

Role Narrative

Chief Executive Officer

We encourage applications from all backgrounds, communities and industries, and are committed to having a team that is made up of diverse skills, experiences and abilities. We welcome applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, mature-age people and people with disability, regardless of sex, sexuality or gender identity.

Introduction

TACSI is Australia's National Centre for Social Innovation. The organisation was seed funded by the South Australian Government in 2009 and operates as a national independent NGO.

The organisation partners with government, business, communities, philanthropy, NFPs and business to tackle our most important challenges, and build the futures Australians want to see.

Over 14 years TACSI has built an unmatched portfolio of expertise. Across ageing, education, child protection, disability, mental health, home and housing, communities and place based work.

- TACSI's **Systems Initiatives Team** partners to develop and deliver long-term, systems change focussed work,
- TACSI's **Consulting Team** advises and supports the development of policy, services and strategy and lived experience involvement.
- TACSI's **Learning Team** provides learning experiences for individuals and organisations in TACSI's major areas of expertise: allyship, co-design, communities, peer-to-peer, systems and social innovation.

In addition, TACSI engages in a number of **thought leadership** activities that aim to advance knowledge about the innovations and ways of working that can help us navigate the 21st century.

Operational since 2010, TACSI is one of the worlds' longest standing examples of a social innovation focussed field builder / intermediaries.

Role Specifics

Location: Adelaide, Sydney or Melbourne (Current offices based in Adelaide and Sydney)

Employment status: Permanent

Terms: Full-time with national travel required.

About the Role

The Chief Executive Officer's principal objectives are to ensure that the organisation delivers on its purpose and strategy, as shaped and agreed upon amongst staff and the board, and to grow TACSI's influence and impact through a financially sustainable business model.

It is also paramount that the CEO focus on modelling an organisational learning culture and operational excellence through building a world-class team united in their commitment to see all Australians live their best life.

Important Relationships

TACSI is a “[networked](#)” organisation, with a non-traditional structure that aims to enable transparency, adaptivity, creativity, connectivity and leadership across the entire organisation. It is critical that you leverage the strengths and knowledge from across all parts of the network and balance an important tension between a strong external focus and a deep understanding of the organisation's work and learning. You will work very closely with the Board as well as Business Leads across our Consulting, Systems Initiatives, Learning and Operations units.

You will connect with a broad array of stakeholders nationally and internationally in both social innovation and social impact fields. Developing and maintaining strong relationships with key decision-makers across government, private sector, NGO's and philanthropy is paramount.

Key Responsibilities

Development and implementation of TACSI's Strategy

- Engage [Board](#) directors and staff in the development, iteration and implementation of TACSI's strategy including:
 - Supporting the establishment of a National Futures Program through multiple alliances with organisations across Australia - ultimately influencing the kinds of futures we pursue in Australia. This will involve stretching TACSI's capabilities in national alliance building and creating national level influence, including with the public.
 - Diversifying TACSI's revenue base through establishing new products and services in new markets, and new forms of investment into the organisation.
 - Improving the communication and understanding of social innovation across Australia as well as the understanding of TACSI's role in the uptake of social innovation
 - Evolving the operating model to better meet the changing needs of the business and the role it plays for Australia.
- Identify and lead responses to strategic opportunities for TACSI in the broader ecosystem.
- Oversee the ongoing development of TACSI's brand and communications
- Oversee the development and implementation of best practice monitoring and evaluation across all TACSI business.

Governance & Compliance

- Work closely with the Board Chair to both recruit and retain board directors that are committed to TACSI's purpose & strategy.
- Work with the Risk and Audit Committee to ensure appropriate policies, procedures & controls are implemented in a way that promotes organisational care, purpose, culture and legal compliance.
- Work with the key organisational roles to ensure TACSI is compliant with Tax, ANCN and DGR regulations.

Organisational Leadership & Excellence

- Build and maintain a world class-learning organisation that attracts and retains a diverse and inclusive workforce.
- Be a role model from business and cultural perspectives and champion TACSI's 'Words to Live By'.
- Invest in your own self-awareness and personal development, including understanding leadership from diverse perspectives
- Ensure the promotion and implementation of a safe, productive and healthy work environment.

Relationships, partnerships and influencing

- Be a strong ambassador for TACSI's brand, purpose & work.
- Develop strategic relationships and partnerships to support the delivery of TACSI's strategy across the public and private sectors, the not-for-profit sector, philanthropy and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations and communities Elders and leaders.
- Support the creation of events, experiences and papers that advance TACSI's strategy and highlight and promote TACSI as a thought leader in Australia and Internationally.
- Inspire and influence key leaders and stakeholders, including potential partners and customers, through sharing insights and stories from TACSI's work with the aim of stretching people's sense of possibility and their comfort in taking greater risks for the potential of greater gain.

About the Person | What you'll bring

SELF AWARENESS

You are authentic and are at ease sitting in the muddy waters of not knowing with humility, vulnerability and empathy. You interrogate assumptions, mindsets and biases, including your own. You are open and committed to learning, personal development and growth. You have a genuine energy, passion and commitment to social justice, working in the social sector and on society's most important challenges.

BOLD TENACITY

You recognise the ways we have worked together in the past will not get us where we want to go in the future and boldly champion alternatives to the status quo. You dig deep and demonstrate a relentless tenacity to show up and support continuous progress but also recognise you are not alone or the hero of the journey. You address fundamental issues and make tough choices enabled by the trusting and brave relationships you have nurtured.

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

You are alert to movements and shifts across multiple layers and dimensions of the system and lead with personal connection. You connect the dots and support bold collective visioning to drive strategic change agendas. You are adept at connecting the big picture to the tactical, pragmatic and practical next steps. You are curious about the interconnectedness of Country, people, communities, sectors and systems and form meaningful and strategic connections to support and contribute towards broader ambitions.

SYSTEMIC LEADERSHIP

You understand there is no one solution and trust the power inherent in relational ways of working. You are adaptive and recognise mutuality, that the success of the whole depends on the contribution of individual parts and that leadership is produced collectively in the community, not the individual (Bateson, 'Small Arcs of Larger Circles'). You bring people together and along.

Working with The Australian Centre for Social Innovation

[TACSI](#) is a fast-paced environment where [people](#) from diverse disciplines, ages and experiences come together to tackle complex social issues and build the conditions for social innovation – all whilst helping each other learn and grow.

We also offer:

- Salary packaging benefits (up to \$15,899 tax-free benefit per FBT year)
- Extra meal and entertainment benefits (up to \$2,650 tax-free per FBT year)
- Flexible work practices including ability to work from home.
- Dedicated time and allowance for professional development and learning.
- A bright and spacious workplace in the centre of Adelaide and a cosy office in Redfern, Sydney.
- A welcoming team with a sense of fun!

TACSI Background information

April 2024

TACSI is Australia's National Centre for Social Innovation. The organisation was seed funded by the South Australian Government in 2009 and operates as a national independent NGO.

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What we do: Our business areas

TACSI's **Systems Initiatives Team** partners to develop and deliver long-term, systems change focussed work.

Exemplar work in the initiatives include:

- Our Town: A 10yr initiative, in partnership with the Fay Fuller Foundation to support regional downs in South Australia to self-determine local mental wellbeing.
- Wilto Willo (Spring Star): An alliance led by the KWY Aboriginal Corporation and 7 First Nations communities across SA, in which TACSI is a partner. The alliance is exploring how to create the supports and systems to enable First Nations communities, and their innovations, to drive the development of Federal and state Child Protection policy and services.
- 'National Futures Program' - new program of work starting in FY25 with seed funding from the Paul Ramsay Foundation PRF. The ambition is to create a number of national initiatives that will contribute to more socially just futures by: stretching Australia's sense of possibility about the future, creating iconic future-focussed demonstrations, orchestrating innovation and mobilising the people who will drive the development of just futures.

TACSI's **Consulting Team** advises and supports the development of policy, services and strategy and lived experience involvement.

Exemplar projects, partnerships and impacts include:

- The development, prototyping and scaling of the RRR model of domestic violence response within primary care. Initially developed with Brisbane South PHN the model is now spreading to PHNs nationally.
- The development of a future-focussed strategy for place for the Paul Ramsay Foundation through conversations with progressive investors and practitioners in place around the world.
- The development of the state ageing strategy for South Australia through large scale consultation with older people across the state and co-design workshops with target groups.
- The development of Victoria's Aboriginal Justice Strategy Four, with the Koori Caucus and Koori Justice Unit.

TACSI's **Learning Team** provides learning experiences for individuals and organisations in TACSI's major areas of expertise: allyship, co-design, communities, peer-to-peer, systems and social innovation.

- Free guides, and a program of monthly webinars introduce fundamental concepts.
- Courses include 'Foundations in Co-Design' and 'Foundations in Social Innovation'
- We are currently supporting 10 NFPs in NSW to introduce peer workers in gambling support services with our course 'Developing Peer-to-Peer Responses' which is based on 10yrs of peer to peer practice.

In addition, TACSI engages in a number of **thought leadership** activities that aim to advance knowledge about the innovations and ways of working that can help us navigate the 21st century. . Exemplar events and publications and partnerships include:

- [The Benefits are Mutual](#) - A paper documenting the promising practice of peer-to-peer responses.
- [Social R&D](#) - A paper written in partnership with RMIT, Equity Trustees, the Smith Family and the Donkey Wheel Foundation proposing a framework for national infrastructure for social purpose innovation.
- [Philanthropy, Systems and Change](#) - A paper in collaboration with Perpetual, Dusseldorp Forum and the Paul Ramsay Foundation, based on interviews with foundation staff around the world.
- [Community Wealth Building and the Future of Place](#) - Event with Future Dreaming Australia, New Economy Network Australia, Griffith Centre for Systems Innovation, Collaboration for Impact, Business Council of Cooperatives and Mutuals, Ethical Fields, Regen Labs, CSIRO Enabling Resilient Investment Initiative, Clear Horizon, The Difference Incubator, Give Where You Live, Donkey Wheel Foundation and Systems Shift.

Our Expertise: portfolio

Over 14 years TACSI has built an unmatched portfolio of expertise. Across ageing, education, child protection, disability, mental health, home and housing, communities and place based work. This includes: / we're currently supporting organisations in areas including:

- Allyship & First Nations Engagement - Building cultural competency and allyship.
- Co-design and co-production- Meaningfully involving people with lived experience in planning, innovation, evaluation and service delivery.
- Policy co-design- Developing effective policy through participatory processes.
- Community-led, place based - Creating effective community-led initiatives.
- Innovation strategy / infrastructure - Creating cultures, structures practices and governance for innovation.
- Strategy - Developing/ facilitating strategy for organisations and sectors working in complexity
- Networks - Developing networks that advance systemic impact
- Peer-to-peer - Developing services, commissioning and strategy for peer to peer responses.
- Philanthropy - Co-creating strategy and impact initiatives.
- Service design - Co-developing service models with lived expertise, research expertise and practice expertise.
- Systems change initiatives - Developing long-term initiatives with ambition change goals.
- Working with/for Mob - Partnering with First Nations led organisations for innovation.

Our ambition: Impact Strategy / areas of action

All TACSI businesses contribute to TACSI's impact goal is to create greater equity / just futures through the widespread adoption of ways of working that are participatory, systemic and creative, future aware. [link to public strategy](#)

There are two areas of action / threads to TACSI's impact strategy:

1. Demonstrating the potential of social innovation to address national priority challenges including / with a current focus in: Mental Health, Home and housing and Regenerative Communities
2. Building the practices, partnerships and infrastructure needed to take social innovation to scale in Australia including: a social innovation workforce, a social R&D ecosystem and peer to peer practices.

In each of these streams we hold a theory of change/ theory of transition that articulates. 1) The future we want to see, 2) The work we need to do now to advance progress towards that future. 3) The work we should avoid - because it reinforces the status quo.

A recent development grant from PRF enabled TACSI to reflect, after 14 years of activity, on the organisation it now needs to become to serve Australia in the second quarter of the 21st Century - whilst also continuing to operate in the current market and funding environment. Informed by this work our current strategic priorities include:

- Better communicating what we do and making it easier for people to partner and buy us
- Exploring the potential of more mainstream offerings to new customers eg. capability building and consultancy to support the business in making just transitions, fulfilling societal responsibilities and meeting the needs of vulnerable customer groups.
- Exploring new ways for people to invest in TACSI that is decoupled from fee-for-service delivery
- e.g. investing into our mental health portfolio of work.
- Exploring the potential of establishing a new set of future focussed initiatives in Australia - to do the work we need to do as a society to meet the challenges of the 21st century whilst moving towards more socially just futures. The Paul Ramsay Foundation have now agreed to seed fund this work with a \$2.5m investment over 5 years

What makes this work/possible: Our Principles and operating model

This breadth of work TACSI engages in is underpinned by a strongly held set of values, practices and a networked operating model.

Our **values and practices** are informed by the team's expertise in: participatory practice, social work practices, systemic practices, creative practices, innovation, community development, design, allyship and cultural appropriateness.

- Act in Allyship with First Nations Peoples, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledges and Country.
- Think and act systemically.
- Rigour in imagination and experimentation.
- Embrace diversity in decision making, ensuring people experiencing disadvantage/lived experience have equal power.
- Put a focus on learning.

Our **network operating model** prioritises: principle based decision making, distributed accountability, flexibility, transparency, creativity and learning. Decision making on key organisational functions is distributed across a number of 'hubs' each of which include team members with a range of experience. Hubs include: Business Health, Communications, Practice, RAP & Culture, Business Systems.

TACSI's annual organisational culture survey shows that TACSI has a consistently strong culture, and that staff value TACSI as a place to work. Over the last 4 years 100% of staff said they are proud to work at TACSI, the four year average for trust with peers and colleagues is 96%.

Recent changes & future direction

Pre-covid TACSI was following a strategy to grow the organisation and revenue base, in responding to increasing demand for consulting services. In the last 12 months, like most consultancies in Australia, we have experienced a significant decrease in demand for consulting services due to a complex set of circumstances. In addition, we have seen increased competition in co-design related consultancy as the practice has become more mainstream - which we believe we have in part contributed to through our leadership in the area. These factors have led to us reducing the size of the business through a number of redundancies in Nov 2023 and April 2024. We are now heading into the new 2025 financial year with a high degree of confidence around a break-even budget, and with the expectation to grow when the funding environment enables it - albeit in a different shape.

The current strategic priorities reflect, we believe, what should be the longer-term priorities of an incoming CEO:

- To establish and grow a National Futures Program through multiple alliances with organisations across Australia - ultimately influencing the kinds of futures we pursue in Australia. This will involve stretching TACSI's capabilities in national alliance building and creating national level influence, including with the public.
- To diversify the revenue base through establishing new products and services in new markets, and new forms of investment into the organisation.
- To continue to improve the communication and understanding of social innovation and TACSI's role in supporting the uptake of social innovation in Australia.
- To build on the strength of the culture whilst evolving the operating model to better meet the evolving needs of the business and the role it plays for Australia.

Applications close at 5:00pm on Friday, 10 May 2024 and can be made [here](#).