



Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN UNITED KINGDOM

CANDIDATE BRIEF FOR THE POSITION OF

National Director (CEO) Aid to the Church in Need UK

SEPTEMBER 2021



ODGERS BERNDTSON
Executive Search

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About Aid to the Church in Need

OUR MISSION: Aid to the Church in Need is a Pontifical Foundation of the Catholic Church, supporting the Catholic faithful and other Christians where they are persecuted, oppressed or in pastoral need.

About Us

From its beginnings, the Church has always provided care for those in need. In addition to its pastoral mission, it is committed to sponsoring social assistance organisations worldwide and supporting those in need in many crisis areas.

But many do not realise that the Church itself often requires urgent help, mainly in developing countries and among those affected by displacement, persecution or catastrophe. The numbers speak volumes: in our world today, some 200 million people cannot freely exercise their faith. The fundamental right of religious freedom is not guaranteed in more than 80 countries.

Christians are currently persecuted, discriminated against or oppressed in more than 40 countries. Here the Church's infrastructure and the human dignity of the faithful cannot be maintained through their own resources, or if so, only with great difficulty. In many of these countries, monetary donations are the only source of income for the Church.

Unlike most charities working to alleviate social needs, Aid to the Church in Need concentrates on supporting local churches, thereby upholding the ideals of Christian charity.

Founded in 1947 as a Catholic aid organisation for war refugees and recognised as a Pontifical Foundation since 2011, Aid to the Church in Need is dedicated to the service of Christians around the world, wherever they are persecuted or oppressed or suffering material need. This is enabled entirely through the generosity of private donors, as our foundation receives no public funding.

Together with hundreds of thousands of benefactors and project partners, we support Christians around the world under our guiding principle "information, prayer and action". In

addition, we are committed to religious freedom and reconciliation across all faiths. Our long-standing experience and belief in the power of charity encourage us to continue on this path and to inspire people about our work around the globe.

Over the 73 years since its foundation, Aid to the Church in Need has developed into an aid organisation with a broad range of activities. We support over five thousand Catholic projects each year in nearly 140 countries – many of these over the long term. In this way, we frequently remain in crisis areas much longer than other aid organisations.

Of course, this requires not only personnel and logistical resources, but also the necessary financial means. Only through the donations of over 330,000 benefactors in 23 countries are we able to fulfil our mission of providing and promoting pastoral assistance.





Our History

The roots of Aid to the Church in Need go back to the period following the Second World War. Europe was in ruins; millions of people were displaced or in flight, often without shelter and plagued by hunger with refugees from eastern Germany particularly affected.

Into this dark hour was born what was to become the life work of Father Werenfried van Straaten. In 1947, he founded the welfare organisation “Ostpriesterhilfe”, from which the charity Iron Curtain Church Relief, today’s Aid to the Church in Need, arose. His relief association organised food and clothing for millions of eastern German refugees and provided spiritual care during this time of crisis. Initially the task seemed nearly impossible – especially considering that those from whom he sought donations were themselves victims of the German war occupation in Belgium and the Netherlands.

Under the leadership of Father Werenfried, the Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need was repeatedly successful in getting unique aid projects off the ground. For instance, priests with backpacks were sent on motorcycles and in VW Beetles to

remote provinces, and chapel trucks were sent as mobile churches to displaced persons.

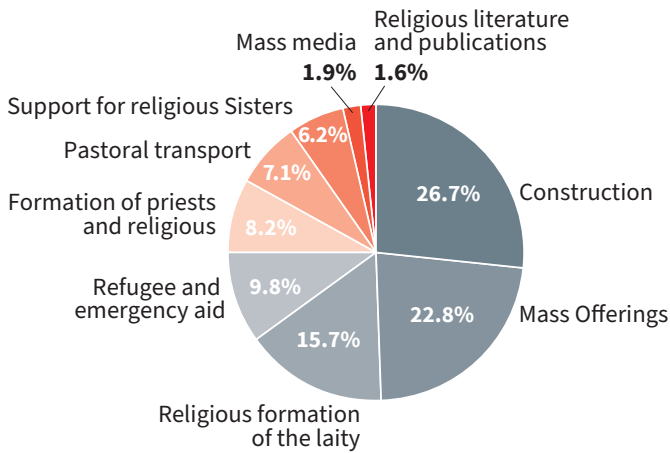
When the Cold War began in the 1950s, the charity launched an unprecedented campaign to lend support to the persecuted Catholic Church in countries behind the Iron Curtain. In the 1960s, aid programmes were extended to Africa, Asia and Latin America. Thanks to the hundreds of thousands of benefactors of Aid to the Church in Need, annual donations total over 106 million Euros. The foundation is now active throughout the world. This success story proves once again how practical charity grows out of a lived faith. There are numerous charities that look after those in need. Aid to the Church in Need is the only international Catholic organisation focusing on the pastoral and spiritual support of persecuted and suffering Christians.

Following our inclusion under the Vatican’s umbrella, our General Secretariat in Germany and our 23 National Sections have been successful in building a unique bridge between benefactors and those in need.





Projects funded by all 23 of ACN’s national offices. Where the help went:



744 construction projects

One third of all construction projects supported were in Africa. They included churches and presbyteries, convents, pastoral centres and seminaries. Likewise in Eastern Europe, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, we were able to support the construction and repair/renovation of many similar buildings.

1,782,097 Mass stipends

Almost 1.8 million Masses were celebrated in the year 2020 – one Mass every 18 seconds, somewhere in the world, for the intentions of one of ACN’s benefactors. In this way we were able to help one in every nine priests worldwide (414,065), particularly in Africa, where 41.5% of our Mass stipends went.

14,009 seminarians supported

There are a total of 115,880 seminarians worldwide, and one in every eight of those studying for the priesthood received support from ACN. Most are studying in Africa (7,589), Latin America (2,384) and Asia (2,097). Once again, this year, training focused on individual and spiritual maturity.

18,126 religious Sisters supported in their apostolate and/or training

One in every 35 of the 641,661 religious Sisters in the world was supported by ACN (in 2019 it was one in every 47). In most cases this was help for the formation of Sisters and novices, or basic support for active and contemplative religious Sisters. It also included retreats and ongoing formation.





1,243 vehicles for pastoral work

These included 783 bicycles, 280 cars, 166 motorcycles, 11 boats, two buses and one lorry. Most of the cars, bicycles and motorcycles in the year 2020 once again went to Asia, Africa and Latin America.

401 coronavirus-related projects

The pandemic demanded a special response (€6,275,910 and 401 projects). Much of our help went to priests and religious in Africa and Latin America.

Altogether, we supported 4,758 projects in 2020. This was 472 projects fewer than in the previous year. Once again, as in past years, we had to turn down many requests (1,432 altogether). In percentage terms, however, we refused fewer requests than in the previous year. Overall, the number of requests (5,727) actually declined. The average amount allocated per project was €13,800. The smallest projects were posters for the Child's Bible, while the biggest were aid parcels for Syria.

Our aid went to 138 countries and 1,145 dioceses – over a third of all the dioceses in the world (3,025). We also helped over 18,000 catechists and other pastoral workers, most of them in Asia and Africa. These two continents, and Latin America too, received the largest number of books, Bibles and other publications.

The pandemic and divine providence

2020 passed in the shadow of the pandemic. Travel and physical contact were limited throughout the world. This had implications for catechesis and worship, not to mention material consequences. Sunday collections stopped – in many cases these were the only source of income for priests, particularly in Africa and Latin America. For months, the faithful could only participate in the celebration of Mass online; unleavened wafers baked by contemplative Sisters were no longer required; schools were closed, leaving many Sisters without an income – with which they otherwise used to help the poor and sick.

We responded with an increase in Mass stipends for priests (from 15.9% to 22.8% of total aid) and basic subsistence support for religious Sisters. We also funded PPE, so they could continue to visit the old and sick.

The shift in aid was also reflected in the countries receiving help. Aid for Africa, already the biggest recipient, increased to 32.6% (from 29.6% in 2019) due not only to the pandemic but also to the growing problem of Islamist extremism. In Central and Eastern Europe, however, the marked rise in aid is due almost entirely to the COVID crisis – for example, our increased help for Sisters in Ukraine. The sharp fall in support for the Middle East was due to building work stopping in the Nineveh Plains region. COVID made it simply impossible to deliver the building materials.

The fall in project requests last year (5,727 compared with 7,154 in 2019) was also partly due to the pandemic. Many of our project partners initially put their plans (particularly for buildings) on hold, in order to focus on emergency aid. These project applications came through in the second half of the year – along with a rise in donations.





Our vision, mission and values

Our Vision

A world in which Christianity can thrive everywhere, free from persecution.

Our Mission

Aid to the Church in Need supports the faithful wherever they are persecuted, oppressed or in pastoral need. Aid to the Church in Need is a Catholic charity helping to bring Christ to the world through Prayer, Information and Action.

Our Values

The following core values of Aid to the Church in Need were agreed upon internationally and this is an adapted English version in the light of the 2019 ACN International document 'The Charism of ACN':

Faith and Christian Love

The foundation of all our activities is Christian faith and love. This includes our fidelity to the Holy Father and adherence to the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church. Above all, ACN strives to live according to the ideal of Christian charity founded on the love of God for the world and especially for those persecuted on account of their faith as it is in them that we see Christ above all.

“They are being tested in faith, we are being tested in love” (Fr Werenfried van Straaten, o.praem.).

In the fulfilment of this task our Lady of Fatima is our Model, Mother, Advocate and Sign of Hope as she shows us the way to the triumph of love over evil.





Pastoral Commitment

Our aim is a pastoral service in faithfulness to ACN's historical charism through which the charity as a pontifical foundation supports the universal pastoral mission of the Catholic Church. This is expressed through our projects at home and abroad in three ways: proclamation of the Word of God and testimony of the faith, celebrating the sacraments, and exercising the ministry of charity and unity. Our way of evangelisation reaches out to the whole human person: body and soul. We strive to proclaim the Gospel "welcome or unwelcome" (2 Timothy 4:2). We are committed to helping our beneficiaries through the financing of pastoral projects and our benefactors through publications, talks and media work.

Prayer

Regular prayer, personal and common, animates our daily work and strengthens our missionary spirit. It moves us to offer spiritual assistance to those who are suffering because of their loyalty to Christ and His Church and unites us to the suffering Church. Our prayer includes above all celebration of the Mass as the heart of gratitude to God and the veneration of Mary who shows us the triumph of love over evil.

Unity

Faithful to our historical roots, we serve in unity and reconciliation. In line with the vision of the Holy Father, we support initiatives in building bridges towards unity with the Orthodox Church, other Churches and ecclesial communities, and other religions. We strive for a deeper unity with our benefactors by praying for their intentions, providing information and expressing gratitude on behalf of those they help. Our understanding of unity involves not merely how people live with one another but how we suffer for one another thus proclaiming an "ecumenism of blood" (Francis, Homily for Closing of Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity, 25th January 2015).

Service

As a bridge between benefactor and beneficiary, we fulfil our mission through humble and selfless service.

Life

Human life is a sacred gift from God. We therefore sustain and defend the Culture of Life in all its dimensions. We promote the understanding of sexuality in the beauty of chaste human love and uphold married and family life as the basic cell of society. ACN UK believes in the sanctity of human life, from the moment of conception to its natural end.

Openness

In Christian fellowship, we will animate and strengthen fruitful communication and dialogue among races, nations and communities. Within the organisation, we will build up and sustain solidarity through transparency and creative responsibility.

Our unshakeable trust in Divine Providence guiding us into the future fills us with hope and confidence and enables us to place trust in others and, in turn, to be trusted by them.

The spirit and charism of the organisation is developed from that of the founder, Fr. Werenfried van Straaten o.praem., whose Spiritual Guidelines are the basis for these values.

In all that we do, we try to be prayerful, professional, personal and pastoral.





Opportunity

Recruitment Context

ACN UK's National Director Neville Kyrke-Smith is retiring in 2022 after more than thirty years with the organisation. Neville has led ACN UK with energy and dedication. He and the team have achieved extraordinary success in engaging and inspiring the Catholic community here in the UK. ACN UK has built a loyal donor base, enjoys strong relationships with senior clergy and is growing its profile and reputation with wider audiences. Neville leaves ACN UK in a very strong position: a talented and committed team, excellent financial health, and foundations to drive forward the next chapter.

The strategic priorities for 2020-2024 are:

1. Increase aid granted to the Church in Need through fundraising growth
2. Increase the number of supporters
3. Contribute to ACN's position as a world authority and resource for issues pertaining to religious freedom and Christian persecution
4. Within the UK, increase understanding of why religious freedom is relevant and urgent to all Christians and other faith groups
5. Make support for persecuted Christians central to the charitable giving of every Catholic
6. Achieve strong recognition in every parish and Catholic school so that every Catholic sees ACN UK as a mainstream, trusted Catholic charity
7. Extend ACN's remit to include advocacy for general and specific government action to uphold individual and collective human rights for Freedom of Religion or Belief to focus on the persecution of Christians within specific campaigns

The Board of Trustees is currently carefully considering ACN's approach to advocacy, specifically how advocacy can be best achieved alongside core fundraising activity. Its approach to influencing government will require alignment with donors and collaboration with other charities and stakeholders. ACN UK already enjoys a strong reputation and presence in the Catholic and secular media and is a voice of authority of religious persecution. The new Chief Executive will work with the team and the Trustees to extend ACN UK's remit with respect to advocacy, ensuring this is pursued in concert with leaders in global headquarters and across the ACN organisation internationally.

The next chapter is one full of hope and opportunity. Building on solid foundations, the new Chief Executive will work with a dedicated and talented team to bring about growth in income and reach, and a greater voice and influence that will inspire benefactors and change the lives of beneficiaries.





Role Description

Main Purpose

The role of the National Director (Chief Executive) is to lead the charity on behalf of the Chairman (National President) & Trustees of the Board. The Chief Executive also liaises with and reports to the Secretary General of ACN International. The Chief Executive focuses the work of the charity on its core calling of prayer, information and action on behalf of persecuted, suffering and needy Christians. The role of the Chief Executive is also to encourage faith, reflecting the spirit, charisma and mission of the charity, as a Pontifical Foundation, by acting with integrity.

This post reports to the Chairman of Aid to the Church in Need UK, with whom immediate and long-term targets are agreed. The Chairman together with the Board members provide the National Director with the necessary support to develop the role.

Regular contact with the Secretary General, the senior management of ACN International and other National Directors helps with the exchange of ideas and encourages best practice. Meeting with Bishops and in the forum of Bishops' Conferences builds up trust and transparency, as well as helping with understanding and respect across the Church and with other Catholic charities. Engagement with ecumenical bodies and inter-religious bodies is also important.

Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership and Management

- Provide leadership to the charity, its staff and stakeholders, ensuring the charitable objectives of the charity are fulfilled
- Be responsible for the day-to-day management of the charity, ensuring its financial health and performance and the highest standards of governance
- Have an open, trusting and productive relationship with the Chairman (National President) and Board of ACN UK
- Work with Trustees and staff to develop the charity's strategic plan, seeking input from volunteers, benefactors and the wider ACN community
- Provide leadership to the senior staff team, and ensure colleagues are equipped to perform well: lead by example, and foster a culture of inclusion, faithfulness, and respect
- Work with the senior team to closely monitor performance and impact in order to maximise the potential of the charity
- Take responsibility for the approval of UK donations to international projects.





Fundraising

- Take a leadership role in fundraising: evolve strategies to deepen sustainable major donor relationships, develop donor acquisition and ensure ACN UK is taking steps to reach and engage new and diverse donor communities
- Empower and enable all staff to help grow income and ensure ACN UK continues to inspire donors. Ensure all staff are working in ways which build profile, trustworthiness, and effectiveness
- Be the voice and face of ACN UK for benefactors and supporters; a professional, pastoral, personal and prayerful relationship with the supporters is of paramount importance.

External Engagement

- Represent ACN UK in a variety of forums in order to raise the issue of Christian persecution and to promote freedom of religion or belief. Raise the profile of ACN UK with bishops, priests, royalty, politicians, government, the media, the charity sector and religious bodies
- Be a member of and engage with bodies such as the UK Freedom of Religion of Belief Forum and the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Religious Freedom and the Right to Believe
- Speak publicly on behalf of ACN UK at events, in the media, and on various official bodies. Prepare articles and reports on the work of ACN UK.

Advocacy

- Conceive and lead campaigns and strategies that extend ACN's position of influence and profile on issues of religious persecution
- Where appropriate, work in partnership with other NGOs and charities on advocacy programmes that serve ACN's mission and which are focused on the system change that is required to prevent persecution.

Working Internationally

- Represent ACN UK internationally: provide input on behalf of ACN UK at ACN International in Königstein, Germany, in meetings with other National Directors, discussing issues with senior international management and being prepared to represent the charity on appropriate committees, consultation groups and boards
- Work with international colleagues to evolve a more strategic approach to how programmes are conceived, and resources designated, ensuring these are aligned with UK donors and the strategic objectives of the UK charity
- Provide input and help to ACN UK internationally when requested, including supporting new National Offices and helping mentor new National Directors
- Undertake travel to project countries from time to time to establish links and to see the impact of the charity first-hand.





The Individual

The Trustees are looking to appoint a National Director (Chief Executive) who has a deeply held belief in the Catholic values of ACN UK and who is passionately committed to helping Christians in need. The Chief Executive will be committed to furthering ACN UK as an impactful and influential organisation at the heart of the Catholic church in the UK. The Trustees are keen to consider candidates from inside and outside the charity sector.

Criteria

- Significant leadership capability with experience gained at a senior level in any sector
- A proven track record of managerial and administrative expertise of comparable scale
- A high degree of business aptitude and financial literacy
- Experience of reporting at Board level; an understanding of corporate or charity governance
- An understanding of geopolitics, international affairs or human rights would be an advantage.

Personal Qualities

- Practising Committed Roman Catholic
- The ability to and appetite to network actively with the church
- The ability to sustain an inspiring working culture and model the values of inclusion and respect; the ability to lead with courage, sensitivity and trust
- The ability and desire to build relationships built on faith and confidence with senior colleagues and with a diverse wider stakeholder group
- A high degree of personal integrity, empathy and authenticity
- An authentic and compelling communicator, with the ability to connect with people from all walks of life.





How to apply

Key Dates

Following a long list meeting of the Selection Panel, successful candidates will be invited to attend preliminary interviews with Odgers Berndtson early November. Closing Day for applications is Friday, 22nd October 2021.

The final interview process with Aid to the Church in Need will take place in December.

How to apply

In order to apply, please submit a comprehensive CV along with a covering letter which sets out your interest in the role and encapsulates the aspects of your experience relevant to the required criteria. Please include current salary details and the names and addresses of three referees. Referees will not be approached until the final stages and not without prior permission from candidates.

The preferred method of application is online at: **www.odgers.com/82756**

If you are unable to apply online, please email: **evie.day@odgersberndtson.com**

All applications will receive an automated response.

All candidates are also requested to complete an online Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form which will be found at the end of the application process. This will assist ACN UK in monitoring selection decisions to assess whether equality of opportunity is being achieved. Any information collated from the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms will not be used as part of the selection process and will be treated as strictly confidential.

Personal data

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and / or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/ application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember to not mention anyone's information or details (e.g.: referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

Contact details

For a conversation in confidence, please contact:

Sarah Lowndes Jones

sarah.lowndesjones@odgersberndtson.com

Kitty Grubb

kitty.grubb@odgersberndtson.com

We are committed to ensuring everyone can access our website and application processes. This includes people with sight loss, hearing, mobility and cognitive impairments. Should you require access to these documents in alternative formats, please contact **evie.day@odgersberndtson.com**

Also, if you have any comments and/or suggestions about improving access to our application processes please do not hesitate to contact us **response.manager@odgersberndtson.com**



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