develop and deliver new products and services that support the achievement of our strategic objectives.
- Able to lead and implement change, whilst effectively influencing across organisational boundaries.
- Strong interpersonal skills with a diplomatic but firm approach to complex negotiation.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills with a proven ability to operate in both national and international fora.
- Experience of operating at a senior level, with proven ability to form collaborative relationships in complex - sometimes political – environments.
- Experience of one or more of the creative industries either from the perspective of publisher or creator or customer and a deep commitment to the value and benefits of copyright.
- Integrity, transparency and fairness in decision making.
- Experience of strategic development in a digital ecosystem
- Exposure to the higher education, professional, research, schools or magazine sectors would be useful.

## Summary of Key Responsibilities

### 1. Strategy

- a. Ensure PLS has a coherent and forward-thinking strategy and mission to support the strategic objectives of the business and deliver effective, reliable and accessible services to its staff, members and customers in a rapidly changing digital ecosystem.

### 2. Risk

- a. To assess and monitor the primary risks to PLS ensuring relevant mitigation where required.
- b. To maintain effective internal controls and management information systems, ensuring that PLS is compliant with all relevant legislation and regulations.

### 3. People

- a. To provide a clear direction for staff, consistent leadership and operate at all times in a collaborative, respectful and transparent manner. Ensure that PLS is properly organised and staffed to enable it to deliver its strategic plans.

### 4. Operations

- a. To maintain and review, the processes through which PLS receives revenues from licensing activities ensuring that monies are distributed in accordance with agreed policies; undistributed revenues are kept to a minimum while maintaining an appropriate level of financial reserves.

- b. To maintain oversight of collective licensing and collective rights administration activities on behalf of publishers both in the UK and more widely, ensuring that publishers' best interests are being served and licensing revenues are optimised.
- c. Collaboratively working with colleagues in CLA, ALCS, DACS, PICSEL and NLA to develop and deliver new products and services ensuring the best interests of publishers.
- d. To develop, manage and maintain oversight of the annual budgetary process and all PLS's services.

#### **5. Governance**

- a. To serve as a member of the PLS Board and maintain oversight of company secretarial matters and ensure that the Directors are enabled to carry out their duties to PLS effectively.
- b. To work in consultation with the Chair on governance issues and strategic planning and to be responsible for the efficient management of all Board and committee meetings.
- c. Ensure that the management and the Board are kept informed at all times about internal and external issues that may materially impact PLS.
- d. To serve on the CLA Board as an observer

#### **6. Communications**

- a. To communicate effectively about PLS's business with all its stakeholders and to maintain the greatest possible degree of transparency commensurate with the orderly running of the business and the protection of confidentiality and privacy.
- b. To maintain effective relationships with the publishing Trade Associations (TAs) and where required, negotiate and manage the services they provide to PLS. To maintain close relationships with publishers more generally and to keep abreast of the changing needs of the industry with respect to collective licensing and rights administration.
- c. To advocate for effective rights management and for the maintenance of a favourable copyright regime.

#### **7. Generally**

- a. To ensure that PLS continues to develop its position as a source of advice and information for publishers on rights management and be responsive to publisher demand for services that are more suited to being managed centrally.
- b. To ensure that the PLS maintains high standards of corporate social responsibility.