



Chief Executive Officer

June 2025



**SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES**

Letter of Invitation

June 5, 2025
Vienna, Austria

Dear Candidate,

I am delighted to invite you to apply for the roles of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Chief Program Officer (CPO) at SOS Children's Villages International, with focus on ensuring that children and young people without parental care grow up with the care, relationships, and support they need to become their strongest selves.

These pivotal executive positions will form the core of our newly established Executive Board, working in close partnership with our incoming International Board to shape the future of our global federation of 137 members.

As CEO, you will lead the Federal Secretariat (FSC) unit, serve as the primary spokesperson for SOS Children's Villages, and promote greater cohesion among our member associations worldwide. The CPO will spearhead the International Development Support (IDS) unit, driving innovative programming, scaling impact, supporting Member Associations, and enhancing mobilization of resources. Together, the CEO and CPO will form a dynamic, collaborative leadership team, combining complementary strengths to advance our mission with excellence.

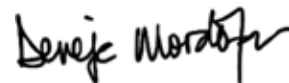
SOS Children's Villages stands at a defining moment. Global instability and humanitarian crises profoundly impact the children and families we serve, while our federation undergoes significant governance and structural transitions within the General Secretariat. We seek visionary leaders to guide this evolution, ensuring our resources are focused on delivering care and support to children and families across the globe, in partnership with our Member Associations.

Our mission is rooted in the belief that every child has the right to grow up in a nurturing and safe family environment, surrounded by secure, trusting relationships. By fostering these bonds, we create a ripple effect that uplifts individuals, families, communities, and future generations. As a member-led organization, we are committed to addressing complex global challenges through strong leadership, a renewed focus on our core principles, and a compelling narrative of social impact.

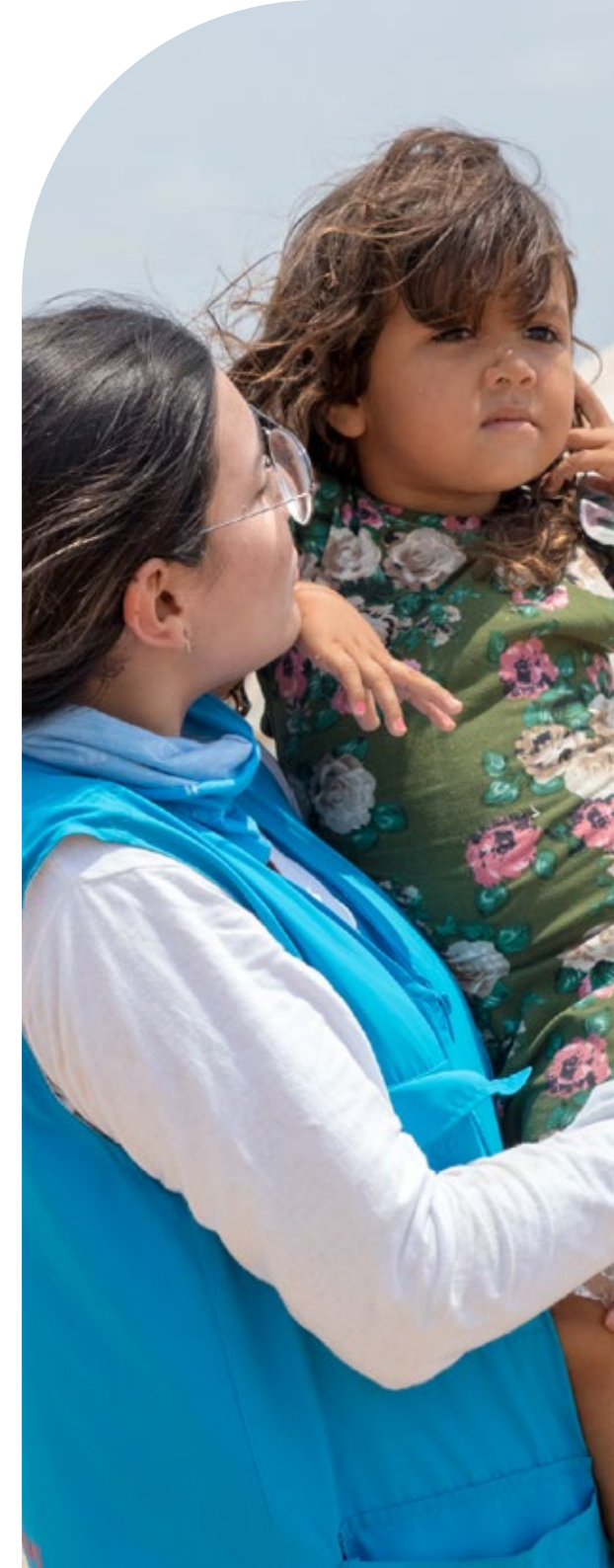
This is a unique opportunity to lead and shape the strategic direction of SOS Children's Villages International, ensuring no child grows up alone. As I conclude my four-year tenure as International President in June 2025, I reflect with immense pride on the privilege of serving this mission alongside passionate volunteers, coworkers, and leaders. The opportunity to drive meaningful change for children worldwide continues to inspire me, and I am confident it will inspire you as well.

If you are passionate about our mission of serving children and young people and confident in your ability to lead with vision and impact, we warmly encourage you to apply for the CEO or CPO role.

We look forward to the possibility of welcoming you to our global movement.



Dereje Wordofa
President, SOS Children's Villages International





About SOS Children's Villages International

Founded in 1949, SOS Children's Villages International is the world's largest non-governmental organization focused on supporting children and young people without parental care or at risk of losing it. Child neglect, abuse and abandonment is everywhere. Families are at risk of separation. Locally led, SOS Children's Villages International (CVI) works in more than 130 countries and territories to strengthen families who are under pressure so they can stay together. When this is not in a child or young person's best interests, SOS Children's Villages International provides quality care according to their unique needs. Together with partners, donors, communities, children, young people and families, SOS Children Villages International enables children to grow up with the bonds they need to develop and become their strongest selves. The organisation speaks up for each child's rights and advocates for change so all children can grow up in a supportive environment.

SOS Children's Villages International is structured as a decentralized federation of independent national member associations, working together towards reaching the federation's strategic goals, and sharing resources and expertise. Each SOS Children's Villages association is committed to applying the federation's statutes, programme standards, and stringent safeguarding, financial and administrative practices.

SOS Children's Villages International's General Secretariat, with offices in Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America provides services

to member associations, develops and monitors federation quality standards, and represents the Federation in international communications and forums.

The Umbrella Organization, SOS Children Villages International (CVI)

SOS Children's Villages International operates global support functions for the Federation through two key units: the Federation Secretariat Unit (FSC) and the International Development Support Unit (IDS). Both units are funded via different funding streams:

Federation Secretariat Unit (FSC)

The FSC drives impact, fosters trust, and ensures alignment by providing standardized governance and organizational support to uphold and manage the Federation. Given the nature of its work, the FSC is fully funded by Membership Fees.

International Development Support Unit (IDS)

The IDS facilitates the development and sharing of evidence, innovation, and standards to help Members enhance the impact and scale of their national programs while strengthening their organizational capacity and self-sufficiency. It also delivers programs in CVI-managed countries and at the supranational level. As a result, IDS activities are primarily funded through project-based funding.

About SOS Children's Villages International

The Executive Board of SOS Children's Villages International

The CEO / FSC lead, and the CPO / IDS lead jointly constitute the Executive Board (EB) of SOS Children Villages International and work together to deliver the responsibilities of the Federation. The EB co-chairs the (soon to be formed) International Management Team ("IMT"), which is a mix of top senior leaders convening for decision making purpose.

The **CEO / FSC lead** is the spokesperson of the Executive Board. Their primary responsibility is to lead the FSC in achieving its mission and objectives, support the Governing bodies of SOS Children's Villages International, strengthen the cohesion amongst members of the Federation, facilitate and encourage Members to contribute to the Federation's ability to achieve their common purpose, facilitate development of the Federation's strategic direction, identify risks and opportunities where applicable to the Federation as a whole and to represent the Federation in global spaces.

The CEO / FSC lead needs to be an excellent communicator and collaborator; a person being able to use their soft power and influence in

managing The Federation Secretariat Unit to ensure it is a well-functioning and effective secretariat in supporting the Federation and its members. The CEO / FSC lead has a key role in strengthening the cohesion amongst Members and between Members and Children Villages International and in bringing them in alignment with common vision, mission, and values. The CEO / FSC lead needs vision, courage, and sensitivity to stand up for the mission and vision of SOS Children Villages International and to unite Members, staff, partners and donors around it, as well as to represent SOS Children Villages International externally.

As the CEO / FSC lead and CPO / IDS lead are jointly the Executive Board of SOS Children Villages International, it requires extremely good collegial and complementary leadership. Together they co-chair the soon-to-be-formed International Management Team ("IMT"), which is a mix of top senior leaders convening for decision making purpose.

Skills, experience, and a strong track record with managing organisational budgets, staff, members, and external relations at this level would be a requirement for SOS Children Villages International's new CEO / FSC lead.

CEO/FSC Lead and CPO/IDS Lead Portfolios

CEO / FSC Lead

- Federation Development
- Federation Engagement
- Transformation
- Executive Support
- Project Management Office (PMO)
- Internal Audit (dotted line)
- Safeguarding
- People & Culture
- Finance
- Information & Communication Technology

CPO / IDS Lead

- Contract Management
- Ideas to Scale
- Humanitarian Action
- MA Development & Support
- CVI-run Operations
- MEAL
- Sustainable Income Development



The Role

Role: CEO (Chief Executive Officer)/FSC Lead

Location: Vienna (Austria), with frequent travel to Member Countries

Salary: In line with INGO standards

Responsibilities of the Position

Main duties and responsibilities including key accountabilities for the CEO/FSC lead (subject to change):

Support the Governance of the Federation

- Executive Support on Transformation process
- Support effective Governance bodies and the related governance processes of the Federation.
- Support the International Board / General Assembly and General Assembly Committees in the Member admittance, suspension, and expulsion process.
- Responsible for reporting, financial management, and providing strategic advice and support to the International Board and its committees.

Facilitating Federation Alignment

- Federation Development and Engagement
- Lead and facilitate processes which strengthen the cohesion amongst Members and Members and Children's Villages International and bring them in support of their common Vision, Mission & Values.
- Enables effective communication and decision-making across the federation.
- Facilitates co-creation between Members and Children's Villages International of shared Strategic Framework, Federation culture & behaviours.

Mandatory Policies, Standards, Brand

- Lead Federation's work on and alignment to the Brand Values and identity.
- Lead and facilitate process for development of Core Global Policies & Standards applicable to all Members.
- Support the performance of ad-hoc investigations in case of need, both by cautious anticipatory budgeting and increasing investigation capabilities and capacities within Children's Villages International.
- Indirectly (dotted-line) manage the Internal Audit department and empower it to execute the multi-annual internal audit cycle for SOS Children's Villages International and its members, in accordance with the multi-annual Internal Audit plan approved by the International Board.

Global External Representation and Messaging

- Externally represent Children's Villages International and the Federation and use its advocacy positions in global and regional spaces to influence global thinking and policy (e.g., UNCRC, EU, African Union, ...).
- Lead development of Global Advocacy policy positions.
- Coordinate development of global and messaging including crisis communications and annual report.

Global Systems and Information

- Lead on Information & Communication Technology
- Provision of appropriate Federation wide technological platforms / systems which have been approved by Governance bodies as

mandatory for all Members.

- Collect and consolidate (very high level) performance metrics from MAs and report to GA.
- Facilitate knowledge management and best practice across and between MAs in operational areas including People & Culture, Finance etc.

People and Culture

- SOS Children's Villages is committed to creating and maintaining a safe working environment for our staff, the children and young people and the communities that we work for. The organization prohibits harassment, exploitation and abuses by or of any employee, supervisor, manager, child, young people, community, contractor, applicant, or other individual with whom SOS Children's Villages employees come into contact by virtue of their work. All employees are expected to carry out their duties in accordance with our prevention and protection against Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse policy.
- Drive and promote organizational culture across the federation to support the achievement of our mission.

Finance

- Joint responsibility as Executive Board member for the financial results and global finance processes in the federation.
- Individual primary responsibility for the FSC budget.
- SOS Children's Villages apply a zero-tolerance concerning any fraud situation. The organization does not charge a fee at any stage of the recruitment process.

Responsibilities of the Position

Risk

- Identifies Federation wide opportunities and risks. Works with Governance Bodies and Member Associations to develop, and in some cases lead, mitigation strategies and responses.

Internal Support Services

- Manage the internal services for both FSC and IDS and operations of the FSC.

Safeguarding

- The CEO champions safeguarding, child rights, and human right-based approaches across the federation, modelling values-based leadership.
- Promotes awareness of safeguarding policies to protect all programme participants, partners, and staff from harm, including abuse, exploitation, and discrimination.
- Embed safeguarding in all operations, strategy, and governance, with a focus on transparency, ethics, and survivor-centred approaches.





Interactions

- General Assembly (via the International Board) and its committees
- International Board and its committees
- FSC Advisory Board and IDS Advisory Board
- MA National Directors
- IMT (International Management Team) to be established
- FSC Leadership Team
- Global & Regional Bodies i.e. UN Agencies
- INGO interagency bodies and other Global CEOs/SGs

Candidate Profile

Functional Competences

- Authentic commitment to the Vision, Mission and Values of the SOS Federation in its work for children
- Experience in an equivalent position (top level) within an international organization or federation, of comparable size and complexity: managing a 400 FTE size organization, over 40 million budget in a federation of over 137 member associations (with an overall turnover of over one billion)
- Track record in the sector, ideally INGO background
- Outstanding interpersonal skills, ability to collaborate, engage and build trust amongst stakeholders in a decentralized and complex global network. Ability to influence without direct authority, navigate complex federation dynamics and power structures with strong diplomacy to align diverse interests and foster cohesion across independent members.
- Outstanding communication and presentation skills including with global media and global people of influence. Ability to act as a global ambassador and advocate for child rights, build strategic alliances, influence global policy, serve as a public spokesperson, and enhance the federation's visibility and credibility externally.
- Good understanding of child protection, care reform, and humanitarian work
- Experience in dealing with high complexity
- Expertise in federated governance, strategic risk management and compliance

- Professional expertise in driving the vision, strategy development, prioritization and implementation of complex and innovative projects
- Leadership skills to manage teams in diverse locations, foster cultural environment development and the ability to build team capacity. Establish efficient organizational structures and lead high-performing teams
- Experience in managing a P&L of equivalent size, ensuring financial sustainability and cost-efficiency
- Experience and interest in innovation and digital readiness: driving digital transformation, enabling data-informed decision-making and ethical use of technology. Fostering innovation, agility and continuous improvement.
- Visionary and transformational leadership: proven experience in managing organizational transformation and change with authenticity, empathy and courage. Ability to drive strategic change initiatives, inspire long-term vision and direction, lead effectively through crises and ambiguity.
- Strong decision-taking competency in fast-changing and uncertain environments, based on available evidence and risk-analysis.
- Experience in establishing clear accountability mechanisms and performance metrics to drive results and transparency.
- Proven ability to lead lean and efficient teams and effectively manage limited resources.

Value-Based Core Competencies

- Kindness
- Continuous learning
- Inclusiveness
- Initiative
- Result-orientation

Values-Based Leadership Qualities

- Integrity, empathy, humility, and authenticity
- Visionary and strategic thinking
- Resilience, patience, and adaptability
- People-centered and inclusive leadership
- Foster a culture of empowerment, continuous staff development, psychological safety, and a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)
- Promote participatory leadership and constructively manage dissent
- Create an atmosphere of collaboration and mutual trust
- Motivate, inspire, develop and lead a high-performing, multicultural senior leadership team
- Role model a values-based leadership to motivate and empower staff
- Strong commitment to environmental and social responsibility
- Foster a growth oriented, positive and encouraging environment while keeping employees and management accountable

Candidate Profile

Education Qualification

- Advanced academic degree
- A minimum of 15 to 20 years progressive and relevant experience including working in a leadership position (at least 10 years at senior management level) in the international context and/or business environment

Experience

- A minimum of 15-20 years leadership experience in overseeing work in multiple geographic locations, in various functional areas or in the international development context
- Multicultural work experience in a relevant leadership role
- Experience in the non – profit environment is a distinct advantage including experience at the grass-root level

Language Skills

- Essential: English
- Desirable: German, French, Spanish or Arabic (SOS Children's Villages International languages)





How to Apply

All correspondence, at this stage, should be via Oxford HR. To apply for this post, click on the "Apply" button on the job advert page, complete our online application form, and submit your CV and cover letter as two different documents, which should be prepared before applying as they will be considered in the application process.

The cover letter should be no more than two pages long and explain why you are interested in this post and how your skills and experience make you a good fit.

The document should be saved in PDF in the following format: Your First Name-Your Last Name-Document Name-Date (mmyy)-Organisation e.g., Pat-Jones-CV-0625-SOSCVI or Pat-Jones-CoverLetter-0625-SOSCVI.

Timeline

- **Closing Date:** 18th July 2025
- **First Stage Interviews by Oxford HR:** 28th – 31st July 2025
- **Interviews by SOS Children's Villages International:** 11th – 22nd Aug 2025 *(to be confirmed by the new International Board which starts in July)*
- **Leadership Impact Assessment for Final Candidates:** 25th Aug – 3rd Sept 2025
- **Final round interviews by SOS Children's Villages International:** Starting 8th Sept 2025

Selection Process

All candidates will receive an update regarding their application after the closing date. We advise candidates to add the role email to their safe senders list and regularly check their spam folder.

Successful candidates will have to submit a criminal record certificate, current within the last three years. In accordance with the organisation's child protection policy, these positions will be subject to criminal record checks.

Equality Statement

SOS Children's Villages International applies zero-tolerance, neither on sexual exploitation, harassment, and abuse nor on fraud and corruption, amongst other safeguarding aspects. SOS Children's Villages International also provides equal employment opportunities to all employees & qualified applicants without regard to race, colour, religion, gender, ancestry, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or class. SOS Children's Villages International complies with all applicable laws governing non-discrimination in employment. Staff are expected to work collectively and individually to promote a constructive and sensitive approach to others from a variety of backgrounds, where the work of others is valued and respected.

Queries

If you have any queries on any aspect of the appointment process, or need additional information, please email to jreinartz@oxfordhr.com in the first instance.

About Oxford HR

Oxford HR is a B Corp certified leadership consultancy. Having worked within a diverse range of institutions, from not-for-profits and charities to governments and corporate environments, we've seen the powerful impact that the perfect team can have.

Finding innovative leaders can be a challenge; and yet their transition into leadership is vital to an organisation's mission and success. We work across the globe to search for and support remarkable leaders and teams, improve their board effectiveness and support on a range of leadership functions.

Learn more at: oxfordhr.com





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