



POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE	Chief Executive Officer
REPORTS TO	Front Project Board
DIRECT REPORTS	Team of 17 staff, including five direct reports: Executive Assistant, Lead, Impact Foundry, Communications Manager, GM Operations, Upskill and Mentoring Program Manager
LOCATION	Melbourne
CAPACITY	Full-time but flexible (3 days/ week in office and 2 days WFH)

OVERVIEW

The Front Project (TFP) is an independent national intermediary in the ECEC sector which addresses children's experiences of inequity, vulnerability, and intergenerational disadvantage, delivering both immediate and lifetime impacts. TFP works across the entire early learning system, connecting with people who work in and on the system and have the potential to effect change and remove barriers that disadvantage children and families. TFP finds innovative solutions that create impact in all parts of the system so that all children can thrive, regardless of the different challenges they experience.

We know high quality early education lays foundations for children that can last a lifetime, while providing huge benefits to our society and the future prosperity of Australia. We will see the full benefits when all children can access the quality education they need to overcome vulnerabilities and lead healthy, successful lives.

"Early learning benefits more than children and families; it strengthens the workforce, builds the economy and helps to grow healthy and safe communities." - Jane Hunt, Founding CEO

THE ROLE

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is a strategic and collaborative role which works between the TFP Board and Executive, government, business, philanthropists, policy makers and funding environment. The CEO has a sharp vision of the strategic goals of the organisation and represents the Front Project amongst a broad range of stakeholders.

The CEO is accountable to the Board and is responsible for the effective implementation and achievement of the organisation's strategic and business plans; ensuring such plans provide impact and financial sustainability well into the future. The CEO is responsible for building operations and culture to underpin growth whilst developing and sustaining critical relationships with key internal and external stakeholders.

The CEO is responsible for amplifying the Front Project's impact by working to remove barriers that keep children and families from having quality early learning experiences.



The Front Project is now at an inflection point, with reforms underway, and there is a next horizon to be shaped.

The incoming CEO will initially focus on four key areas:

- Working closely with the Board to set the next strategic direction
- Contributing to the current reform environment
- Diversifying Revenue – identifying multiple funding and other fee for service income streams to replace current funding (which declines at the end of 2024).
- Exploring financial sustainability options, including assessing whether the organisation could become an accredited Research Institute in order to obtain DGR status to attract diverse funding streams through donations.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic leadership

- Provide strong, clear, and visionary leadership to engage and inspire all stakeholders around the Front Project's purpose.
- In consultation with the Board, develop, implement, and review TFP's overarching strategy and ensure operational plans are developed to deliver on impact-related, financial and performance objectives.
- Take responsibility for the management of the TFP's financial budget and position to ensure short term goals are balanced with long-term sustainability.
- Lead and develop the culture of the organisation to ensure high performance of an agile and cohesive team that is both innovative and accountable, building a high level of credibility in the sector and beyond.
- Continue iterating and maintain a framework to measure and report on TFP's impact.
- Ensure TFP continues to play a key role in the ECEC sector, leading systemic change as both an actor and field-catalyst, serving as an advisor to government, capacity building force for the sector, source of evidence and incubator of innovation that supports systemic change.

Operations & Risk Management

- Work with the Board to set and deliver on the broader strategic objectives for the organisation including policy areas and impact, diversifying income, positioning, reach and growth objectives.
- Develop and track against key performance indicators, both operational and strategic (policy impact, quality of and engagement with research, and income sourcing).
- Oversee compliance with all relevant statutory, legal and other obligations pertaining to the Front Project's legal obligations, including but not limited to, maintaining current and relevant insurance policies, health and safety processes and policies, financial and audit responsibilities.
- Ensure the appropriate people and culture structure, policies and practices are in place and reviewed, and aligned to TFP's values, strategy, and regulatory requirements.
- Ensure a relevant and robust marketing / communication strategy, including an internal communications strategy, is developed, implemented, and monitored.
- Create and sustain a positive organisational culture of commitment, and innovation.



Stakeholder Relationships, Collaboration and Advocacy

- Take a policy leadership role in influencing and advocating for the Front Project's mission and social impact.
- Lead, foster and expand key partnerships with expert research collaborators, funders, influential leaders, government and other persons of interest who may advance the Front Project's mission and strategic objectives.
- Identify, source and implement business development opportunities.
- Provide thought leadership across the sector, being visible as an influential, credible and respected voice at key forums and through multiple mediums including government, business, and media roundtables and conferences.
- Identify and create opportunities to expand and promote TFP and its work, to be recognised as a strategic anchor of alleviating disadvantage for children.

Financial Sustainability

- Prepare and manage the annual operating budget, as approved by the Board and operate within these budgets.
- Play a key role in identifying new avenues for corporate and philanthropic funding by leveraging new and existing networks.
- Identify and manage operational and funding risks for TFP and, where those risks could have a material impact on the organisation, formulate strategies for managing and mitigating those risks.

Governance

- Work with the Board in fulfilling TFP's constitutional, regulatory and legal obligations.
- Build the organisation with appropriate regard to corporate, structural and governance standards.



KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

To be successful in this role, you will demonstrate:

- Significant senior executive management / CEO experience in the social purpose, business and/or policy–change fields, preferably in the human services sector.
- Critical experience as a strategist and creative thinker who can champion TFP’s core values and protect the organisation’s reputation and integrity.
- Demonstrated strategic, financial, people and culture, operational and performance management experience with a strong personal reputation.
- A well-connected leader with strong networks to leaders within Government and philanthropy, who will partner with and advocate for TFP and has proven knowledge and experience working with a range of ministers and knowledge of working successfully with government through big policy reform.
- Well-honed people and stakeholder management skills, including the ability to form and sustain collaborations amongst key stakeholders at a range of levels including NFP’s, government, philanthropists, social enterprises, academics, researchers and policy makers.
- A highly–developed ability to communicate key messages succinctly and clearly, both verbally and in writing, including skills in media and policy engagement.
- A high degree of empathy and experience in building and fostering a positive team culture.
- Proven ability to span systems and disciplines across a range of organisations in the sector.
- Demonstrated financial management skills including experience in deploying resources for social impact.
- Genuine passion for, and commitment to, creating positive change in early learning to improve outcomes for children experiencing developmental vulnerability and disadvantage.
- Deep, sophisticated and practical understanding of the human services sector, policy and practice in the entrenched cycles of disadvantage and the evolving nature of social change in Australia, underpinned by the capability to apply systems thinking – ideal, but not essential.

FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Undergraduate qualification in relevant field (e.g., Social Sciences, Education, Commerce).
- Professional and/or postgraduate qualification in relevant area desirable (e.g., MBA, Masters in Business Leadership).
- Knowledge of systems change practice, early learning, policy and collective impact.
- Early Learning knowledge and networks.