

ROLE PROFILE FOR Strategic Partnership Manager

About the National Church Institutions (NCIs)

The National Church Institutions comprises a wide variety of teams, professions and functions that support the mission and ministries of the Church of England in its vision to be a church, centred on Jesus Christ, for the whole nation - a church that is simpler, humbler, bolder.

We Include. You Belong.

Our Belonging and Inclusion Strategy aims for everyone in the National Church Institutions (NCIs) to feel that they belong and are valued for who they are and what they contribute. Together, our people contribute in different ways towards our common purpose, whichever NCI they work in and whatever their background.

Living out our values in all that we do, we:

- Strive for **Excellence**
- Show **Compassion**
- **Respect** others
- **Collaborate**
- Act with **Integrity**

We believe our commitment to belonging and inclusion fuels our progress and drives us forward. The NCIs are a safe, inclusive workplace for people of all backgrounds and walks of life. We welcome applications from people of all faiths and of no faith. We want to encourage applications from a diverse group of people who share our values. Even if you have never thought about working for us before, if you have the skills and experience, we're looking for then we would like to hear from you.

About the National Safeguarding Team

The Church of England is continually striving to improve its safeguarding practices. The 2020 report by IICSA on the Church highlighted failures in respect of child sexual abuse and, more broadly, the challenges facing the Church to get safeguarding right.

The Church's aspiration is that safeguarding is not experienced and approached as a matter of administrative compliance. Rather, it should be what the Church is – something that flows from its core beliefs and values, part of its DNA.

The Church has made important and positive strides over recent years. There is, however, still much to be done to keep children and vulnerable adults safe, and to promote their well-being.

The Church is a complex collection of different bodies. Most of the safeguarding work is carried out locally within the 42 dioceses and cathedrals in England. This work is supported centrally by a National Safeguarding Team (NST).

What you'll be doing

The Strategic Partnership Manager will provide senior leadership, strategic oversight, and trusted coordination for the Independent Safeguarding Audit Programme (ISAP), delivered on behalf of the Archbishops' Council by INEQE Safeguarding Group.

This pivotal role acts as the single point of contact (SPOC) and strategic broker between INEQE, the NST, and participating dioceses and cathedrals. It ensures cohesion, continuity, and trust in ISAP delivery, and plays a central role in safeguarding assurance and reputational risk management at national level.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The role is central to safeguarding assurance, reputational risk management, and public confidence in the Church. It will directly impact the credibility and sustainability of the ISAP.

The role will provide strategic leadership and oversight across a high-profile national programme. The person will act with delegated authority from NST senior leadership to shape partnership, change, stakeholder strategy and influence decision-making at senior levels of the Church and external partners.

The role aims to reduce reputational damage, minimise the disruption of audits, and prevent erosion of trust.

Key Responsibilities:

- Provide senior strategic leadership of the ISAP, ensuring alignment with the Church's wider safeguarding reform and assurance agenda.
- Act as primary liaison and trusted intermediary between INEQE, the NST, and Church bodies — building relationships, managing expectations, and mitigating tensions.
- Lead engagement and preparation for dioceses and cathedrals, strengthening receptivity, reducing resistance, and improving audit outcomes.
- Maintain a rapid insight and intelligence loop, identifying emerging safeguarding risks, relational tensions, and delivery challenges at an early stage.
- Oversee and quality-assure INEQE's delivery against contract requirements, ensuring stability, trust, and effective performance.
- Provide senior advice to NST leadership and other Church bodies on the learning, risks, and trends arising from ISAP.
- Manage reputational risk by anticipating and navigating sensitive safeguarding and audit-related issues under conditions of scrutiny.
- Sustain programme continuity, ensuring trust, credibility, and momentum are maintained across all stakeholders.

- Leads in setting direction and ensuring alignment with wider safeguarding changes ie Safeguarding Structures.
- Responsible for anticipating, interpreting, and mitigating complex risks before they escalate.
- Exercises independent authority in brokering, mediating, and resolving tensions.
- Escalates issues strategically to NST leadership with recommendations for action.
- Acts as a trusted advisor on reputational issues to senior Church and NST leadership.

Your job description is intended to reflect your main tasks and areas of work but is not exhaustive. Changes may occur over time, and you will be expected to agree any reasonable changes to your job description that are commensurate with your banding and in line with the general nature of your post. You will be consulted about any changes to your job description before these are implemented.

About You

The Church of England is for everyone, and we want to reflect the diversity of the community the Church serves across the whole country. Therefore, while of course we welcome all applications from interested and suitably experienced people, we would particularly welcome applicants from UK Minoritised Ethnicities (UKME)/Global Majority Heritage (GMH) and other under-represented groups.

Essential

Knowledge/Experience:

- Senior-level experience of strategic partnership management, contract oversight, or programme leadership in a complex organisational setting.
- Demonstrated ability to navigate sensitive, high-profile issues under media or public scrutiny.
- Proven experience to negotiate, influence, and persuade at national and diocesan level.
- Significant experience in operating in highly complex stakeholder environments with diverse, and sometimes conflicting, priorities.
- Applies judgement and discretion in sensitive and reputationally significant matters.
- Experience of engaging credibly with senior leaders, boards, or governance structures.
- Understanding of safeguarding in institutional or organisational contexts, including the challenges of culture change.
- Able to balance short-term delivery pressures with long-term strategic outcomes.

Skills & Aptitudes

- Excellent stakeholder engagement and brokering skills; able to build trust, mediate tensions, and align expectations.
- Strong political awareness and organisational sensitivity; able to operate effectively in complex, high-stakes environments.
- Exceptional communication skills — written and verbal — including the ability to influence and persuade at senior level.

- Skilled in managing conflict, providing constructive feedback, and handling difficult conversations.
- Analytical and insightful; able to interpret safeguarding intelligence and provide clear, actionable advice.
- Able to develop and sustain relationships with a range of stakeholders, internally and externally, including working sensitively with victims and survivors.
- Able to hold a position of authority and lead by example, inspiring trust and commitment from others.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills, engaging diverse stakeholders with authenticity and expertise. A persuasive and competent presenter at meetings, training sessions and conferences.
- Able to produce clear written documents, including materials tailored to different audiences.
- Able to provide feedback and hold difficult conversations.

Personal Attributes:

- Principled and values-driven; able to act with integrity, authority, and credibility.
- Resilient and calm under pressure; able to manage competing demands and sensitive issues with discretion.
- Courageous and constructive in challenging assumptions and speaking truth to power.
- Self-aware and reflective; open to feedback and committed to continuous learning.
- Strong commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion, and safeguarding.

Qualifications & Training

- Degree or equivalent experience in a relevant field (e.g., safeguarding, risk management, organisational change, public sector leadership, contract management, stakeholder management).
- Relevant professional development in risk, change or programme management (desirable).

Additional guidance

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Vacancy Summary

JOB TITLE: Strategic Partnership Manager

NCI ENTITY: Archbishops' Council

DEPARTMENT: National Safeguarding Team

July 2024

GRADE:	2
SALARY:	£68, 999
WORKING HOURS:	35 hours per week
PRIMARY OFFICE LOCATION:	Church House, Great Smith Street, Westminster
HYBRID WORK ARRANGEMENTS:	Yes
SUITABLE FOR FULL HOMEWORKING:	☐
HOMEWORKING REQUIRED:	☐
CONTRACT TYPE:	Permanent
IS A DBS CHECK REQUIRED? IF YES, WHICH LEVEL	☒ Basic
IS A FAITH-BASED GOR APPLICABLE FOR THIS ROLE?	☐
ORACLE POSITION CODE:	8102238
COST CODE:	22382
PARENT POSITION:	Deputy Director for Learning and Development