



# RECRUITMENT PACK

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



# WELCOME

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Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next CEO of WorldSkills UK.

I have been involved with WorldSkills UK for several years and have seen first hand the transformational impact of our work on the lives of individuals and organisations and our catalytic impact on the UK skills system.



With ongoing rapid changes in the UK and the world – politically, economically and technologically – it is an incredibly exciting and important time for WorldSkills UK. I believe wholeheartedly that our mission as a world-class skills network has never been more important.

Working with our partners nationally and internationally is vital to help motivate more educators, empower more young people and help more employers to get the future skills they need. The value of our work at WorldSkills UK is recognised right across all UK governments, the business community and the skills sector. Within our global network our contribution is recognised as innovative, inspiring and impactful at a time of significant change. We continue to make a compelling case for investing in our work to increase the UK's prosperity.

We are now seeking a CEO to join us at this pivotal and important time, to further unleash the full potential of world-class skills informed by international benchmarking creating opportunities for the next generation. Our new CEO will provide leadership, vision and direction to build on WorldSkills UK's position in promoting the value of high-quality skills and work across a range of cross-sector stakeholders to broaden our role and profile nationally and internationally in raising standards. Importantly, they will further enhance the overall public status and recognition of professional and technical education, training and skills in the wider environment.

A visible and innovative senior leader, our new CEO will have maturity of judgement, alliance-building capability and quickly build credibility across a range of audiences. They will inspire and influence at all levels, with the vision, energy and presence to represent the full breadth of the UK skills systems on public platforms nationally and internationally. With commercial and strategic acumen, our new CEO will have a flexible and entrepreneurial approach, identifying opportunities for WorldSkills UK with ideas that capture imaginations but that are backed by the rigour and evidence to achieve change. Finally, they will have the strategic leadership skills to move the organisation forward and motivate our exceptionally talented and committed team.

We believe that when young people succeed, we all succeed. If you believe you would like to make a meaningful difference to the future of the UK, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

**Marion Plant OBE FCGI**  
**Chair of the Board of Trustees**

# ABOUT WORLDSKILLS UK

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WorldSkills UK is focused on developing world-class technical skills to help better prepare young people to succeed and to help boost business confidence to invest in creating jobs that will drive economic growth.

## OUR WORK IN THE UK

We are the only government-backed UK wide skills partnership and are a collaborative four nations partnership with education, business and UK governments – and we form a world-class skills network – working as a catalyst in three key areas:

1. Raising standards – through international benchmarking and professional development.
2. Championing future skills – through analysis of rapidly changing economic demand.
3. Empowering young people, from all backgrounds – through competitions- based training and careers advice.

We focus on these areas to help us contribute positively to skills policy and practice in these ongoing challenging times. We believe that working with our partners across the UK and internationally we can make technical and professional education a source of UK pride and an asset for our future economic success.

## OUR INTERNATIONAL IMPACT AND INVOLVEMENT

We are the only UK skills partnership which is part of a global network - our work is rooted in our knowledge of how other countries train to meet global industry standards and use skills policy for economic development.

We formally represent the UK Government in WorldSkills, an 85-country coalition that champions global industry standards in apprenticeships and technical education. We therefore have a unique perspective on how other countries' skills systems work to support economic growth and create jobs for talented young people.

That's why we are increasingly focussed on using our programmes to help boost the international competitiveness of the UK's workforce skills – boosting standards to world-class levels. And why we are focusing more of our programmes on future skills at higher levels in areas such as industry 4.0, cyber security, industrial robotics, additive manufacturing and renewable energy – as other advanced economies are doing.

We are also using our international networks to form partnerships between skills providers in the UK and other economies focused on sharing training methods and best practice. We are working with institutions in Japan, Korea, and Kenya on advanced manufacturing skills and with France, Netherlands, Taiwan and Korea on green skills.

We achieve our strategic goals through our key programmes:

### 1. Raising standards

The WorldSkills UK Centre of Excellence is at the heart of this programme and has been developed in partnership with NCFE. It was founded in 2020 based on diagnostic research undertaken by the University of Oxford, with 50 member institutions currently spread across the four UK nations. We have ambitious plans to grow the Centre of Excellence over the next three years to engage over 200 institutions, supporting 75,000 educators and reaching 300,000 students and apprentices.

The Centre is a knowledge transfer mechanism and innovation space focused on professional development to deliver to standards of excellence in training and assessment for young people. Through the Centre we disseminate world-class expertise by our international experts who train to meet global industry standards in WorldSkills. We base this on analysis and insights for practitioners and policy makers on international skills and economic trends.

This programme also includes the WorldSkills UK Network for Innovation – a community of best practice among training providers and colleges working together to benchmark and improve their performance using WorldSkills UK national and international performance data and resources. This includes the WorldSkills UK Learning Lab – offering online access to professional development resources for educators and young people developed by our international experts.

## 2. Championing future skills

This programme is about undertaking diagnostic research into how policy and economic demands are changing in a way that informs how we future proof our skills portfolio and programmes, creates insights for policy and practice on “what works” within our programmes and partnerships; and creates content for public affairs and communications activities about our work as well as opportunities for fundraising and sponsorship.

Last year we convened an independent Skills Taskforce for Global Britain, led by the former head of the CBI, John Cridland CBE, to undertake international benchmarking looking at the role world-class skills play in attracting foreign direct investment to create jobs and boost productivity. The Taskforce not only concluded that a high-quality skills base is critical in attracting investment to the UK, particularly outside London, but it also made a compelling case that we need to act urgently to keep pace with economies like Singapore, France and Ireland which have more effective and joined up skills and inward investment offers to drive sustainable economic growth.

This has created a strong platform from which to pursue our mission in policy and practice. We have seen our work endorsed in the 2021 Skills for Jobs White Paper (England), supported by ministers across the UK, cited in House of Lords inquiries and by a House of Commons select committee. We have featured on BBC News, Sky News and LBC as well as achieving significant coverage in regional, trade press and national dailies including the Financial Times and The Guardian.

## 3. Empowering young people

The WorldSkills UK competitions programme is at the heart of our work to empower young people from all backgrounds. WorldSkills UK has been engaged in international benchmarking through competitions-based training for over 65 years.

Competitions-based training enables young people to benchmark their skills against their peers and against national and international standards. Participation in competitions-based training not only improves young people’s technical skills, but it also develops their mindset skills by increasing resilience, self-confidence and employability. We actively encourage participation from underrepresented groups to ensure growing inclusion in this programme to help ensure more young people from all walks of life can benefit from our work.

It also develops teachers and trainers to deliver to high-quality standards. Government inspectors, like Ofsted in England, have recognised the value of competition-based training in their education inspection framework, citing their value in demonstrating outstanding behaviours and attitudes. Furthermore, recent independent research by Frontier Economics shows that young people who have taken part in our competitions-based training earn up to 63% more than their peers who have not been involved in our work.

As part of our careers advice work, to encourage more young people to take up apprenticeships and technical education career routes, our competitions programme alumni act as role models through online careers advocacy sessions with business and skills sector partners to ensure we inspire as many young people as possible.

### FIND OUT MORE

To read more about WorldSkills UK’s work, please visit: [www.worldskillsuk.org](http://www.worldskillsuk.org)

# ROLE DESCRIPTION

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**Role title:** Chief Executive

**Accountable to:** Chair of the Board of Trustees

## OVERALL PURPOSE

- Provide high calibre leadership, vision and direction to further develop WorldSkills UK's position and reputation in promoting and supporting UK development of world-class skills to benefit young people, teachers and employers.
- Ensure the organisation meets mission and objectives as directed by the Board of Trustees through effective leadership and management.

## KEY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Advance the vision and strategy with the Board of Trustees.
- Cultivate and manage a strong sustainable business model to enable WorldSkills UK to achieve its vision, mission and strategy.
- Broaden the role and profile of WorldSkills UK nationally and internationally in raising standards and the overall public status and recognition of professional and technical education, training and skills across the whole of the UK, in line with charitable objectives.
- Lead government relations to ensure alignment between strategy and public policy across the UK to help secure and grow public and corporate fundraising, analysing and exploiting appropriate development, public funding and business opportunities.
- Fulfil a key role internationally representing the UK government in WorldSkills fora to maintain a leading role in promoting UK technical and professional education and training on the world stage, fostering international collaboration and benchmarking and transferring best practice in international standards of teaching and learning.
- Place at the core of the organisation a partnership network across the UK with governments, employer bodies, key organisations within the further education, higher education and skills sector and public authorities to:
  - ensure WorldSkills UK reflects stakeholder priorities;
  - increase the engagement and investment of network partners in WorldSkills UK activities; and
  - strengthen and protect WorldSkills UK's long-term role and position as a quality improvement partner by leveraging international best practice.
- Represent WorldSkills UK in media and on public platforms championing our work and agendas.
- Be a visible and innovative leader who leads and motivates a strong and successful management team to deliver against strategic objectives and establish an inclusive and productive organisational culture.



## RESPONSIBILITIES

- Vision, mission and strategy, working with the Board of Trustees, including:
- Developing detailed strategic options for Board consideration;
  - ensuring the Board of Trustees receives all necessary information that is valid, timely and reliable in order for it to fulfil its duties as the governing body of the company and charity;
  - supporting the Board of Trustees through regular effectiveness reviews; and
  - helping ensure diversity is embedded in a progressive Board that represents beneficiaries, the four UK nations and key stakeholders – young people, educators, employers and governments.
- Strategic development and oversight of charity activities, including:
  - raising standards through teacher-focused continuing professional development programmes and international benchmarking;
  - championing future skills through industry engagement, employer and economy focused intelligence, research and thought leadership programmes; and
  - empowering young people through inclusive competitions-based training, careers advocacy and diversity programmes - nationally and internationally.
- Public funding development, financial and resource strategy and management, including oversight of public procurement funding bids.
- Commercial strategy and business development, including leading and overseeing partnership and contract negotiations and implementation.
- Government relations and public affairs, public relations and external affairs.
- National and international key stakeholder management in WorldSkills and with governments, business and education sectors.
- Leadership and management, including:
  - leading and motivating staff and contractors, including ensuring an inclusive working environment;
  - meeting objectives, targets and KPIs; and
  - ensuring good risk management in operational, regulatory, legislative and contract management.



# PERSON SPECIFICATION

## EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

- Substantial leadership and senior management experience, ideally gained in a charity, economic or relevant skills sector context.
- A sound understanding of the structures and workings of the UK further education and skills sector and evidence of an ability to develop excellent working relationships with governments, agencies and all key partners and stakeholders, nationally and internationally.
- Successful strategic planning for an organisation of comparable size and operational complexity in a changing economic and public policy stakeholder environment.
- Demonstrable experience of representing an organisation on a national and an international stage, in the media and on public platforms and of developing and sustaining key relationships to advance status and reputation.
- A successful track record of developing and sustaining partnerships with business and employers and their representative organisations.
- Proven financial management skills and successful experience of entrepreneurial and commercial activity that have led to new income opportunities.
- Championing and leading successful strategic and operational innovation with proven success in managing change.
- Commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace and through the delivery of programmes.

## SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- The ability to lead others with energy and enthusiasm, to command respect and to provide an inclusive environment where others will feel motivated to achieve outstanding results.
- Proven ability to form strategic plans based on internal and external environmental analysis, and to create integrated resource plans.
- Entrepreneurial with the judgement and ability to seize appropriate opportunities.
- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to negotiate effectively and present to a wide range of audiences.
- The ability to develop positive working relationships with individuals at all levels.
- The ability to operate effectively under pressure.
- The ability to understand and interpret financial and management information.
- Effective prioritisation and organisational skills.
- Determination to promote and embed equity, diversity and inclusion throughout all aspects of WorldSkills UK activity.
- Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young adults and vulnerable adults.



# TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

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## **SALARY:**

The salary for this role is circa. £120,000, depending on experience.

## **PENSION:**

WorldSkills UK offers a maximum employer's contribution to your pension of 6% of your basic salary, on the condition that you make an employee contribution to your pension of at least 3%. You may choose to contribute a higher percentage of your salary to your pension, subject to statutory limits.

## **LOCATION:**

Normal place of work is Third Floor, 25 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1LW. This role is office based but with flexible hybrid working.

## **HOURS OF WORK:**

Full time working hours are a minimum of 35 hours per week, with normal working hours being 09:00 to 17:00 Monday to Friday. We are proud to have a flexible approach to our working practices and service delivery and are happy to discuss flexible working options with suitable candidates.

## **ANNUAL LEAVE:**

25 days' annual leave [which will increase by one additional day for each completed year of service up to a maximum of 30 days] plus public and bank holidays.

## **PROBATION PERIOD:**

The post is subject to six months' probationary period with one month's notice during the probationary period and six months' notice thereafter.

## **REFERENCES:**

The offer of appointment will be subject to satisfactory references.

## **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (EAP):**

Employees have access to an independent support line provided through AVIVA. This telephone-based service offers guidance and will provide onward referral onto other services if appropriate. The counselling service is free of charge, completely confidential and can be accessed 24 hours a day every day of the year.

## **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

Diverse perspectives and experiences are critical to our success and we welcome applications from all people from all backgrounds with the experience and skills needed to perform this role.



# HOW TO APPLY

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We hope you will consider making an application. To do so, please visit: <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/wsuk-ceo/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- your CV (no more than three sides).
- a short supporting statement (maximum two sides) that sets out why you are interested in joining WorldSkills UK as its next Chief Executive Officer.

We would also be grateful if you would also complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

<b>Search closes</b>	Monday 5th June 2023
<b>Preliminary Interviews</b>	w/c 12th and w/c 19th June 2023
<b>Final formal interviews</b>	w/c 26th June 2023 (tbc)

