



British Heart Foundation

Candidate pack

Role: Sales Assistant



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Appointment of Sales Assistant

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in our role of Sales Assistant at the British Heart Foundation (BHF).

It is my privilege to lead the Retail team for the UK's largest charity retailer.

The BHF is strong, highly effective and well respected nationally and internationally. Our work has helped save countless lives - in the UK and beyond – and enhances the lives of many more. We have a big job on our hands - raising money to fund life saving research.

When it comes to retail, we are leaders in the sector. We have over 700 stores across the UK and ongoing expansion plans. We serve 60 million customers each year. Plus we've regularly delivered annual profits of up to £30 million that fund pioneering research into heart and circulatory diseases. We couldn't do it without our people who run a seamless operation, get a kick out of finding brilliant products, and deliver a first-rate customer service.

Our Sales Assistants contribute towards maximising shop sales and profits as well as the successful day to day running of the store.

We want an exceptional colleague who exemplifies and champions our values; brave, informed, compassionate and driven. It's an incredibly exciting time to be part of our team. We are more ambitious and determined than ever – because the cures and treatments we need are in sight. You could be part of getting us there sooner, so thank you for your interest.


The BHF is also proud that we are working towards being a truly diverse organisation. Our growing commitment to equality and diversity spans across our organisation and we pride ourselves in being an inclusive employer who puts diversity at the heart of everything that we do.

So, if you feel you have the skills and experience that we are looking for, and you share our determination to help fund life saving research, then we would be delighted to hear from you.

Alli Swaine-Hughes

Retail Director





Ghayan saved his son Jady's life after performing CPR on him when he was six years old

About the British Heart Foundation

After a year that tested the BHF like no other, we remain proud of our commitment to research. With significant disruption to our ability to generate income, we worked hard to mitigate the impact on our charitable mission. Due to Covid-19 our 2020-21 net income was down by 47% but the BHF continues to lead the way in research. With over £450m of BHF-funded research underway, and the BHF supporting 55% of all non-commercial research into heart and circulatory diseases carried out in the UK, the commitment of the BHF to honouring existing commitments and considering funding new research projects remains intact.

We raise money to fund research that saves and improves lives, and to support people affected by heart and circulatory diseases. These diseases can affect anyone and everyone. By funding the research that will find breakthroughs, we hope to realise our vision of a world free from the fear of heart and circulatory diseases.

In 2021 we're celebrating 60 years of life saving research. We are the leading independent funder of cardiovascular research in the UK with an employee base of over 4,000, supported by a further 18,000 volunteers. We are also the UK's largest charity retailer with almost 730 stores.

Covid-19 has caused us all to rely on science for solutions. And science has delivered in abundance, including developing, testing, and producing effective vaccines and therapeutics in record time.

Our life saving work is primarily advanced through long-term investment in medical research with an aspiration to invest £1 billion in cardiovascular research over the next ten years.

Our pioneering research has helped to transform the lives of people living with heart and circulatory conditions. The landscape of heart and circulatory disease is changing.

More people now survive a heart attack or stroke than ever before in the UK, and that combined with an ageing population means more people are now living with a heart or circulatory disease. We will continue to fund life saving research, vital prevention and survival activity, ensuring quality care and support for those affected by heart and circulatory diseases.

Working in retail

Let us share our story so far...

Our Retail directorate began with two very determined fundraisers from Leicester, Dorothy and Anne. From their BHF loan of £2,000 to set up a single shop, 32 years later their legacy lives on, with over 700 stores across the country. We are the UK's largest charity retailer. We've opened an average of one new store every fortnight for the past 32 years.

We fully appreciate that we have a role going beyond being a great charity retailer. We will continue to connect with our local communities who generously offer gifts of reusable quality goods or give their time and volunteering in our stores.

Extraordinary times demand extraordinary actions. With all our shops closed for eight months in 2020 we had to adapt and forge a path to recovery. Recognising the growing importance of online retail, we moved swiftly to open new channels, expand offerings and build new connections. Our shop teams moved mountains to kickstart innovations that are more than just tactical responses but represent strategic shifts to a more modern and digital future.

Making it easier to shop online

In 2021, despite all the challenges, the BHF achieved an incredible £3.7m in sales on our eBay store, also reaching the milestone of our one millionth eBay sale. This was supported by the expansion of our online office and warehouse, which positions us for future growth.

We expanded the range and accessibility of our pre-loved goods online, and have been looking at how we appeal to new audiences and continue to expand what we sell – whether that's much-needed medical devices, a rare antique watch or a bulk donation of end of line fashion stock. Despite the challenge of being required to be closed for so long, our passion and commitment to our position on the British high street is as strong as ever. We believe the combination of extraordinary value, choice and sustainability our shops and online platforms provide, allied to the mission of the BHF, makes us increasingly relevant and resilient and we're committed to our future as part of local communities across the UK.



Open to opportunities

Making sustainable choices

Our Sustainability Programme is the framework we use to shape our medium-term approach and monitor and improve our performance, both within our own operations and the wider supply chain and we will continue to build upon our reuse agenda in the years to come.

Our stores make a huge environmental impact by preventing around 71,000 tonnes of unwanted items going to landfill every year. We receive 1.6 million items donated to our home stores and 9.8 million bags of donated items.

The BHF retail network of stores and online platforms are a powerful engine for sustainable re-use and circulation of resources, driven by donated goods and teams of volunteers and staff. The items we re-use and recycle have a significant positive environmental impact, enabling lower greenhouse gas emissions, reducing pressure on natural habitats for raw materials and conserving limited resources such as rare metals and water.

We have invested in a cleaner fleet with 67 new vans compliant with Euro 6 technology. Our fleet is now 100% Euro 6, delivering an improvement in greenhouse gas and harmful emissions.

We have also switched to a 100% renewable electricity tariff to power our buildings.

The pandemic has had a seismic impact on the income of the BHF. We've made it easier for people to donate but we've also expanded on how we reach new audiences.

We recognised our unique position in the market as a go-to retailer for medical devices such as blood pressure monitors and defibrillators, and have increased the range of items available on the website. Our blood pressure monitor sales more than tripled to £140,000 in 2020/21, the overall range will be expanding this year to include oximeters and portable ECG monitors.

Launching Freepost

How can a chain of charity shops survive a nation in lockdown? We knew we needed to keep stock donations rolling in, so we swiftly launched a freepost delivery option.

Simply by printing a freepost label, donors across the UK were asked to send their preloved items to us at 6,600 Collect+ points. We launched in June 2020, and the service has grown ever more popular, such that we were receiving some 12,500 parcels a month by the end of the year, and we have plans to build further on this success moving forward.



Celebrating 60 years of saving lives

In 2021, we're celebrating 60 years of life saving research.

The donations, time and tireless fundraising of our supporters has brought us a long way since 1961. Sudden death from a heart attack at the age of only 50 or 60 was so common it was thought to be just a fact of life. But with unwavering public support, BHF-funded researchers began to pioneer a revolution in the understanding and treatment of conditions like coronary heart disease. Today, 7 out of 10 people survive a heart attack in the UK.

We want
better ways to
identify people at
risk and help people
avoid disease

7,600,000

Around 7.6 million people are living with heart and circulatory diseases in the UK today – that's double the number of people living with cancer and Alzheimer's disease combined



Since we were founded, our research has helped to reduce deaths from heart and circulatory diseases in the UK by half.

But we cannot stop now.

Heart and circulatory diseases still cause untold heartbreak for millions of families. And although we have made great strides in solving many big problems in the past, continued and emerging challenges demand a bold new approach. As survival rates from heart attack and stroke have risen in the UK, more people now live to an older age, often with multiple chronic conditions that require new kinds of treatment and care. The number of people living with vascular dementia, for instance, is forecast to more than double in the UK over the next three decades. Risk factors like obesity and diabetes are putting our progress at risk, and health inequalities still persist.

We know research is the answer to these challenges. And we need to act now. Only through continuing to push the frontiers of scientific discovery, embracing the opportunities of our digital new world, and developing truly innovative solutions, will we be able to turn back the tide.

By building evidence, influencing decision-makers and involving people in their own health and care, together we can drive change at a national, local and community level.

We can prevent more people developing heart and circulatory diseases in the future, and make sure those with existing conditions and risk factors are detected and treated early, with more effective medicines and interventions.

We can ensure that everyone, regardless of factors like gender, age, ethnicity, or where they live, has access to the treatment, care and support that they need.

And we're ready for the challenge.

Our headlines

Our track record speaks for itself.

Heart transplants, pacemakers, clot-busting drugs and statins are just a few examples of the many advances in heart and circulatory health and care propelled by our world-class medical research.

There's no doubt the pandemic remains the biggest challenge that the British Heart Foundation has ever faced.

In 2020 we faced our biggest challenge in our 60-year history. As grim headlines dominated around the world, the pandemic had a seismic impact on our organisation, halving our net income as all our retail stores were closed and our face-to-face fundraising activities were cancelled.

We had to respond swiftly, making some difficult decisions to manage our costs whilst protecting as much of our life saving research as we could and ensuring we were there for heart and circulatory disease patients who needed us more than ever. Despite these challenges, we honoured all existing research commitments, supported our researchers to respond to the crisis and continued to grant new funding, with almost £52 million of new grants issued in 2020/21.

Our response to the crisis, supported by our strong reserves position and robust fundraising performance, has put us in a strong position as we move into recovery mode and has meant we are feeling optimistic and excited for our next 60 years.





We love
the BHF...

Show some love. It starts with your heart.

Backing the power of science

At breakneck speed we had to switch to remote working, cancel much-loved fundraising events, and close all our shops and stores. Our income was devastated just as people with heart and circulatory diseases, many of whom are at increased risk from Covid-19, needed us more than ever.

It was clear early in the pandemic that Covid-19 threatened people with heart and circulatory diseases, and we are proud to have been there for those who turned to our BHF Coronavirus Hub for support.

Similarly, our commitment to our life saving research did not falter. We took urgent steps to protect over £450 million of investment in pioneering research, supported our scientists to redirect their research towards Covid-19, and partnered with the National Institute of Health Research to support flagship Covid-19 research projects.

There is no doubt it has been tough.

Covid-19 is the greatest financial challenge we've faced in our 60-year history. BHF funded research has advanced the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of heart and circulatory diseases – the world's biggest killers, causing disability across the globe. With less money available to fund fewer research projects, there is a danger that the pace of progress is slowed, and our mission delayed.

Covid-19 presents a heightened risk to people with cardiovascular diseases, so we rapidly mobilised research leaders from the BHF Data Science Centre, National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) and the British Cardiovascular Society (BCS), through the NIHR-BHF Cardiovascular Partnership.

Together, we approved seven UK flagship Covid-19 projects which could benefit people with heart and circulatory diseases.

Through working with the BHF Data Science Centre, a cornerstone upon which crucial Covid-19 research is being built, each of the flagship projects will involve patient or health data to address urgent clinical research questions on Covid-19 and cardiovascular health.

By awarding flagship status to these projects, we are mobilising resources and research efforts behind studies that have the best chance of swiftly improving care and saving lives. The speed at which we've done this is testament to the strength of UK cardiovascular science.



Fresh challenges, fresh thinking

Our ambitious strategy to 2030 guides us towards our vision of a world free from the fear of heart and circulatory diseases. The pandemic raised significant challenges and created unforeseen opportunities. How our organisation adapted and responded was crucial.

The pandemic increased demand for our support, research and services. With 45% of Covid-19 death certificates in England's first wave mentioning heart and circulatory diseases and 130,000 fewer heart procedures taking place in England's hospitals during the first year of the pandemic, we had to address the overwhelming need for information and support for people living with heart and circulatory diseases.

It was forecast that £310 million would be cut from medical research funding during 2021 as a result of Covid-19, so we needed to consider how we could address the shortfall in our own

funding, and mitigate the potential impact on the entire research ecosystem.

Our strategy also needed to reflect new ways of working. How could we support our employees and volunteers as they adapted to working from home, closed shops, digital technologies and the stress of lockdowns?

Our incredible achievements are the result of dedicated people pulling together, so supporting them remained a priority.

The changes we want to see in our world by 2030

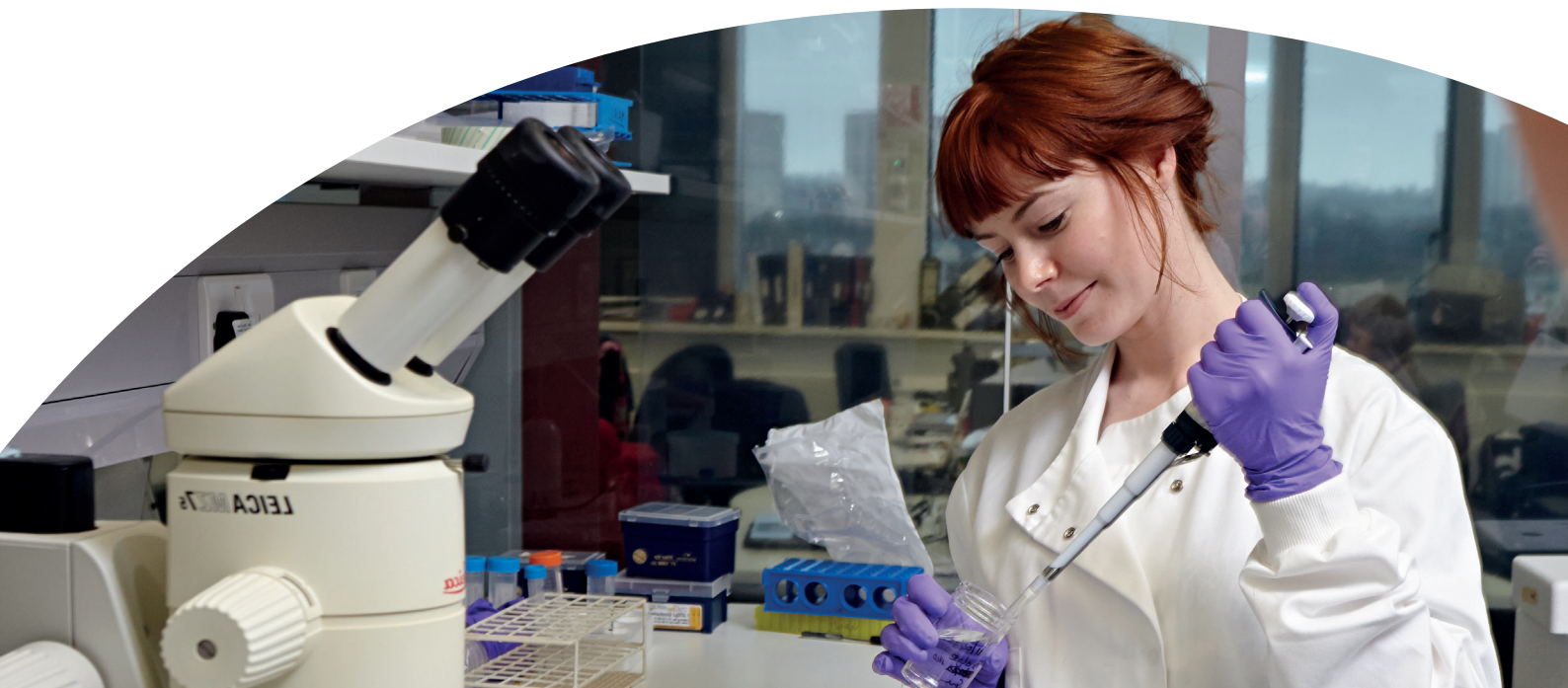
Our vision is a world free from the fear of heart and circulatory diseases. It's a bold ambition, and we cannot achieve it alone. But we believe the next ten years will see unparalleled progress.

By 2030 we want the world to look different. We want to mobilise communities, leaders and the government to get us there. We want to see advances across the spectrum of heart and circulatory diseases; we want to prevent these conditions from developing, and we want those with existing conditions to have better, longer lives.

Our leadership team made the swift decision to pivot our strategy to guide us in our response to the coronavirus crisis, prioritise our activities and deliver support where it was needed most. We decided to focus on four important areas:

- Promote information and support for heart and circulatory disease patients.
- Promote our life saving research, and maintain funding and confidence in it.
- Protect net income and financial sustainability.
- Support our people to adapt to changes and new ways of working.

While changes were essential to keep our strategy relevant in this crisis year, the fundamentals remain the same. We've made immense progress since our inception in 1961, helping to reduce annual UK deaths from heart and circulatory diseases by half, but we must achieve so much more. We know we can prevent more people from developing heart and circulatory diseases and ensure that people with existing conditions and risk factors are detected and treated early if we have more effective medicines and interventions. A persistent challenge we face is the gap between the burden of heart and circulatory diseases and the disproportionately low levels of research and healthcare investment when compared to many other diseases. But despite the difficulties we have had to overcome during the pandemic, we continue to tackle these challenges head on and deliver our strategy to 2030.





Our strategy to 2030

Our vision is a world free from the fear of heart and circulatory diseases.

These are our values

Our values express who we are and what we stand for. They are the spirit and culture of our organisation. Because through the way we work together, knowing what to expect of each other, knowing what we expect of our leaders, knowing what's expected

of ourselves, we're able to live our values. We are fearless in our approach. Together, we can fund life saving research to create a world free from the fear of heart and circulatory diseases.



We're brave

We speak out. We're decisive. We're innovative



We're compassionate

We're open and honest. We respect others.
We promote our cause



We're informed

We work together. We're clear.
We're curious



We're driven

We're focused. We're determined.
We keep learning



Equality, diversity & inclusion

Our push for equality, diversity and inclusion takes many forms, including how we manage our organisation, and how our research funding helps to tackle health inequality.

Reducing heart and circulatory disease health inequalities is an important part of our strategy to 2030. The ongoing work of Kaleidoscope, our diversity and inclusion group, demonstrates a similar commitment to improving equity, diversity and inclusion for our staff and volunteers. Discussion around how far the BHF could bring together all the different aspects of our diversity work, patients, research, our people; into one clear EDI strategy is underway.

Our Kaleidoscope group is made up of representatives from each directorate and our activities span across the diverse landscape which is prevalent in all of our communities, encompassing accessibility to work for people with caring responsibilities, working parents, disabilities, age, ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ and many more strands of diversity.

We have a number of 'affinity groups' within the organisation. These include working parents as well as religions and racial and ethnic groups and are spaces for colleagues from underrepresented groups to feel connected, included and heard.

Whilst working for the BHF, you will be actively encouraged to bring your true self to work. You'll find a culture where colleagues are inquisitive about diversity and keen to get involved in all activities that make individuality part of what we do every single day.

We want to fund life saving research for everyone. We can help to achieve this by welcoming colleagues from all backgrounds to come and be part of our BHF family.





Our benefits

We all achieve more together when we're happy and healthy

As a world class organisation, we offer competitive salaries and an attractive package of benefits, designed to support the health and wellbeing of everyone who works here.

But more than that, we provide opportunities that are completely unique to the British Heart Foundation, such as going behind the scenes of cutting edge research, meeting scientists who are paving the way for future cures, and hearing from people who have directly benefited from the research we fund.

We've been recognised by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) for our Live Well. Work Well. programme and we're passionate about creating a mentally healthy workplace for everyone. From mindfulness sessions to team sports, we know there's more to work than targets.

Because we all achieve more together when we're happy and healthy.

Our generous benefits include:



Annual leave

Your work-life balance is important to us and our annual leave allowance of 25 days plus bank holidays is among the best in the sector.



Health cash plan

We will help cover the costs of certain medical treatments to ensure if you need treatment, they are more affordable.



Live well. Work well.

Heart health is central to our mission, and that starts with you. We provide a programme of activities, opportunities and guidance to inspire and support you to live a healthy and happy life, at home and at work.



Pension

It's essential to save for your retirement. Everyone is eligible to join our group pension plan after three months up to a maximum employer contribution of 10%.

Job specification

Job description

Job title	Sales Assistant
Directorate	Retail
Team	Home
Reporting to	Store Manager / Assistant Store Manager
Agility contract type	Shop
Budgetary responsibility	N/A
Job level (HR use only)	8

Role summary

To contribute towards maximising shop sales and profits as well as the successful day to day running of the shop. To deputise for the Shop Manager and Assistant Manager in their absence. To represent the BHF in a professional manner reflecting our core values and beliefs.

Key duties

Sales:

- Achieve maximum sales at all times
- Ensure that the high standard of service to customers that is expected by the British Heart Foundation is maintained at all times
- Actively support any national fundraising promotions as directed by Head Office or your Area Manager
- Implement any promotion in the shop as directed by Head Office or your Area Manager

Shop Appearance:

- Maintain a high standard of display, both in window and internally
- Achieve and maintain high standards of housekeeping, organisation and cleanliness throughout the shop premises.

Stock:

- Encourage the public to donate saleable goods.
- Use steamer where necessary to ensure the stock is presented to its best possible advantage
- Ensure the stock density is kept full by ensuring there is adequate stock available at all times
- Rotate stock on a daily basis so that no garment remains on the shop floor for any longer than the agreed time limits
- Hang, ticket, size and cube all clothing as appropriate
- The role will demand moving a lot of stock on a daily basis

- Comply with all instructions regarding the sale and auditing of New Goods
- Actively promote and process Gift Aid according to the British Heart Foundation policy

Stockroom:

- Grade and count in van deliveries and ensure goods are separate i.e. in to source Voluntary

Staff:

- Promote a happy working environment and to increase efficiency and job satisfaction
- Assist in the recruitment and training of Volunteers

Administration and Security:

- Complete all administrative paperwork such as sales sheets and stock control sheets correctly and promptly
- Bank daily according to BHF policy
- Ensure that all BHF till procedures are adhered to and that cash is kept secure
- Order consumables/stationary as necessary
- Notify a senior member of staff in the event of suspected theft or dishonesty by any member of staff
- Ensure that no unauthorised person is allowed to inspect the shop or to examine sales or other records
- Complete stock taking as required

Health and Safety:

- Comply with all Health and Safety regulations as per BHF Health and Safety policy
- Report any maintenance or health and safety issue in the shop to the Area Manager/Line Manager and Building and Maintenance Department at Head Office

General:

- Any other duties as appropriate

Person specification

Knowledge, training and qualifications

- Good level of general education
- IT literate and numerate
- A knowledge and understanding of the BHF cause and its objectives

Experience

- Previous retail experience or experience of working in a busy customer facing role
- Experience of cash handling and reconciliation

Skills and Attributes

- Excellent customer service skills
- Excellent communication and relationship building skills with the ability to build rapport with people of differing ages, backgrounds and cultural origins
- Good organisational skills
- Strong team player with the ability to work collaboratively with others
- Ability to work under own initiative
- Approachable with a can do attitude
- Committed to achieving the highest retail standards at all times
- Results driven but with a recognition of right result, right way

Safeguarding

At the British Heart Foundation (BHF), we are committed to creating a safe and rewarding environment for all of our people to work and volunteer. This means we have a robust safeguarding policy to ensure everyone is treated properly, and a whistle blowing service so people can raise any concerns they have confidentially





British Heart Foundation



Palirey's
Flats 1 & 2

How to apply

To apply for this role please use the apply button via the jobs page on our website. Our process involves submitting your CV and a covering letter, which should outline your interest and explain how you meet the criteria stated in the person specification.

All applications are managed by our Recruitment Team. If you wish to speak with a member of the team regarding the role and your application please contact them on careers@bhf.org.uk

Early application is encouraged as we will review applications throughout the advertising period and reserve the right to close the advert early should we receive a sufficient number of applications.



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