



**WORLD FEDERATION
OF THE DEAF**

Position Description

Executive Director

About the World Federation of the Deaf

The World Federation of the Deaf seeks a strategic, values-driven, and experienced Executive Director to lead the Secretariat and advance our mission globally. The Executive Director is responsible for delivering on the WFD's strategic priorities, ensuring organisational sustainability, supporting strong internal operations, and building relationships with international allies, funders, and stakeholders.

The Executive Director is the head of the WFD Secretariat and manages a staff of seven employees across four continents. This role is remote-first, with expected availability during Finnish business hours and flexibility to meet with staff across four continents. The Executive Director is expected to undertake a two-week orientation period with the WFD President upon starting (circumstances permitting).

Leadership Qualities We Seek

Mission Stewardship and Values Alignment We seek a leader who authentically embodies WFD's values and can translate the board's strategic vision into clear organisational direction. You should demonstrate a genuine commitment to deaf-led leadership principles and the ability to serve as an operational voice for our member organisations' collective mission.

Operational Excellence in Global Context The ideal candidate brings proven skills in managing distributed teams across cultures and time zones, with particular strength in building cohesion and accountability in virtual environments. You should excel at translating strategic priorities into practical action plans while maintaining organisational effectiveness across multiple projects.



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Resource Development and Stakeholder Relationship Management We need someone with demonstrated success in securing funding from diverse sources and building lasting relationships with foundations, government funders, and multilateral organizations. Your ability to represent WFD professionally while maintaining authentic connections to our constituencies will be essential.

Cultural Bridge-Building and Adaptive Leadership You should bring experience working respectfully across different deaf communities and national contexts, with skills in facilitating collaboration between organizations with varying priorities. We value leaders who can navigate complexity while maintaining focus on shared goals.

Collaborative Implementation Style The successful candidate will demonstrate comfort with board-driven governance, showing ability to take strategic direction and create effective implementation pathways. You should excel at managing both "up" to the board and "across" to peer organizations while maintaining clear team direction.

Key Responsibilities

- Lead implementation of the WFD's Action Plan, as approved by the WFD Board and General Assembly
- Supervise WFD Secretariat staff and coordinate projects, partnerships, and operations across multiple time zones
- Ensure sound financial management, including fundraising, grant writing, and compliance with Finnish and U.S. regulations
- Prepare for and support WFD Board meetings, the General Assembly, the WFD Congress, and other WFD events.
- Support WFD representation in high-level international spaces (e.g. UN and its agencies, IDA, partner networks)
- Oversee stakeholder communications, including members, funders, and the public
- Foster a respectful and collaborative organisational culture within a multilingual, multicultural, and deaf-led work environment



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Essential Qualifications and Experience

- At minimum, a Master's degree in Public Administration, International Development, Deaf Studies, Disability Rights, Law, Management, or a related field
- Minimum 5 years of senior management experience, including team supervision and operational and budgetary oversight
- Experienced in raising funds from diverse sources and working with grantmakers and funders
- Demonstrated success in leading diverse teams, including in virtual or international contexts
- Proven ability in fundraising, donor relations, and revenue generation
- Excellent written English skills
- Fluency in a national sign language
- Financial literacy, including budget planning and organisational reporting
- Knowledge of human rights frameworks

Desired qualifications

- Familiarity with international institutions (e.g. UN, IDA, CRPD mechanisms)
- Experience in the application or implementation of international human rights frameworks to deaf people and sign language
- Knowledge of global human rights frameworks, particularly related to deaf and disability rights is a significant plus. Knowledge of International Sign (IS) is an asset
- Lived experience as a deaf person
- Experience working with member-based organisations
- Commitment to deaf-led leadership and movement-building
- Experience navigating change and organisational growth
- Experience in working with NGO Boards



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- **Location:** Remote. Occasional site visits to WFD headquarters in Helsinki, Finland
- **Start Date:** 1 January 2026 (or mutually agreed date)
- **Contract Duration:** Two years, renewable, with an initial six-month trial period
- **Salary:** €65,000–€80,000 per year, with benefits, aligned with Finnish NGO sector standards and commensurate with experience

Interested candidates are invited to submit their application through our online form by 4 October 2025, midnight (Helsinki time): <https://forms.gle/osgAZp3QfAFPka3C9>.

For any questions regarding the application process, please contact: apply@innivee.com.

The World Federation of the Deaf is committed to creating an inclusive workplace that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. We strongly encourage applications from deaf candidates and individuals from diverse backgrounds and experiences.