

JOB DESCRIPTION - SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO CEO

| Role | Special Assistant to the CEO | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Reports to | Senior Director of People Operations | Direct reports | None |
| Budgetary responsibility | None | Resource responsibility | None |
| Safeguarding | None | Key relationships | CEO, Leadership team, Directors, External stakeholders |
| Salary | \$47,500 - \$55,000 | Location | Hybrid / remote within D.C. metro area preferred |
| Contract | Full-time, 40 hours per week | Salary Level | Level 7 / Associate |

About ISD

ISD is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to safeguarding elections, freedom, national security, public safety and individual rights by reversing the rising global tide of polarization, extremism, foreign interference and authoritarianism. Combining research and analysis with government advisory work and the design and delivery of training, education and communications programs, ISD works to implement real-world, evidence-based responses to these challenges.

For 20 years, ISD has been at the forefront of analyzing, exposing and combatting all forms of terrorism, extremism, foreign interference, digital manipulation and authoritarianism, helping equip institutions, communities and the private sector with the tools, policies and skills to achieve impact at scale. ISD’s mission is delivered by teams in the UK, the US, Germany, France, Jordan and Canada. Details of ISD’s separate legal entities can be found [here](#).

Role Purpose

The Special Assistant will support the global Chief Executive Officer and will work closely with the leadership team and other senior team members on critical projects. The post holder will support the CEO in correspondence and administration; help with the development of proposals, bids and programs; will assist in stakeholder communications on behalf of the CEO; and will support on special projects at both a local and international level.

The post holder must possess exceptional multitasking skills, excellent written and verbal communication skills, be highly organized with excellent attention to detail, and be proactive in their approach. This position is a salaried (exempt) US-based role and may require some work outside traditional office hours. Occasional travel may be required (up to 10%).

Responsibilities

1. Strategic and tactical support to the CEO (65%)

- Provide practical support to the CEO in implementing ISD’s mission.

- Anticipate tasks and priorities on behalf of the CEO, particularly before meetings (e.g.: coordinating talking points and speeches, taking notes and preparing written summaries and preparing materials for meetings and events).
- Support follow-through from the CEO's engagements in an effective and timely fashion.
- Keep the CEO informed on all matters requiring their attention, taking the initiative to formulate appropriate options and solutions.
- Work with colleagues to manage and prioritize the CEO's schedule.
- Coordinate/draft correspondence with key external stakeholders, partners, and donors on behalf of the CEO.
- Review documents on behalf of the CEO and provide briefing reports as required.
- Draft internal and external communications on behalf of the CEO.
- Proactively engage with and share relevant information across the organisation, to maximise the impact of the CEO's engagement.
- Complete complex projects or activities in support of the work of the CEO.
- Provide content expertise to special projects originating from the CEO's office.
- Advise global programmatic Directors and the Leadership teams on the CEOs' ongoing priorities where applicable and appropriate.

2. Business Development Support (25%)

- Support the CEO and wider ISD team members to maximize and capitalize on opportunities by proactively engaging with stakeholders and colleagues.
- Support in the preparation of new business development proposals in partnership with relevant senior programmatic and operations colleagues.
- Maintain the CEO's business development contacts and support global development teams reflecting in the CEO's latest language, outreach and follow up.
- Provide additional ad hoc support to the development team as needed.

3. Administrative and operational support (10%)

- Provide prioritization guidance to the Executive Assistant on the CEO's project/task tracker, upcoming follow-up, and decisions.
- Document CEO engagements and outreach and facilitate organization wide information flow regarding stakeholder engagement across geographies and issue areas.
- Take notes during internal and external meetings, including taking minutes during Board meetings.
- Support with ad-hoc requests from members of the senior operations team and Leadership team

PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

Expectations

We expect all staff, consultants and volunteers to:

- Commit to ISD’s vision, mission and [Guiding Principles](#)
- Foster diversity, inclusivity and equality of opportunity at ISD
- Demonstrate respect for others and safeguard those who are vulnerable
- Carry out their duties in accordance with ISD’s policies and procedures
- Adhere to risk management and security instructions at all times

Our commitment to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

We endeavor to recruit a range of candidates into ISD, to strengthen our team and contribute to our inclusive organizational culture. We particularly welcome applications from candidates currently underrepresented across ISD – including those from diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, those with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ+ community. We have tried to make this recruitment process as accessible as possible, but please let us know if you have any access requirements that you would like us to be aware of during this process.

Competencies

These reflect ISD’s [Guiding Principles](#) which we expect all members of the team to embody, regardless of seniority and role. How these competencies are assessed is outlined in ISD’s Performance Review Process.

| Guiding Principles | Competencies |
|--------------------|---|
| Integrity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal integrity • Focus on quality |
| Collaboration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect for others • Commitment to the team |
| Agility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency and effectiveness • Problem Solving |
| Courage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic thinking • Growth Mindset |

Specific Requirements

These are a priority for this specific role, and form part of our assessment during recruitment, and ongoing performance management. They are also a framework for focusing continuing professional and personal development.

| | Essential | Desirable |
|---|--|--|
| Knowledge, training and qualifications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree-level qualification or equivalent professional experience. • Understanding of and experience working on ISD’s issue areas (democracy protection, extremism, hate, disinformation). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in a special assistant or similar role assisting a principal in the field of political affairs, diplomacy, conflict resolution, or a related field. |

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| <p>Experience</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in performing a supportive, responsive role in a fast-paced, entrepreneurial environment. • Experience writing proposals, creating presentations and preparing speeches. • Experience drafting high quality documents under tight deadlines. • Experience and interest in internal and external communications and partnership development. • Experience using good judgment as a sounding-board for a senior executive. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in fundraising and preparation of bids for individual donors, foundations and institutions. • Experience of working for a 501(c)3 organisation and understanding of the obligations and responsibilities this entails. |
| <p>Skills</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to anticipate CEO's needs and proactively support these. • Ability to build and manage trusting relationships and display high levels of professionalism and discretion. • Excellent written and verbal communication skills, detail-oriented, and highly organised. • High attention to detail and accuracy. • Ability to work independently and proactively, leading and taking initiative on tasks and projects. • Ability to manage competing priorities whilst responding to senior leadership requests. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional languages desirable (French, German, Arabic). |