



Chief Program 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.

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.

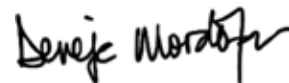
SOS Children's Villages International stands at a defining moment. Global instability and humanitarian crises profoundly impact the children and families we serve, while our federation undergoes significant governance and structural transitions within the General Secretariat. We seek visionary leaders 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's 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's Villages International (CVI)

SOS Children's Villages International (CVI) 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's Villages International and work together to deliver the responsibilities of Children's Villages International. 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 CPO's / IDS lead's primary responsibility is to lead the IDS unit to achieve its functional mission. This includes supporting Members and program operations of SOS Children's Villages International to adopt innovative programming for scale, build their capabilities and increase their income. It also has primary accountability for closely accompanying dependent programs operations which are organized as foreign branch operations of Children's Villages International in countries where no Member is active ("**CVI-Run Operations**"), by supporting their transition to independence and coordinating the Federation's humanitarian response activities.

The CPO/IDS lead builds strategic programs through a process of innovation and research,

driving scale whilst ensuring adequate processes for Members and CVI-Run Operations to reach and maintain an independent, self-sufficient status.

As the CPO / IDS lead is responsible for enabling increase of SOS Children's Villages International's global impact through Members and Children's Villages International's run operations, as well as use of research, monitoring, evaluation, learning and accountability to improve program quality and policy development, the new person should have senior experience in international development with a strong track record in large and quality programmes, policy and membership development.

As the CEO / FSC lead and CPO / IDS lead are jointly the Executive Board of SOS Children's 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 country and global programmes, budgets, donor relations, staff, and members at this level would be a requirement for SOS Children's Villages International's new CPO.

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: CPO (Chief Program Officer)/IDS Lead

Location: Strong preference for Nairobi (Kenya), with frequent travel to Vienna. Other locations where SOS Children's Villages International has a registered presence may be considered. Work permits in the preferred work locations would be desirable.

Salary: In line with INGO standards

Responsibilities of the Position

Main duties and responsibilities including key accountabilities:

Increasing Federation Impact from “Ideas to Scale”

- Responsibility for enabling the Federation to increase its global impact through Members and Children’s Villages International-run Operations taking up and scaling innovative programming, use of research, learning and application of high-quality program policy.
- At the request of Members, facilitate and co-ordinate strategic international programs/ multi country programming including advocacy programming, that groups of independent Member Associations and Children’s Village International’ Run countries request and opt in to deliver.

Sustainable Income Development Support

- Lead and drive sustainable income development in the organization, Supporting Member Associations to raise sustainable income through support to Grant/ Institutional income development, delivery of multi member systems & processes such as those enabling Child Sponsorship, digital fundraising, and CRM systems support.

Member Support Services

- Responsible for provision of “on-demand” support and digital services to Member Associations. This includes capacity & capability building to risk and growth Members in program and operations areas. Provision of other on demand support services to Promoting and Supporting Members (“PSAs”), Sustainable

Members, and Risk & Growth Members.

- Include contracting staff and maintaining a contract structure ensuring the stable and sustainable funding of Member focused support projects via PSAs.
- Overall maintain Member focused support structures to Members to achieve and maintain self-sufficient Member maturity status.

Children’s Villages International Run Country Operations & Transition Countries:

- Overall responsibility for ensuring that Children’s Villages International-Run Operations are run for maximum program impact, quality and are compliant with policies and standards. Program funding for Children’s Villages International-Run Operations is not part of Children’s Villages International’s budget responsibility. It is the responsibility of the Children’s Villages International-Run Operation in close alignment with the respective location PSAs, who financially support those Children’s Villages International-Run Operations to ensure the respective budgets are available and are disposed accordingly.
- IDS has the overall responsibility for ensuring that selected Children’s Villages International managed countries transition to independent Member Associations.

Humanitarian Action

- Responsibility for development of the Federation’s Humanitarian Strategy and supporting Members and Children’s Villages International- Run Operations to implement in their country (e.g.,

advice, capability building, development of policy).

- Responsible for coordination of Humanitarian response to rapid onset emergencies and for leading those which necessitate the use of international capacities.
- Lead and strengthen overall Member and Children’s Villages International-Run Operations capacity to respond to global emergency situations.

Finance

- Joint responsibility as Executive Board member for the financial results and global finance processes in the federation.
- Joint responsibility with the CEO for the total overall budget of the IDS and FSC, including funding of additional global projects. Individual primary responsibility for the IDS budget.

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 they 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.
- Promote organizational culture across the federation to support the achievement of the mission.

Responsibilities of the Position

Safeguarding

- The CPO 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.

Risk

- Assess federation-wide opportunities and risks, and collaborate with governance bodies and member associations to develop, and, when appropriate, lead mitigation strategies and response plans.





Interactions

- General Assembly (via the International Board) and its committees
- International Board and its committees
- IDS Advisory Board, FSC Advisory Board
- National Directors of Members and dependent Program Operations
- IMT (International Management Team) to be established
- IDS Leadership Team
- INGO interagency bodies + other INGO Global Leads

Candidate Profile

Functional Competences

- Authentic commitment to the Vision, Mission and Values of the SOS Federation in its work for children
- Extensive experience in international cooperation and development, research, MEAL or alternatively in humanitarian and emergency contexts
- Experience in an equivalent position (top level) within an international organization or a decentralized, member-based federation of comparable size and complexity.
- Track record in the sector, ideally INGO background
- Experience in managing a P&L of equivalent size, 440 employees, 40 million Euro budget (excluding variable project budgets) in a federation of 137 member associations (with an overall turnover of over one billion)
- Experience in child protection, alternative care or youth empowerment is a strong asset.
- Strong understanding of member association needs, ideally gained through experience managing country offices in unstable or crisis contexts.
- Professional expertise in driving the vision, strategy development, prioritization and implementation of complex and innovative projects
- Outstanding interpersonal skills, ability to collaborate, engage and build trust amongst stakeholders, in a decentralized and complex networked global system, able to influence without direct authority, fostering collaboration across units and members.
- Leadership skills to manage teams in diverse locations, foster cultural environment development and the ability to build

team capacity

- Strong negotiation, customer relationship management and presentation skills.
- Ability to establish efficient organizational structures and lead high-performing teams, with a focus on continuously adapting the workforce and services to evolving needs.
- High level of resilience, adaptability and flexibility.
- Proven experience in managing organizational transformation and change with authenticity, empathy, and courage. Skilled in driving strategic change initiatives, inspiring a long-term vision and direction, and leading effectively through crises and ambiguity.
- Strong decision-taking competency in fast-changing and uncertain environments, grounded in available evidence and risk-analysis. Leading with a results-based mindset.
- 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.
- Experience in establishing clear accountability mechanisms and performance metrics to drive results and ensure transparency. A structured approach to performance and impact measurement, including safe programming.
- Proven ability to develop and scale innovative programs, particularly in youth-focused and crisis-affected areas.
- Good understanding of the rapidly evolving donor ecosystem, including comprehensive knowledge of fund development and resource mobilization.
- Good understanding of safeguarding

- Service-oriented leadership combined with a business mindset and focus on creating value for internal stakeholders. Experience in establishing and managing a service center is a strong asset.

Value-Based Core Competencies

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

Value-Based Leadership Competences

- Integrity, empathy, humility, and authenticity
- Visionary and strategic thinking
- Resilience, patience, and adaptability
- People-centered and inclusive leadership
- Ethical, impartial, and non-political leadership
- Foster a growth oriented, positive, empowering and encouraging environment, with a strong commitment to psychological safety, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI); while keeping employees and management accountable
- Promote participatory leadership and constructively manage dissent
- Create an atmosphere of collaboration and mutual trust
- Motivate, inspire and lead a multicultural senior leadership team while coaching and mentoring direct reports through role modelling and empowerment
- Role model a values-based leadership to motivate and empower staff

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

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: 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 yweldring@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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