

ROLE SPECIFICATION

for the position of **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

with



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THE ORGANISATION

The MAVA Foundation is one of the largest conservation foundations in Europe. The Foundation was established under Swiss law in 1994 by Dr. Luc Hoffmann to promote the protection of nature in its broadest definition, with particular focus on:

- Preserving biodiversity and habitats
- Sustainable management of natural resources

The Foundation provides grants to conservation and nature protection initiatives located in the Alpine region, the Mediterranean Basin and the West African Coast to promote scientific research, training and integrated management practices as well as enhancing and in certain cases building up the capacity of international, national, regional and local organizations in the conservation field.

MAVA is funded through a dividend stream of shares specifically ear-marked for this purpose by the Hoffmann family, a funding agreement which stands to run for another 13 years and then is up for renewal. It currently disburses CHF 45 million per annum and employs 7 staff in its secretariat: the Acting Director General, three administration/finance staff and three technical staff. The Foundation's office will move into the newly expanded IUCN buildings in Gland in April/May 2010.

To maximise its impact and influence, the MAVA Foundation has decided to be a grant-making organisation (rather than running field operations itself) and therefore has developed a network of partnerships (most importantly but not exclusively with the WWF and IUCN) with advocacy, programme and funding components.

In the context of the planned transfer of the presidency from the founder, Dr. Luc Hoffmann, to his son André Hoffmann in 2010, the Foundation's governance structure (both in terms of approach and of individuals appointed) is in the process of being reviewed. In the future, the Foundation Board will limit its direct operational involvement and focus mainly on issues of strategy and high-level monitoring, which in turn requires strengthening of the top leadership team. Therefore, the MAVA Foundation seeks to **appoint a new Executive Director** (or CEO).

THE POSITION

Reporting to the Board and leading the secretariat, the Executive Director will be the Foundation's external ambassador as well as its strategic and operational leader. He/she will be expected to drive the organisation to higher levels of performance by continuing to build capacity (in terms of advocacy, funding and programme impact), ensuring a responsive, aligned and customer-focused relationship with grantees, and maximising the effectiveness of cooperation with conservation partners.

The key responsibilities of the role will be to:

- Advocate conservation and nature protection initiatives
- Develop and implement the strategy of the organisation under the board's guidance
- Organise the secretariat
- Manage day-to-day operations and processes of the secretariat
- Oversee efficient and effective allocation of funding
- Monitor efficient and effective utilisation of funds by grant recipients/partners
- Drive greater impact in programme development, implementation and monitoring
- Identify, develop and maintain partnerships and stakeholder relationships
- Promote a culture of results, accountability, innovation and knowledge sharing
- Ensure effective internal and external communication
- Contribute to possible fundraising initiatives to expand capacity and to leverage the foundations activities

CANDIDATE PROFILE

This role represents a unique and exciting opportunity for an inspiring, internationally experienced leader who combines business orientation, strategic vision, stakeholder relationship skills and entrepreneurial drive with passion for, and credibility within, the international nature conservation and/or sustainability fields.

Candidates could come from private and/or public sector backgrounds. Considering the size and dynamics of an organisation like MAVA, the candidates should have proven their ability to be successful in a hands-on, entrepreneurial setting without the need for ample support systems of large organisations. Prior working experience in an international not-for-profit organization in the nature conservation area or other NGO/CSO would be an advantage, but is not an absolute must; a strong affinity and track of exposure to the issues of nature conservation and/or sustainability, however, is. Given the current and planned geographic coverage of MAVA, experience working in developing regions such as Africa would also be highly advantageous.

Competencies

- **Strategic orientation:** Candidates will have the creativity and vision required to develop and implement the strategic roadmap for the organisation. They will have the conceptual and strategic skills to break down complex problems and competing priorities, and present solutions while thinking of options and alternatives. They will also be able to scan the horizon for looming trends and issues and see how they will impact the organisation.
- **Results drive:** The ideal candidate will be a high-energy, self-motivated and entrepreneurial professional who is energised by a challenge and is capable of driving the organisation's growth and performance to higher levels. They will have experience in setting individual and team stretch targets and delivering against them, and will be energised by creating better ways of doing things and generating greater impact from the same resources. He or she will have proven to be commercial savvy in obtaining new resources and a proven

experience in monitoring resource utilisation. The hired candidate would be expected to have a track record of two or three key successes which have earned him/her high credibility and recognition in his/her organisation or sector.

- **Team building and developing skills:** Ideal candidates will demonstrate an ability to manage, motivate and retain professional staff by bringing out the best in others. They will have experience of leadership in a collaborative, team-oriented environment, bringing an enthusiastic and motivational style and managing talent development and performance. They will look to build the capacity of the team over time.
- **Collaboration and influencing skills:** The ideal candidate will have highly developed interpersonal skills to inspire, influence and collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders to seek common ground for collective action. They will bring active listening as well as dynamic advocacy and negotiation skills and have experience in roles requiring extensive networking, relationship and alliance building.
- **Communication skills:** The desired candidate will bring an outstanding ability to effectively, credibly and diplomatically represent the organisation to a wide range of different international audiences, reflecting the strong advocacy and partnership development dimensions of the position. They will have the ability to address large and varied gatherings, communicate clearly and motivate people, including grass-roots groups. Fluency in English is a must – fluency in other languages would be highly desirable.

Potential success in this role would be enhanced by an individual who is passionate about conservation and sustainability topics, who has a high level of self-motivation and is enthused by a hands-on opportunity within a smaller organisational structure.

LOCATION

Gland, Switzerland

COMPENSATION

A highly competitive salary will be offered to the successful candidate.

CONTACTS

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