

Chief Executive Officer

Position Description

About The Baird Institute

The Baird Institute is Australia's only independent medical research institute dedicated to cardiothoracic surgical research, education and training.

Established in 2001, the Institute works in close partnership with Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, the University of Sydney and leading clinicians and researchers to improve outcomes for patients with heart disease.

The Institute supports world-class research, clinical trials, surgeon-scientists and the next generation of researchers through scholarships, grants and collaborative research programs. Current areas of focus include heart failure, diseases of the aorta, cardiac regeneration, surgical innovation and translational research that improves patient care.

Although a small organisation, The Baird Institute consistently punches well above its weight. Through the generosity of individual donors, philanthropic trusts and foundations, corporate partners and bequests, the Institute raises more than \$1 million annually to support life-changing heart research.

The Baird Institute is uniquely positioned for significant growth and impact over the coming years. This represents a rare, career-defining opportunity for an accomplished leader to scale a high-performing, purpose-driven not-for-profit and shape its next chapter of growth and create lasting impact for future generations.

Find out more about us here: <https://www.baird institute.org.au>

Position Purpose

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) provides strategic and operational leadership to The Baird Institute, with a strong focus on securing the philanthropic support that enables the Institute's research to thrive.

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the CEO is responsible for leading fundraising and donor engagement, governance, financial management, communications and the day-to-day operations of the Institute.

As the public face of the organisation, the CEO develops and nurtures strong relationships with donors, philanthropic organisations, clinicians, researchers, universities, hospitals, corporate partners and the broader community, increasing awareness of and support for the Institute's work.

The Baird Institute is a small, high-performing organisation. This is a hands-on leadership role where the CEO works closely with a small team and is actively involved in every aspect of the organisation. While providing strategic leadership, the CEO also prepares donor

communications, develops fundraising initiatives, oversees marketing and administration, supports governance, and works directly with researchers, donors and stakeholders to deliver outstanding outcomes.

Reporting Relationships

Reports to:

Board of Directors

Direct Reports:

Administration and fundraising staff (currently two part-time employees and several contractors)

Employment:

Full-time (0.8 FTE / four days per week may be considered for the right candidate)

Hybrid working arrangements supported.

Key Responsibilities

Fundraising and Philanthropy

- Lead and implement the Institute's fundraising strategy to grow sustainable philanthropic income.
- Personally cultivate, solicit and steward major donors, trusts, foundations, corporate partners and prospective supporters.
- Drive fundraising across major gifts, regular giving, appeals, bequests, trusts and foundations and corporate partnerships.
- Develop strategies to acquire new supporters while strengthening donor stewardship and retention.
- Prepare fundraising appeals, donor communications, impact reports and supporter recognition initiatives.
- Work closely with the Board to expand philanthropic networks and fundraising opportunities.
- Maintain accurate donor records and reporting through the Institute's fundraising CRM (Salesforce) and use data to strengthen fundraising performance.

Strategic Leadership

- Work collaboratively with the Board to develop strategic priorities and organisational objectives.
- Identify opportunities for future growth.
- Identify new partnerships, collaborations and funding opportunities that advance the Institute's mission.

- Continue to strengthen the Institute's reputation and impact within Australia's medical research community.

Governance and Board Support

- Support the Board in fulfilling its governance responsibilities through timely, accurate and meaningful reporting.
- Prepare Board papers, strategic reports, annual operating plans and budgets.
- Ensure compliance with all legal, regulatory and governance obligations.
- Work closely with the Chair and Directors to implement Board decisions.

Financial Management

- Develop and manage the annual operating budget.
- Monitor financial performance, investments, cash flow and organisational sustainability.
- Oversee financial reporting, annual audit and compliance.
- Identify opportunities to diversify income and strengthen long-term financial sustainability.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Develop and maintain strong relationships with clinicians, researchers and academic partners.
- Maintain productive partnerships with Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, the University of Sydney and collaborating organisations.
- Represent the Institute at meetings, conferences, donor events and public engagements.
- Build relationships with philanthropic organisations, corporate partners and community leaders.
- Act as an effective ambassador for the Institute and its mission.

Marketing and Communications

- Lead the Institute's communications and brand strategy.
- Oversee publications including newsletters, annual reports, fundraising appeals, media releases and website content.
- Increase awareness of the Institute's research achievements and community impact.
- Identify media and partnership opportunities that enhance the Institute's profile.

Research and Program Support

- Maintain close relationships with researchers and scholarship recipients.
- Support the administration of scholarship and research grant programs.

- Work collaboratively with researchers to communicate research outcomes to donors and supporters.
- Ensure the Institute's activities continue to align with its mission.

People Leadership

- Lead and support a small team of staff and contractors.
- Foster a culture of collaboration, accountability and continuous improvement.
- Build the organisational capability required to support The Baird Institute's ambitious growth agenda, with the opportunity to recruit, develop and lead a significantly expanded team over the coming years.

Key Selection Criteria

Essential

- Minimum five years' experience in a senior fundraising, philanthropy or development role with demonstrated success in securing major gifts and building long-term donor relationships.
- Demonstrated experience developing and implementing successful fundraising strategies across major gifts, trusts and foundations, appeals, regular giving, bequests and donor stewardship.
- Demonstrated experience using a fundraising CRM, such as Salesforce, to manage donor relationships, reporting, fundraising pipelines and campaign activity.
- Strong relationship-building skills with the ability to engage confidently with major donors, Board members, clinicians, researchers, corporate partners and philanthropic organisations.
- Demonstrated leadership experience, including the ability to lead a small team and work collaboratively with a Board.
- Strong financial management and budgeting skills.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to prepare compelling fundraising proposals, donor communications and Board reports.
- Highly organised with the ability to manage multiple priorities in a small, hands-on organisation.
- High levels of integrity, professionalism and sound judgement.
- Someone who enjoys working in a small organisation where flexibility, initiative and a willingness to be hands-on are essential.

Desirable

- Understanding of philanthropy within the medical research sector.
- Tertiary qualifications in business, fundraising, management, communications, or a related discipline.

Success in the Role

Success will be demonstrated by:

- Growth in philanthropic income and donor engagement.
- Increased major donor, trust and foundation support.
- Strong governance and financial management.
- Strengthened relationships with researchers, hospitals, universities and supporters.
- Increased awareness of The Baird Institute and its impact.
- Continued delivery of high-quality research support programs that advance cardiothoracic surgical research.

Why Join The Baird Institute?

This is a rare opportunity to lead Australia's only independent medical research institute dedicated to cardiothoracic surgical research.

The role is ideally suited to an experienced senior fundraising professional seeking their first Chief Executive Officer appointment, or an experienced CEO who enjoys working in a small, mission-driven organisation where they can make a genuine difference.

You will work alongside internationally recognised surgeons, researchers and clinicians while leading an organisation that is transforming discoveries into better treatments and improved outcomes for patients with heart disease.

As the CEO, you will have the opportunity to shape the Institute's future, expand its fundraising success and help advance life-saving medical research for generations to come.

To Apply

Please submit your cover letter (maximum two pages) addressing the Selection Criteria, together with your current CV.

Applications close: 5 pm AEST 26 August 2026.