

JOB PROFILE

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO)

We're looking for a commercially savvy **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** to be the heart of the Greeting Card Association (GCA) and the driving force behind the UK's vibrant greeting card industry. You'll work in close partnership with our President, Board, and Council, setting our strategic direction while personally delivering the day-to-day operations that keep us moving. Your mission is to ensure the GCA remains relevant, financially resilient, and fit for a future where the cultural and commercial importance of card-sending continues to thrive.

You'll be the person who turns high-level vision into clear, actionable plans, delivering strong governance and exceptional value to our diverse community of publishers, retailers, and suppliers. Whether you are acting as our "loud, clear voice" on critical issues like postal reliability and sustainability laws, or navigating the industry into the future, you will do it with a leadership style that is collaborative, inclusive, and empowering. You will foster a culture of open communication where diverse perspectives are welcomed, and teamwork is encouraged at every level.

If you thrive in a collaborative environment and find reward in a role that requires both high-level strategic influence and the direct delivery of core operations, seamlessly transitioning from board-level engagement to overseeing digital platforms and systems, this is the role for you. You will lead the GCA with warmth and professional credibility, ensuring our much-loved creative industry stays connected and competitive for years to come.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Accountable to:	GCA President (on behalf of the Board, Council and Members)
Key Internal Relationships:	Council/Board members, committees and working groups, members, staff/contractors and professional advisers (e.g., accountant/bookkeeper).
Key External Relationships:	Royal Mail, Ofcom, relevant government departments and parliamentarians, media, trade press, partner organisations, sponsors and suppliers.
Working Hours:	3 to 5 days per week (open to discussion). Requires flexibility for occasional events and media appearances, plus attendance at key industry tradeshows including Spring & Autumn Fair, Top Drawer, PG Live, and Home & Gift.
Working Location:	Home-based with operations primarily online. Requires mandatory in-person attendance for 4 Council and 4 Board meetings per year, alongside regular travel for industry events and stakeholder meetings.
Salary:	Competitive and aligned with industry standards for the sector and scale of our organisation; dependent on the candidate's specific skills and experience.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Strategy, Leadership and Organisational Performance

- Work with the President, Board and wider council to proactively shape, recommend, develop and deliver a multi-year strategy and annual operating plan.
- Set, monitor and report on clear KPIs (member engagement/retention, income targets, event performance, campaign reach, stakeholder outcomes).
- Stay two steps ahead of trends and risks (such as legislative changes) so our members aren't caught off guard.
- Act as a neutral broker who can get competing businesses to work together for the good of the whole industry.

2. Commercial Strategy and Income Generation

- Develop and deliver an income generation plan to diversify revenue and build financial resilience beyond core subscriptions.
- Grow commercial income through conferences and events, as well as turning industry data and insights into products members are willing to pay for.
- Build and manage a pipeline of sponsors/partners and ensure strong account management and renewals.
- Actively hunt for new revenue, such as industry sponsorships or government grants.
- Ensure all commercial activity aligns with member value and protects the GCA's independence and reputation.

3. Member Value and Engagement

- Develop and continually refine the membership proposition for different member types (publishers, retailers, suppliers, individuals).
- Drive membership recruitment and retention, using data insights to understand trends, renewals and lapsed members.
- Ensure members have access to timely, practical support, guidance and opportunities to connect and collaborate.
- Maintain a strong feedback loop with members (including structured member listening and annual check-ins with key member segments).
- Oversee the planning and delivery of key in-person events (e.g., Conference & AGM, Dragons Speed Dating, local meetups) and online programs / webinars.
- Ensure events deliver member value and commercial outcomes, with clear budgeting, sponsorship and post-event evaluation.
- Build strong relationships with venues, suppliers and speakers to ensure quality and value for money.

4. Advocacy and Industry Voice

- Represent the GCA and the greeting card industry with stakeholders including Royal Mail, Ofcom, government and regulators.
- Be the loud, clear voice for the industry on critical issues like postal reliability and sustainability laws.
- Build alliances, and meet regularly, with other relevant trade bodies and partners to amplify influence.
- Act as a credible spokesperson and thought leader for the industry.
- Oversee the GCA's communications strategy to members and external audiences (newsletter, website, social media, events and PR).
- Lead delivery of industry and consumer-facing initiatives/campaigns that protect and promote card sending (e.g., Thinking of You Week, Festive Friday, #Cardmitment).
- Protect and enhance the GCA brand and reputation, ensuring consistency of message and tone across channels.

5. Governance, Finance, Risk and Compliance

- Ensure the GCA operates in line with its Articles of Association and applicable legal and regulatory requirements.
- Support effective governance: prepare board/council papers, organise meetings, ensure minutes/actions are captured, and keep governance documents up to date (e.g., Council Handbook).
- Lead the annual budgeting process, manage cash flow and reserve, and ensure timely year-end accounts and audit/independent examination (as applicable).
- Oversee financial controls, accounting processes and external providers (e.g., bookkeeper/subscription reconciliation service).
- Maintain organisational risk management, policies (including data protection) and insurance.

6. Resource and Operational Delivery

- Manage the GCA's professional staff member(s) and coordinate our network of contractors and volunteers.
- Oversee efficient day-to-day operations and supplier management, ensuring the organisation is well-run and responsive.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion in organisational practice and across GCA activity.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential Skills & Experience

- Senior leadership experience.
- Demonstrable commercial acumen and a track record of growing income.
- Strong financial management capability (budgeting, cashflow, reserves, working with accountants and/or auditors).
- Willingness to be hands-on with administrative and operational tasks.
- Governance experience and confidence working with a Board/Council of non-executive or elected members.
- Excellent stakeholder engagement and influencing skills, including with senior industry leaders and (where relevant) regulators/government.
- Strong marketing, communications and public speaking capability; able to act as an effective external spokesperson.
- Experience overseeing events and programs with both member value and commercial objectives.
- Hands-on ability to use our systems, update the website, and lead digital marketing campaigns.

Desirable

- Experience within the Greeting Card industry or within a membership organisation, trade body, or related not-for-profit environment.
- Experience of policy, lobbying or public affairs.
- Media Trained.
- Ability to influence without formal authority; specifically, the skill to mobilise, motivate, and galvanise a volunteer-led member base and Board to achieve collective industry goals.
- Experience of managing small teams and/or working in a 'hands-on' leadership role.
- Familiarity with Xero (or similar accounting systems).
- Trustee/non-executive, volunteering or governance roles.

Personal attributes

- Collaborative, inclusive and empowering leadership style.
- Member-centric and commercially pragmatic: balances member value with financial sustainability.
- Highly organised, with strong follow-through and attention to detail.
- An entrepreneurial approach: the ability to switch seamlessly between high-level board strategy and hands-on operational tasks (e.g., website updates).
- A proactive leader who shapes outcomes by providing clear, evidence-based recommendations to the Board, rather than just facilitating consensus; someone who leads the conversation on the 'future of the industry'.
- Confident communicator with credibility and warmth.

HOW TO APPLY

Please send a copy of your CV and Covering Letter to Karen Wilson, GCA President at gcapresident@papersalad.com

Note on Discretion: We recognise that many qualified candidates currently hold key positions within our industry. Please be assured that your application will be treated with absolute confidentiality and will not be disclosed beyond the immediate hiring panel made up of GCA Directors. We are committed to protecting your current professional standing throughout the recruitment process.

RECRUITMENT TIMELINE

27th April	Applications Open <i>(Applications will be reviewed and screened throughout)</i>
20th May	Applications Close
8th and 9th July	First-stage interviews to take place online
12th August	Second-stage interviews to take place in-person <i>(location to be confirmed later, but likely to be happening in London)</i>
1st December	Proposed start date

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Our current CEO will be leaving at the end of 2026. Therefore, we are looking for our new CEO to start sometime in November / Early December so that an appropriate handover can be carried out.

Interviews will initially take place online with a longer interview being carried out in-person subject to passing the first-stage interview. Interviews are expected to commence around June 2026.

ABOUT THE GREETING CARD ASSOCIATION (GCA)

The Greeting Card Association (GCA) is the trade body for the UK greeting card industry, representing a vibrant and diverse community of publishers, retailers, suppliers, and creative professionals.

As the recognised voice of the sector, the GCA champions the cultural and commercial importance of card sending, working closely with the media, Royal Mail, Ofcom, government and other stakeholders to support growth and ensure the industry's long-term success.

We provide members with valuable insight, practical support, industry initiatives, and opportunities to connect through events and networking, helping to sustain and shape this much-loved UK creative industry.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The GCA is committed to embedding and improving equality, diversity and inclusiveness in the Greeting Card industry both in the workplace and across the range of cards available.

The GCA will encourage and promote equality and diversity across the industry, to ensure an inclusive, welcoming and inspiring environment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity or marriage and civil partnerships.

We strive to represent, celebrate and embrace diversity across the industry. All GCA members and partners have a responsibility to enact these values. Everyone should feel welcome and valued within the industry regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

The GCA will ensure that our recruitment is fair, open and inclusive of all roles and membership. The GCA is also committed to ensure that diversity and inclusion are a key objective for the council and wider association.

Furthermore, the GCA is committed to ensuring that their own communications consider all matters of diversity, including but not limited to; printed material, digital resources, speakers and the language it uses.