

Head of Innovation
£62,151 per annum (London)
£53,459 per annum (Outer London)
35 hours per week
Hybrid with primary office located in
London, Oxfordshire or Wales



OUR VISION

As the largest women's organisation in the UK, we aim to offer women the best opportunity to make an impact in their communities and to make change on the issues that matter to them. We have a long track record of successfully campaigning for change at local, national and international level on everything from violence against women to climate change and microplastic pollution. We also offer women the chance to come together, to learn new skills and build social connections wherever they live.



The NFWI (National Federation of Women's Institutes) strategic vision sets out an ambitious plan to drive our organisation forward for the future by growing our membership, reaching more women and making a positive impact in communities across the UK.

We aim to be an organisation of choice for all women, building on our past successes and the strength of our current membership and influence to ensure a sustainable and strong future for the WI.

Vision statement 1: Bold and Inspiring

We will be a bold voice representing all women and the communities in which they live.

Vision statement 2: Growing and Relevant

We will work together to continually promote the achievements of our organisation, reach more women and grow our membership.

Vision statement 3: Inclusive

Our membership will reflect our local communities and we will represent women from all backgrounds through the work we do.

Vision statement 4: Flexible

We will remove any practical barriers to women supporting us by offering flexible ways they can engage with what we do.

OUR VALUES

The WI is based on the ideals of fellowship, truth, tolerance and justice.

With our original roots in rural and agricultural communities, we now embrace the interests of women in both rural and urban communities. All women who are interested in the values and purposes of the WI may join.

OUR PURPOSE

The main purposes of the WI are:

- **to advance the education of women and girls for the public benefit in all areas including (without limitation):**
 - local, national and international issues of political and social importance;
 - music, drama and other cultural subjects; and
 - all branches of agriculture, crafts, home economics, science, health and social welfare;
- **to promote sustainable development for the public benefit by:**
 - educating people in the preservation, conservation and protection of the environment and the prudent use of natural resources; and
 - promoting sustainable means of achieving economic growth and regeneration;
- **to advance health for the public benefit; and**
- **to advance citizenship for the public benefit by the promotion of civic responsibility and volunteering.**



The WI seeks to give women the opportunity of working together through the WI in their communities, of developing their capacity and skills, and of putting into practice those ideals for which the WI stands.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE NFWI

The WI was originally formed in 1915 with two clear aims: to revitalise rural communities and to encourage women to become more involved in producing food during the First World War. Our aims have broadened a little since then, and we are now the largest women's organisation in the UK. We currently have over 170,000 members in 5,500 WIs.

Membership is open to women and meetings are held in workplaces, village halls and pubs in towns, cities and villages.

We also offer the option to join our movement without becoming a member, by giving a donation to become a WI Supporter. This is an opportunity to support our causes and campaigns and be kept in the loop about all things WI.



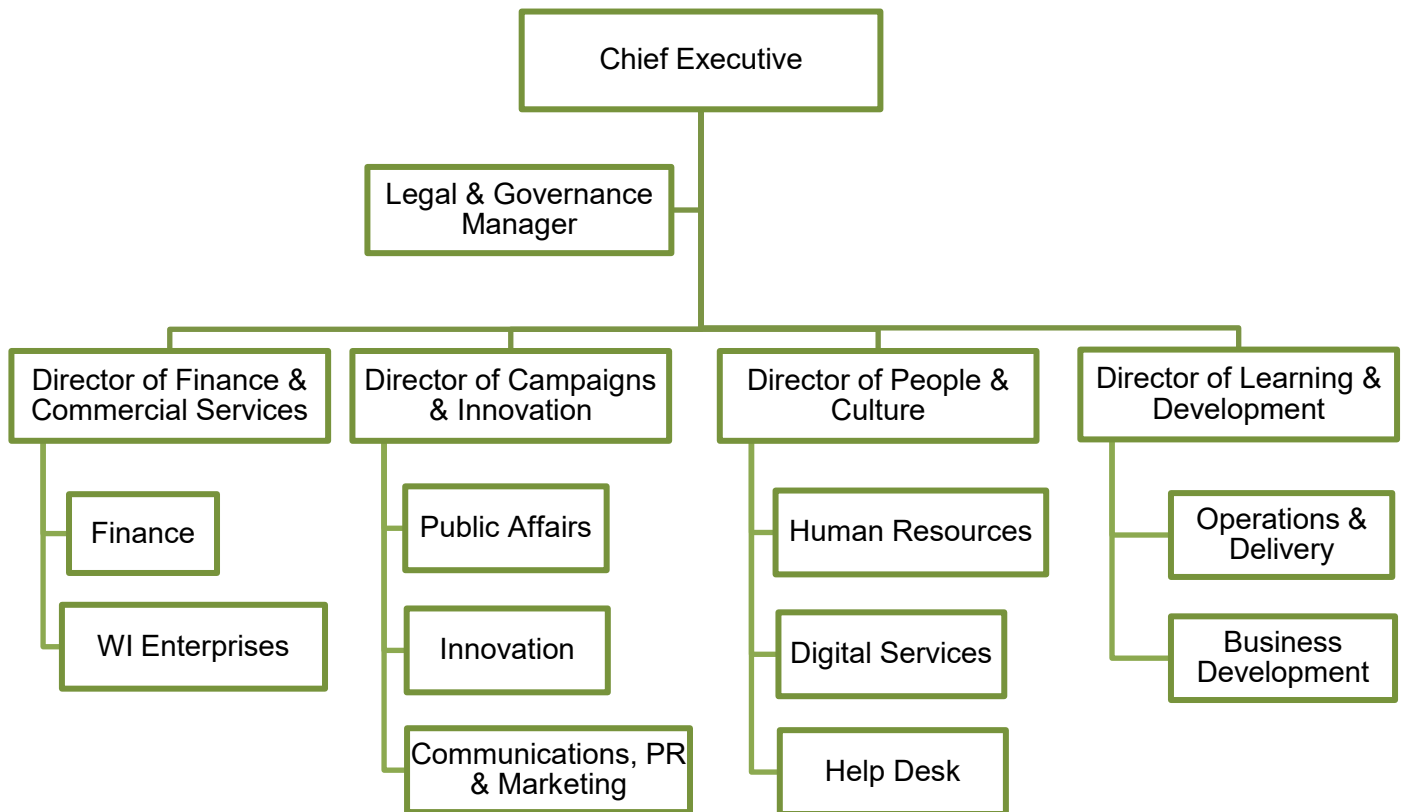
THE STRUCTURE AND FRAMEWORK OF THE NFWI

Structure

Each WI is self-governing within the framework of the WI constitution and rules and belongs to one of 69 federations – each with a regional office. The WIs and federations make up the National Federation. Each level of the organisation is run by a committee of elected members. The NFWI Board of Trustees is democratically elected every two years by WI members. The national head office is in London, with other offices located in Cardiff and Oxfordshire.

NFWI staffing structure

The NFWI has approximately 40 staff across its three sites in London, Oxfordshire and Wales.



Central Secretariat

The Central Secretariat team is at the core of the NFWI, its main function being the governance of the federated charity structure. This includes implementation of legal and regulatory requirements and supporting and carrying out the work of our internal governance structure, including our elected Board of Trustees and our consultative body, National Council. Alongside this internal function, the focus of the department is on the provision of support the 4500 charities within in the national federated structure and to our 170,000 members. The Central Secretariat team communicate policy and information throughout the organisation as well as being available to members for specific advice on governance matters. Our aim is to work in partnership with members, so they feel supported and informed about the wider work of the national charity and how to ensure the effective management of their own individual charities. We also encourage continuous improvement and benchmarking with national governance standards to ensure our charities are strong, well-run and sustainable. Our model is one of empowerment and support, building on our organisational values and shared mission.

Finance and Commercial Services

The Finance and Commercial Services directorate includes Finance and WI Enterprises Ltd. The Finance team generates income through fundraising, Gift Aid and legacies. This ensures a joined-up approach to our long-term financial planning, income generation and sustainability with a focus on moving away from reliance on membership income and developing a diverse income portfolio. The Finance team are also responsible for financial process, planning and management.

WI Enterprises Ltd is the trading company of the NFWI. It exists to raise revenue for the NFWI and provide benefits for members. The majority of NFWI income is from annual subscriptions. Other sources of revenue include grant-making bodies, educational trusts, commercial sponsors and investments. WI Enterprises is expected to generate a considerable profit each year through its various commercial activities. These include the ad revenue from the *WI Life* magazine, sale of WI branded products; joint WI-Fred Olsen cruises; and other commercial partnerships.

People and Culture

The People and Culture directorate is responsible for supporting the organisation through its people, systems, technology and central support services. The directorate includes Human Resources, IT and Digital Services, and the Help Desk.

The directorate plays a key role in creating a positive and inclusive workplace culture, supporting organisational development and employee wellbeing, and ensuring the organisation has the people, processes and systems needed to deliver its strategic objectives.

Human Resources provides expert people support to staff and advice across the organisation and is also responsible for member support in relation to complaints and safeguarding matters. The directorate additionally coordinates organisational health

and safety arrangements, providing policy, guidance and oversight while supporting managers and teams in meeting their day-to-day health and safety responsibilities.

IT and Digital Services is responsible for maintaining the organisation's IT infrastructure, systems and cybersecurity arrangements, while also managing and developing the organisation's digital presence, including its website and social media channels.

The Help Desk provides a central point of contact for enquiries, helping to deliver a more consistent, efficient and responsive service across the organisation while ensuring colleagues, members and federations are directed to the right support.

Together, these functions help ensure colleagues, volunteers, members and federations receive the support they need while enabling the organisation to deliver its strategic objectives.

Learning and Development

The Learning and Development directorate is responsible for ensuring a high-quality education and learning experience to members across England, Wales and the Islands that enhances the NFWI's membership offer. Learning and development for members and non-members is mainly delivered through VIA, an online platform that offers free, high-quality educational courses tailored to diverse needs and aspirations. As an educational charity, learning is at the heart of the WI. The provision of education through the Denman Trust enabled the launch of the WI Learning Hub (now VIA) in January 2024.

Campaigns and Innovation

The Campaigns and Innovation directorate brings together Campaigns and Public Affairs, PR and Communications, and Innovation to increase the WI's visibility, influence and impact. The directorate leads external communications, marketing, public affairs and audience development, helping to raise the organisation's profile and strengthen its reputation.

A key focus of the directorate is to grow the WI's presence within communities, trialling new ways of engaging with new and under-represented audiences, and working to better understand the issues that matter to women and their communities. Through insight, innovation and engagement, the directorate develops new approaches to participation, supports membership growth, and helps ensure the organisation remains relevant and responsive to changing needs.

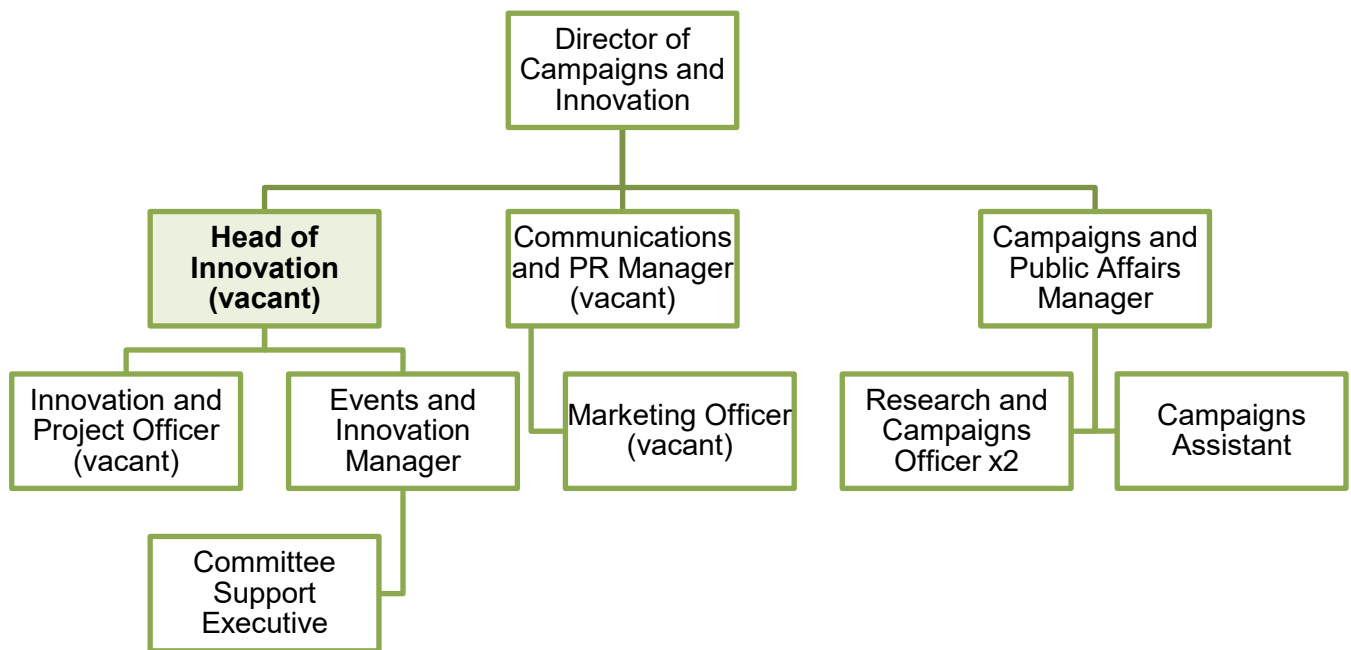
The directorate also plays an important role in raising the profile of the WI with stakeholders, partners and the wider public, building relationships that strengthen the organisation's influence and support its ability to create positive change on issues that matter to women.

The Innovation team

The newly established Innovation team, led by the Head of Innovation, is responsible for driving change and innovation across the organisation. This includes exploring new approaches to expanding our membership, creating wider engagement with new

audiences and raising the overall profile of the WI by using a test-and-learn framework, piloting new initiatives and leading on events activity that increases our visibility.

Campaigns and Innovation directorate structure



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Head of Innovation
Department:	Innovation
Location:	Hybrid working with primary location in London, Oxfordshire or Wales
Organisation:	National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI)
Reports to:	Director of Campaigns and Innovation
Responsible for:	Innovation and Project Officer Events and Innovation Manager

Job Purpose

The Head of Innovation leads innovation across the organisation, providing strategic leadership and operational delivery to grow our membership and reach, while exploring and developing future membership options that reflect the needs and aspirations of women today and in the future. The role is responsible for enhancing the charity's visibility and relevance among wider communities of women, and supporting financial growth through diversified engagement opportunities and partnerships.

Main Functions

- Lead innovation across the organisation, providing both strategic leadership and operational management for the innovation agenda to deliver organisational growth and diversification. This includes developing and expanding the opportunities the organisation offers, to ensure the WI remains relevant and reaches a wider group of women.
- Embed a culture of evidence-informed practice, continuous development and improvement, supported by the creation of a research and development programme, to drive innovation across the charity's membership offer.
- Develop and deliver a 'test and learn' programme of membership innovation projects to pilot and evaluate new membership models for the organisation.
- Line management and development of the Innovation and Project Officer and Innovation and Events Manager.
- Contribute to the organisational priorities of cultural diversity, equal opportunities and environmental responsibility.

Principal Responsibilities

Lead innovation (strategic leadership & operational management)

- Develop and lead the long-term strategy for innovation focused on growth, diversification, inclusivity, and financial sustainability, ensuring this supports organisational priorities and values.
- Provide strategic leadership and direction for innovation activities, working with the senior leadership team to identify opportunities and embed innovation into organisational strategy and decision-making.
- Oversee the design, delivery and performance of innovation initiatives, ensuring regular evaluation and reporting to promote accountability and continuous improvement.
- Champion cross-team collaboration to enhance membership offers, models, and engagement.
- Promote innovation at Board and senior leadership level ensuring that it is factored into influencing and investment decisions, and act as a key adviser on innovation across the organisation.
- Use findings gathered from research and testing to expand and diversify membership reach, particularly with a view to engaging new and underrepresented groups of women.

Embed a culture of evidence-informed practice and continuous development and improvement, supported by the creation of a research and development programme

- Champion data-led decision-making across membership innovation and the wider organisation.
- Develop and embed frameworks, tools, and systems that allow for effective capture of data and evidence to support learning and evaluation, and their effective application across innovation projects.
- Design and manage the end-to-end innovation pipeline, from research and insight generation through to testing, launch, and ongoing development of new membership models.
- Lead a structured research and development programme, overseeing mixed-method research to understand current and potential audiences, identify trends and opportunities, and translate findings into actionable recommendations that support organisational growth and future-proof membership offerings.
- Build and maintain strategic partnerships and networks with stakeholders and external organisations to strengthen collaboration, enhance research opportunities, and support the delivery of data-informed innovation.
- Proactively identify and apply sector trends, opportunities, and best practice to inform innovation priorities and wider organisational strategy.

- Support the Communications and PR Manager in identifying and engaging potential high-profile supporters, ensuring alignment with target audiences for growth and organisational priorities.

Develop and deliver a 'test and learn' membership innovation programme

- Design and deliver a programme of pilot projects to test new membership models, services, and engagement methods.
- Bring creativity and ambition to the development of new membership products and experiences, applying data and findings gained from test and learn projects to support innovation and mitigate associated risks.
- Develop and oversee robust evaluation frameworks for pilots, using data and feedback to assess impact, value and effectiveness, and support evidence-based decision-making.
- Capture, share, and embed learning from pilots, supporting wider adoption of successful membership innovation projects and best practice across the organisation.

Line management and development of the Innovation and Project Officer and Innovation and Events Manager

- Be a positive role model by promoting a constructive, inclusive and respectful team culture.
- Build effective working relationships across the organisation, and with key stakeholders.
- Support and oversee team performance, including appraisals, objective setting, training and development.
- Provide opportunities for professional growth and development within the role and across the organisation.
- Manage people matters appropriately, including attendance, performance and conduct issues.
- Ensure team activity and project work support the NFWI's strategic objectives.

Budget and resource management

- Manage the Innovation budget, ensuring value for money and effective management of suppliers to maximise impact.

Cultural diversity, equal opportunities and environmental responsibility

- Uphold a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, ensuring these values are reflected in workplace culture and relationships with external stakeholders.
- Promote a respectful and inclusive environment where all individuals are valued and supported.

- Champion environmental responsibility by adopting sustainable working practices and encouraging responsible behaviours in interactions with external organisations.

This is a summary of the main activities of the role and this post requires flexibility to undertake other duties not specified in this job description but compatible with the role or the department.

We pride ourselves on being one big team and expect all NFWI roles to provide occasional support in other areas of the business where skills are compatible.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualities	<i>Essential</i>	<i>Desirable</i>
Experience and Interest	• Experience of innovation, membership, project or programme design, or organisational development. • Proven experience of developing and delivering strategy, particularly focused on growth, diversification, and engagement. • Experience of leading organisational change and embedding innovation across teams. • Experience of designing and delivering test-and-learn or pilot programmes. • Experience of using research, insight, and evaluation to inform decision-making. • Experience of managing and developing staff and leading teams. • Demonstrable commitment to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion into organisational practices and broadening participation. • Experience of working collaboratively with senior leaders and influencing decision-making. • Experience of reporting and presenting at Board level. • An interest in working for the WI.	• Experience within the charity, membership, or not-for-profit sector. • Experience of audience development and engaging underrepresented groups. • Experience of building external partnerships and networks. • Experience of working with boards or governance structures.

Education and Training	• Educated to degree level or equivalent professional experience.	• A relevant degree or qualification in business development, project management, research or innovation.
Knowledge	• Strong understanding of innovation methodologies, including test-and-learn prototyping, and project or programme design. • Knowledge of research methods (qualitative and quantitative) and how to embed data-informed decision making. • Understanding of membership models, audience engagement, and growth strategies. • Knowledge of evaluation frameworks and continuous improvement practices. • Awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion principles in project and programme design and delivery. • Good knowledge of Microsoft Office including Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook.	• Knowledge of trends affecting membership organisations or the voluntary sector. • Knowledge of the breadth of views, experiences and preferences of women in the UK across demographic and geographical segments. • Knowledge of audience segmentation and targeting. • Knowledge of income generation models. • An understanding of the WI.
Skills/Abilities	• Strong creative and strategic thinking and ability to translate vision into actionable plans. • Excellent leadership and people management skills, with the ability to motivate and develop teams. • Highly developed analytical and problem-solving skills. • Ability to design, manage, and evaluate complex projects and programmes.	• Strong facilitation skills, including workshops and co-creation activities. • Experience of communicating effectively to different audiences. • Ability to act as an ambassador and advocate for innovation internally and externally.

	• Excellent communication and influencing skills, including the ability to engage senior stakeholders and present insights clearly. • Ability to work collaboratively across teams and build effective relationships internally. • Excellent networking and partnership building skills. • Skilled in using data and insights to drive decision-making and innovation. • Ability to manage multiple priorities and work flexibly in a changing environment.	
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Circumstances of the job

- The salary is £62,151 per annum, which is NJC point 46 in the range 46-49 on the London scale and £53,459 which is NJC point 42 in the range 42-45 on the outer London scale.
- The NFWI operate a hybrid working arrangement which includes:
 - Staff are required to work a minimum of 1 day in their primary office each week (agreed with the manager) but with ability to work up to 3 days a week in the office.
 - Attendance at meetings, events and conferences to enhance performance or that fall within this role, are in addition to this.
 - Managers can request you attend the office more often where there is a business need.
 - Core hours are in effect, from 10am to 4pm, which means your hours must include this time but with flexibility to work between 8am and 6pm, both at home and in the office.
 - There is a Hybrid Policy to support the arrangement, which is non-contractual and subject to change.
 - We are also open to other forms of formal flexible working requests which staff can request from the outset of their employment.
- Some attendance at meetings or conferences may occasionally require overnight stays unless they are digital.
- Evidence of right to work in the UK will be required before appointment.

- The selection process starts with a written application to explain your suitability for the role based on the job description and person specification, and any ideas you have to enhance your application. The interview process will be in person, but please contact us if this is difficult for you.

SELECTION PROCESS

How to apply

To apply for this role, **please submit a covering letter and your current CV to the [HR Team](#)**. In your letter you will need to explain why you are interested in the role and how your skills and experience make you a suitable candidate based on the job description and person specification.

Please note that incomplete applications will not be considered. If you need any adjustments or support with the application process, please contact us as we may be able to help.

Your completed application should be returned via email by **3 September 2026**.

Applications after the closing date will not be considered.

Unfortunately we are unable to provide feedback on applications if not shortlisted for interview, therefore if you have not heard from us by **31 September 2026**, please assume that your application has been unsuccessful.

For further information on the NFWI refer to [our website](#).

Shortlisting of candidates

All applications will be measured against the person specification and job description as presented above.

Interview process

Applicants who demonstrate their skills, experience and knowledge to a sufficient standard in their application will be invited to interview. In order to get the best out of candidates and ensure that the process is as comfortable as possible, we aim to create an open conversation during the interview. There will be questions that relate to the job and person specification, but we also have some time to answer questions from candidates.

We understand that some may find the interview process slightly nerve-wracking, so we are happy for candidates to refer to notes throughout to enable them to share as much as possible. In order to support a free-flowing conversation we discourage scripted reading unless this is required as a reasonable adjustment.

There will be two rounds of interviews that will take place:

First round (virtual via Teams): 11 September 2026

Second round (in-person at our London office): 15 September 2026

FURTHER APPLICATION INFORMATION

Qualifications

Candidates should be prepared to produce evidence of educational and professional qualifications claimed on their application form if required.

Salary

The NFWI sets salaries in accordance with the National Joint Council (NJC). NJC negotiates a salary award each year payable from 1 October. All offers of employment will be made at the starting point on the scale.

The salary is £62,151 per annum, which is NJC point 46 in the range 46-49 on the London scale and £53,459 which is NJC point 42 in the range 42-45 on the outer London scale. Salary is paid monthly in arrears on the 25th of each month for the whole calendar month.

References

All offers of employment are subject to satisfactory references.

Right to work in the UK

All offers of employment are conditional upon evidence of your right to work in the UK. You will be asked to present this before appointment.

Probation period

All staff will undertake a three-month probationary period which can be extended up to five months.

WORKING FOR THE NFWI

Diversity and Equal Opportunities

We believe that the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are central to our work as an effective employer. They are inherent in our values. We pride ourselves on building positive relationships, we strive to ensure that anyone who engages with us finds it easy to do so, and feel they are supported and treated fairly, with dignity and respect.



The NFWI recognises that groups in society experience discrimination as a result of a protected characteristic. We oppose such discrimination. When recruiting, the NFWI does not discriminate against any applicants. All vacancies will be filled by successful applicants assessed on their ability to do the job. We guarantee an interview to any candidate with a disability who meets the essential criteria for the post.

Employee Benefits

- Hybrid working with a minimum of one day a week in the office
- A fully auto-enrolled contributory Personal Pension scheme with maximum employer contributions set at 8%
- A holiday entitlement of 196 hours (28 days) per annum rising to 210 hours (30 days) after 5 years' service. Bank holidays are in addition to this
- Benenden Health scheme (non-contributory)
- Company enhanced maternity, adoption and partner/paternity pay subject to qualification
- Family leave policies including parental leave, flexible working, compassionate leave, carer's leave and dependant's leave
- Wellbeing policies including mental health and wellbeing and menopause
- A commitment to training and development

OUR LOCATION

Address: [104 New Kings Road, London, SW6 4LY](https://www.nfwlondon.org.uk/contact-us)

Tel: 020 7371 9300 (switchboard)

Nearest tube station: Parsons Green or Putney Bridge (District line)

Nearest train station: Putney

THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING THE NFWI