



GLOBAL
SCHOOLS
FORUM

Applications to be reviewed on a rolling basis till 25 September, 2020

GSF PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

Application Pack



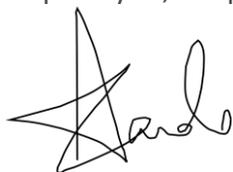
Note from the Executive Director

Global Schools Forum is the only international membership organisation that supports the non-state education sector. GSF connects school networks, intermediary organisations, funders and other stakeholders to build their capacity, share lessons with one another, and solve key challenges.

Our 57 Members span 45 countries from India to Uganda to Brazil, collectively running or supporting 17,000 schools who provide quality education to over 2.3 million children.

As we develop the various strands of our work, we want to increase our skill and capacity to design and deliver new programmes and services for our growing membership.

We are looking for a colleague with commitment and drive to join our team as Programme Director. They will combine a background in international development and in school settings with experience in knowledge sharing and strengthening organizational capacity. It's an exciting time at Global Schools Forum, and this role will play a critical part in shaping our future. If what you see in this pack inspires you, I hope to see an application from you!



Aashti Zaidi

Role: Programme Director, Global Schools Forum

Location: London, UK with some international travel; Location flexible

Contract: Full time

Salary: Competitive

Reports to: Executive Director

We are looking for an ambitious professional who has deep experience in low-resource school settings serving low income students in the Global South, has significant understanding of knowledge sharing and capacity building, is keen to work for a rapidly growing social startup, and has a strong desire to design, lead and deliver member programmes for Global Schools Forum.

This is an exciting time for an experienced education professional to join the team as we shift gears to accelerate our impact and increase our scale through our member programmes and services. This role offers the unique opportunity to engage with and support innovative and inclusive school networks and intermediary organisations working towards the same mission of quality education for all children. The Programme Director sets the vision for, and leads the design, development and delivery of our member offer, from identifying the thematic focus areas to designing the appropriate modes of delivery to executing the delivery, to evaluating the offer's effectiveness in order to continuously improve. An integral member of a small entrepreneurial team, you will have the opportunity to contribute to a one-of-a-kind global organisation that is focused on transforming education outcomes in developing countries.

Key responsibilities will include:

GSF Capacity Building Programme Design and Delivery

Create, design, develop and deliver programmes and services to our growing member base and the global education community in a timely and professional manner

Programme Design

- Understand members' needs, priorities, strengths and gaps to determine content that is responsive to their diverse needs and contexts
- Initiate and set goals for the programme, aligned to GSF's strategic objectives
- Identify focus areas to design, develop and deliver programming for GSF members, including for example, school leadership, classroom pedagogy, re-opening schools post COVID-19, child protection, finance and operations, and building effective school networks for scale
- Design content that is relevant and useful

Programme Delivery

- Deliver content through a variety of mediums and modes, engaging for adult learners
- Engage proactively with members to co-create and curate resources for each member programme, including, member led content based webinars and toolkits
- Build and manage links with external experts and partner organisations to deliver professional development to GSF members
- Facilitate virtual joint working groups and communities of practice to foster collaboration and shared resources among GSF members

Programme Evaluation

- Engage members in ongoing feedback cycles to improve the overall quality of the programme

Events

- Lead on the design and delivery of member only events and develop a regular programme of activities for members, including in-person and virtual events
- In partnership with the Executive Director, plan wider GSF events, such as our Annual Meeting and Study Tours, to ensure programming is aligned to member needs and priorities
- Deliver a series of virtual events designed as global public goods, and open to the global education community

Connections and Collaboration

- Engage with our members to understand their areas of need and facilitate connections amongst members and /or with external organisations and experts where helpful
- Actively seek and develop opportunities for collaboration amongst members

Budget

- Hold budgetary responsibility for the Capacity Building programme including monitoring and reporting on expenditure

Additional responsibilities might include:

- Line manage and provide guidance to Programme Manager
- Support the Advocacy and Communications Manager with member recruitment and engagement
- Create relevant content for internal and external communications

Required experience

- Over ten years of relevant work experience working in high-achieving schools and school networks, ideally in a low or middle income country
- Deep understanding of how schools and school networks operate and the levers that will strengthen the organisation's approach
- Strong understanding of current trends and innovations in K-12 school education delivery

Required knowledge and competencies:

- Strong capability and experience with knowledge sharing and organisational capacity building
- Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to build and maintain strong relationships with multiple stakeholders including members and external partners
- Outstanding verbal and written communication skills
- Self-starter with demonstrated ability to work on your own initiative
- Ability to work in a changing and flexible organisation and willing to learn new skills
- Strong leadership, project management and organisational skills; able to manage multiple concurrent activities and projects

- Comfortable with international travel (around 10-15 percent)

Desirable competencies:

- Masters degree in relevant field desirable
- Deep professional networks in the Global South across school networks, service providers, funders, investors and ecosystem players
- Monitoring and Evaluation experience
- Familiarity with approaches to virtual learning

GSF Values

We are transparent and inclusive

- *Our membership criteria are clear and simple; cost is not a barrier for entry*
- *We share information to support the efforts of operators, intermediaries and partnering governments*
- *Our words and actions are characterised by integrity*

We are urgent and outcomes-oriented

- *Our actions reflect the urgency and importance of our members' efforts to put children first*
- *We provide a high-quality and relevant member offer*

We operate with kindness and humility

- *We understand that people with different experiences and contexts can challenge and strengthen our notions of what is possible*
- *We seek out feedback and look for best practices to continuously improve the quality of our work*
- *We know there are many different solutions to the challenge we're trying to solve, and we seek counsel and best practices to improve the quality of our work*

How to Apply

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis till 25th September, with an anticipated start date in mid-October, 2020. Prospective applicants should send their cover letter and CV to info@globalschoolsforum.org with the subject "Programme Director, Global Schools Forum." Your cover letter should be one page, providing details of why you think you would be a good fit for the position; why your experience, expertise and interests are relevant to the role; why you want to work for Global Schools Forum; and how what you've done to date is relevant to what we're looking for. You are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Please direct any questions or queries to the same email. Note that only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.

GSF seeks to be a diverse and inclusive place to work. We welcome applications from everyone regardless of race, age, disability, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or faith.

Background: Global Schools Forum

1. The Challenge

In recent years, non-state engagement in education — which includes a vibrant mix of non-profit, for-profit and faith-based organizations — has grown significantly around the world. Following several decades of growth, around 20-30% of children globally are educated outside of government schools. According to 2018 data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 42% of pre-primary, 18% of primary, and 26% of secondary students globally were enrolled in the non-state sector. In low- and middle-income countries, the sector caters for a sizeable share of the poorest students. In India, just under half of children are educated in privately-managed schools, with one third coming from the poorest 40% of the population. Survey data in seven sub-Saharan African cities found that approximately 1.8 million low-income children were being educated in non-state schools, with enrolment in this sector as high as 84% (Kampala) and 60% (Nairobi). Unofficial data estimates over 1.1 million non-state schools across low- and middle-income countries. If we are serious about meeting the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goal #4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all), the importance of non-state provision in education globally is simply too large to ignore.

Non-state schooling has grown and expanded organically in the developing world in a bottom-up manner, unlike in the developed world, where it is largely a privilege of the elite. There is a growth of schools serving working class and lower middle-income parents, from daily wage labourers to junior civil servants and small business owners, who are willing to pay for a ‘better quality’ alternative to government schools. There is evidence to suggest that non-state operators have been successful in expanding access by increasing the number of school places available, especially in settings where there is a gap in state provision and/or among marginalised groups.

A lot remains to be done to move the needle on quality education for the world’s poorest children; in response, over the last decade, passionate entrepreneurs have entered the sector and established innovative schooling models that seek to deliver a high-quality education at an affordable cost. Unfortunately, many of these pioneers are working as “Islands of Excellence” —lacking access to the relationships and know-how that could enable them to scale effectively

The International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity recommended that to accelerate progress and achieve the SDG and the vision laid out in *The Learning Generation*, the education sector should “invest in a global ecosystem for education that will promote cross-border learning and sharing of innovations and grow the capacity of leaders and practitioners across sectors.” Global Schools Forum is a powerful example of building and strengthening this ‘ecosystem’ to enable learning, sharing and capacity building.

2. Identifying a Solution

Global Schools Forum (GSF) is a community of education entrepreneurs who are running and supporting innovative and inclusive schools in underserved markets. GSF currently includes 57 members across Africa, Asia and South America collectively running or supporting 17,000 schools, and providing quality education to over 2.3 million children.

We believe that non-state schools can play a critical role in addressing the learning crisis because they can provide capacity where the state system faces constraints; they are well placed to innovate and

find new ways to raise standards, increase access, and reduce costs. In line with human rights law and international agreements, GSF believes that governments should be the guarantors, but not necessarily the sole providers, of education. We work on the basis not that private is better than public, but that the non-state sector can complement and support government provision of basic education — when invited to do so — and also bring new ideas, funding and energy to the sector. We believe governments should determine the best way to provide education — whether public, private or a combination of both — as long as this complies with human rights law and can be effectively regulated to deliver goals of learning and equity, with a particular focus on girls.

While there are many local associations and advocacy bodies, there is no single “go to” global platform to focus on the opportunities and challenges faced by non-state schools – to strengthen the quality of education and contribute to the generation and use of greater data and evidence.

The organisation has grown its membership from 25 to 57 members between 2018 and 2020. In 2019, with the launch of a new 3-year strategy, the organisation entered a new phase of development, moving from being a ‘small and scrappy’ organisation to thinking deeply about how to expand our reach and deepen our impact as we establish GSF as the ‘go to’ global platform for the non-state sector.

With an ambition to reach 200 members by 2024, the focus of the organisation will be on three core workstreams: Opportunities for our members to collaborate and share expertise, knowledge and best practice through our Capacity Building programme; Policy and advocacy work on behalf of the wider sector to protect the policy, funding and operational space; and the generation of high quality data and evidence as a global public good.

A. Capacity Building: GSF is a vibrant network organisation focused on providing opportunities to collaborate and share expertise, knowledge and best practice in order to strengthen the capacity of its members. We bring together people who run and support schools virtually and in-person to learn from one another as they confront shared operational and pedagogical challenges. Additionally, through the development of tailored resources focused on a set of rotating themes, we provide programming that further capacitates GSF members.

B. Policy & Advocacy: The focus of GSF’s advocacy work is to protect the policy, financing, and operational space for non-state operators through both reactive and pro-active engagement in global education policy processes. The organisation will amplify its members’ successes and advocate on their behalf.

C. Data & Evidence: Through its Data & Evidence workstream, GSF will generate and disseminate high-quality data and evidence to strengthen the wider education system. GSF intends to regularly report on a set of basic metrics through an Annual Member Survey, which over time will be collated into a longitudinal dataset to provide further evidence of the role non-state schools are playing in education. The organisation will leverage its role as a learning lab for high quality non-state actors by testing interventions that can ‘nudge’ larger education systems. Finally, it will develop a bi-Annual State of the Sector Report to inform the wider education sector.

Read more on the GSF [website](#).