Further Particulars: background information, job description, person specification and recruitment process

Executive Director – UWC International

November 2014

Heidrick & Struggles advises UWC International on the basis of an exclusive consulting assignment.
INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIR OF THE INTERNATIONAL BOARD

Thank you for your interest in the position of Executive Director.

This is a critical appointment for UWC International. Our new Executive Director will build on the progress of recent years, during which we have achieved greater cohesion within the UWC movement and successfully implemented UWC’s first strategic plan. The Executive Director will lead the preparation of a plan for UWC through to 2025, which will require the development and maintenance of relationships across UWC and with external stakeholders and partners as well as the day-to-day coordination and problem-solving necessary within a diverse international movement.

I have much enjoyed working with our current Executive Director, Keith Clark. We are looking for a successor to work in close cooperation with the UWC Council and International Board, as well as with our 15 institutions and 140-plus national committees, so as to extend UWC’s reach and impact. The UWC movement is steadily gaining momentum. This is an exciting opportunity to fulfil an inspiring mission.

Sir John Daniel – Chair, International Board, UWC

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Introduction

UWC makes education a force to unite people, nations and culture for peace and a sustainable future. UWC mission statement

The idea that became the United World Colleges was conceived at the height of the Cold War. It was a bold plan, based on the notion that much would be done to secure a more peaceful future if young people could be brought together to learn from one another. In the turbulent world of the 21st century, the mission remains as relevant as when UWC was founded in 1962, perhaps even more so.

UWC is now an international educational NGO, usually referred to as the ‘UWC movement’, with 15 schools and colleges, UWC national committees in 146 countries and some 50,000 UWC alumni. UWC is a federal organisation, with UWC International as its coordinating and governing body.

UWC schools, colleges and programmes deliver a challenging and transformational educational experience to a diverse cross section of students, inspiring and equipping them to make a positive impact in the world. UWC looks beyond the education of each student to the positive difference that its alumni can make, and it is primarily through this impact that UWC’s mission can be delivered. A UWC education challenges young people to learn about themselves, to take initiative and embrace personal challenge, to commit to social and environmental responsibility and action, and to build a deep awareness of global issues. UWC is committed to building deliberately diverse
communities, bringing together students of different socio-economic, cultural, racial, religious or national backgrounds, grounded in the belief that understanding and celebrating differences are the keys to resolving tensions within and between societies.

UWC’s first college, UWC Atlantic College in Wales, was inspired by the thinking of the German educationalist Kurt Hahn. The 15 UWC schools and colleges are now located in the UK, Singapore, Canada, Swaziland, USA, Italy, Hong Kong, Norway, India, Costa Rica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Netherlands, Germany, Armenia and, from 2015, Changshu, China. Each school and college has its own distinctive character but all share a full commitment to UWC’s mission and values, common aims and a growing suite of common policies. Other shorter programmes and ‘outreach’ are becoming an important feature of extending UWC’s impact.

UWC national committees, the majority of them volunteer-run, operate in more than 140 countries. National committees select UWC’s students and it is through this unique system that UWC is able to find students of promise and potential to create its deliberately diverse student communities.

A comprehensive scholarship programme is essential to UWC’s diversity aspirations. This creates a major financial and fundraising challenge: across the movement there is an annual funding need of c. $80m. A significant portion is met by fundraising, with the bulk of fundraising responsibility resting with the schools and colleges and some national committees – but with UWC International also increasingly active in fundraising. Funding partners include governments, foundations, corporations, individual benefactors and increasingly UWC alumni.

More than 50,000 alumni are evidence of UWC’s success. Many go on to become leaders in their fields. UWC aims to be the start of a lifelong journey, with alumni bringing UWC’s values to life in whatever they go on to do at a personal, community, professional or global level.

**UWC International**

UWC International is the coordinating and governing body of the UWC movement with functions that embrace leadership, oversight and support. It is responsible for UWC’s strategic development; protecting and developing UWC’s ethos, reputation, brand and profile; supporting and defending the mutual interests of all constituencies; building and maintaining a sense of cohesion and unity; coordinating and communicating across the movement; and strengthening financial sustainability.

UWC International [The United World Colleges (International)] is a UK-registered company (number 908758) and charity (313690).

UWC International has three components:

- The UWC Council (chaired by the Chair of the International Board) has up to 60 members, including the chairs and heads of all the UWC schools and colleges and at least 12 members with national committee experience; at least 12 are UWC alumni. The UWC Council meets once a year, usually at a UWC college in October, and considers a limited number of issues of developmental and strategic significance. UWC Council members are also the members
of the company, in which role they elect the Board, creating the key governance link between the two bodies and an expectation of accountability between the Board and UWC Council.

- The UWC International Board comprises 16 members, who are the Directors and Trustees. Three are chairs of the governing bodies of UWC schools and colleges, two are UWC school/college heads, three are required to have national committee experience and five to be UWC alumni. The Board meets three times a year in person and usually once by conference call. The Board has a number of sub-committees with members drawn from within and outside the governing bodies. The Nominating and Governance Committee is a particularly important sub-committee as it acts as a check and balance within the governance system.

- The UWC International Office is headed by the Executive Director who is responsible through the Chair to the Board. The International Office currently comprises 16 highly engaged and committed staff.

UWC International’s structure deliberately reflects the broader UWC movement. All the UWC schools and colleges form part of its governance, with national committees also represented. This builds structure around the concept that in a federal organisation the legitimacy of the ‘centre’ comes from acting on behalf of the ‘whole’.

UWC International is funded primarily though annual fees paid by the schools and colleges, calculated through a formula that takes account of relative financial strengths.

In 2015, the governance model will be adjusted to accommodate some growth within UWC and to develop more direct representation of national committees. In the next five years, it is likely that more significant governance change will be necessary to support further growth.

Nature of the UWC Movement
It is important to understand the nature of the UWC movement in order properly to understand the role of the Executive Director. First and foremost, UWC is a federal organisation. However, it is also a membership organisation, an alumni organisation and a volunteer organisation. The characteristics of each produce particular governance and management challenges wherever they are found, but it is rare for them to exist together in a single organisation.

The implications of the federal structure are particularly important. While UWC International’s three areas of responsibility – oversight, leadership and support – are fully agreed, its actions and initiatives can only have legitimacy if they are grounded in a genuine understanding of the collective will of the movement. This in turn impacts on the role of Executive Director, who carries responsibility without having the direct authority that would be the case in a unitary organisation: authority can only come from UWC International’s legitimacy and its intent always to act in the best interests of the wider movement. This applies across all areas of work, whether it is the development of new strategy or policy or in addressing an issue in a UWC constituency that may present a risk to other constituencies.
There are also implications for governance. Both the UWC Council and Board are important not only in making responsible governance decisions but also in ensuring that decisions, strategies and policies have ownership in the wider organisation. Board agenda are lengthier and more varied than might be expected in a non-federal organisation and the three Board meetings tend to determine the rhythm of the year.

It is critical that the Executive Director is able to understand the nuances of this structure, the nature of subsidiarity within a federal organisation, and the potential complexity that arises from it.

A structure such as UWC’s is most effective when levels of trust are high. Trust relies on UWC International being seen to add value to the work of the movement. Building and maintaining excellent relationships therefore forms a large part of the role of the Executive Director.

**Strategy, Development and Growth**

UWC’s strategic plan for 2010-15 was the first such movement-wide plan in almost 50 years of existence. The fact that UWC International was able to develop such a plan was a sign of significantly increased cohesion and common purpose. The plan was a manifestation of the recognition that all parts of the movement can be stronger when they work together and is based around six themes: education, impact, national committees, funding and finance, communications and organisational effectiveness and unity. Since the movement was entering uncharted territory, a number of objectives represented an aspiration to work together rather than easily-measurable goals. Nevertheless, indicators have been developed for most of the objectives.

The strategic plan is a plan for the whole UWC movement. A strong sense of collective responsibility is therefore required for implementation, which is being achieved to the extent that in many areas working together across the movement has become the default position. A number of the strategic objectives have exceeded initial expectations, while others will require more work before the end of the plan period at the close of 2015.

The strategic plan signalled a cautious approach to the growth of new schools and colleges, in particular to avoid new institutions having an adverse financial impact on the existing organisation. Nevertheless, four new colleges have been added: UWC Maastricht in 2010, UWC Robert Bosch College and UWC Dilijan in 2014 and UWC Changshu China in 2015. The number of national committees has increased in this period from 124 to 146.

In 2013, a major new planning process was launched. This envisages a future plan based on three pillars: growth and impact, financial sustainability and quality and distinctiveness. The intention is that the three pillars must be inter-dependent so that, for example, growth cannot be considered without taking account of the organisation’s financial sustainability or without a full understanding of UWC’s distinctiveness.

Alongside the three pillars are seven working objectives that will be tested for their desirability and feasibility during a planning process running until early 2016. The objectives envisage potential
growth to 25 institutions by 2025, a greater openness to a variety of models of school and college, clearer financial structures for the movement as a whole so that sustainability is a feasible organisation-wide aspiration, and a clear articulation of UWC’s distinctiveness and a commitment to assuring quality.

The paper that launched the new planning process, *Beyond 2015, Towards 2025*, is available to candidates who wish to develop a fuller understanding of UWC’s future aspirations.

**THE ROLE OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

The Executive Director is UWC International’s chief executive and is appointed by the Board. He/she has responsibility for supporting the UWC movement to meet its mission of making education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future and for all aspects of the organisation’s day-to-day running within the strategic and financial framework established by the Board.

The Executive Director is responsible for the work of four teams in the UWC International Office: National Committee Development and Admissions, Fund Development (including alumni relations), Communications, and Finance and Administration. The Executive Director takes direct responsibility for UWC’s strategic development, the coordination and support of the UWC schools and colleges, and the development and coordination of governance. The Executive Director works especially closely with the Chair, Vice Chair and Board, UWC Council, Nominating and Governance Committee and College Heads’ Committee. A strong relationship between the Chair and Executive Director is essential in maintaining UWC International’s position within the wider UWC movement.

The most recent Report of the Board to UWC Council (October 2014) is available to candidates and sets out the work undertaken by UWC International in 2013-14, all of which falls under the responsibility of the Executive Director.

The Director of National Committee Development and Admissions is also the Deputy Executive Director and provides support across a range of areas. The Director of Finance and Administration is the Company Secretary. The Executive Officer gives direct support to the Executive Director.

Travel is a critical part of the Executive Director’s role – whether for meetings, to offer support or to engage in particular work with schools, colleges and national committees, or in connection with the development of new institutions. Such travel will usually constitute 10-14 trips a year, in most cases of less than a week. Many meetings take place at weekends, and so travel often includes at least part of a weekend (time off in lieu is granted). A new Executive Director may undertake additional travel as part of the process of acquainting him or herself with the organisation.
Key tasks and responsibilities

Organisational governance and strategic development

- Advise and support the UWC International Board of Directors, servicing the Board and its meetings, creating relevant agenda, facilitating discussions and ensuring that issues are taken forward from one meeting to the next.
- Service the UWC Council, including its annual meeting, understanding the Board's accountability to the UWC Council and the opportunity to seek the broader perspectives of the Council on matters of importance to the Board.
- Consult the Chair of the Board about agenda and meetings of the Board and Council and keep the Chair briefed on developing issues.
- Facilitate debate and discussion on strategic development, building momentum behind key initiatives and developing longer-term planning and strategies that will strengthen the UWC movement.
- Develop policies, protocols and guidelines that strengthen the effectiveness and cohesion of the UWC movement. Ensure the implementation of such policies across the movement.
- Work closely with the College Heads' Committee as it develops policies, protocols, initiatives and activities, including educational policy, across all the UWC schools and colleges.
- Take the lead on the development of new schools and colleges, advising local project teams, recommending projects that are ready to enter the Board's approvals process, establishing and working with new college task forces and reviewing the effectiveness of the approvals process.
- Understand the risks and opportunities facing the UWC movement and formulate approaches to dealing with and benefiting from them.
- Ensure the governance structure is implemented effectively, inspiring a consultative and participatory culture across the movement.
- Service the Nominating and Governance Committee, organising the annual nominating process and keeping governance development under review.
- Coordinate, support and oversee the work of other Board sub-committees, as appropriate.

Organisational engagement

- Establish effective and productive relations with UWC schools and colleges, national committees and other groups.
- Strengthen the sense of UWC International as the ‘hub’ of the UWC movement.
- Identify risks that may arise from activities or practices in one part of the movement.
- Work on behalf of UWC International in support of constituencies as they manage their own development and seek to address issues, challenges and opportunities, including but not limited to issues of governance.
- Maintain regular contact with the chairs and heads of the UWC schools and colleges, offering advice and support as required.
- Lead and support the national committee development and admissions team in support of the effective development and management of the national committee system, offering advice and support to national committees as required.
- Communicate with individual members, alumni and stakeholders as required.
External relations, fundraising and ambassadorial

- Enhance UWC’s global profile and reputation, communicating its mission and purpose to international stakeholders and partners.
- Represent, safeguard and further develop UWC’s ethos and brand.
- Champion UWC internally and externally, communicating consistent messages about its mission and values, strategies, achievements and priorities.
- Represent UWC International within the UWC movement and externally.
- Support the fundraising activities of UWC International and UWC constituencies, including sustaining meaningful relationships with donors, supporters, alumni and other philanthropic or strategic supporters or partners.
- Liaise with UWC’s President(s), Patrons, Ambassadors and other prominent supporters.
- Ensure effective communication with UWC International’s wider supporter base.
- Identify opportunities for institutional partnerships.
- Act as a spokesperson when required.

UWC International

- Lead, motivate, develop and manage the London-based UWC International Office, ensuring its smooth and successful operation and fitness for purpose, including in relation to the welfare, evaluation and remuneration of staff.
- Develop and implement pragmatic solutions and robust operational plans to address complex organisational challenges.
- Working with the Director of Finance and Administration, create an annual plan and budget that is able to support the routine coordination and support of the UWC movement and the strategic and developmental priorities identified by the International Board.
- Working with the Director of Finance and Administration (including as Company Secretary), ensure compliance with all financial, statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Foster an International Office culture that builds effective relationships across the UWC movement and that recognises the importance of trust, relevance and good delivery in enabling UWC International to carry out its coordinating, oversight, leadership and support responsibilities effectively.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The role of Executive Director requires an adaptable and perceptive general manager with highly developed communication skills and a global perspective. Candidates could come from a wide range of backgrounds including education, NGOs, international charities, business, public service, the military, the law and professional services.

Whilst the environment within which a candidate has gained his/her experience is important, greater significance will be attached to the individual’s ability to transfer experience, knowledge and skills into a collegiate, collaborative and global organisation and a candidate’s commitment to and passion for UWC’s mission and values.
The role of Executive Director is far from a typical nine-to-five job, and will require significant stamina to influence and have impact across an increasingly complex global organisation.

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate that they meet many if not all of the following criteria encompassing experience, qualifications, skills and personal characteristics. This is an indicative, but not exhaustive, list of the attributes that might be found in an ideal candidate.

**Experience, knowledge and qualifications**

- Tested leadership/management and strategic/operational skills developed in an international context gained in organisations of appropriate scale and complexity in education, business, public service, international development or other relevant organisations.

- Significant experience of working within complex governance structures, ideally having reported to a board made up of internationally dispersed members, combined with a sound understanding of governance, compliance and regulatory issues.

- Success in devising and implementing strategies for growth, development and innovation.

- Evidence of forming a cohesive, innovative and culturally diverse team.

- Proven financial management competence and understanding.

- Successful relationship building with donors, funders, governmental organisations and NGOs.

**Personal characteristics**

- Intellectual capacity and stamina to build and sustain a wide array of relationships and networks across the UWC movement, and the ability to absorb information and build institutional knowledge quickly and accurately.

- Open minded with the personality to inspire others to push boundaries too, and the confidence as a leader to handle the consequences of an active, engaged and challenging community of volunteers, students, staff and alumni.

- Consensual yet decisive; able to energise debate, facilitate group thinking and move positively to decision making. Confidence to encourage dialogue on key issues and willingly to seek input and advice from all quarters of the UWC movement.

- Strong communicator and motivator, adept at conveying messages and a vision, and inspiring others to support and drive through initiatives. First class writing skills, with the ability to convey complex information clearly to international audiences.
- High level of emotional intelligence. Diplomacy, tact, honesty and empathy. The ability to build trust and to understand how to balance openness and the importance of confidentiality when building relationships.

- Strong judge of character able to spot talent, recruit, develop and retain excellent staff and forge successful and diverse teams.

- Confident delegator able to lead and deliver through others, empowering staff to take responsibility and welcome accountability.

- Strong cultural awareness with total commitment to the values of a multicultural global organisation.

- Adaptable yet also clear minded, accepting of differing points of view with commitment to fostering engagement in which all parts feel valued and motivated to participate.

- Firm belief in UWC’s commitment to service, community, compassionate behaviour and education as the key drivers of future generations.

**REMUNERATION**

The Executive Director’s remuneration package will be competitive, reflecting the significance of the role. The Board will take into account the particular circumstances of each candidate.

**RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

**How to apply**
Applications should consist of a full curriculum vitae and a covering letter (including the names and contact details of four referees) and be sent to: uwci@heidrick.com or 40 Argyll Street, London W1F 7EB.

For a confidential conversation with either Alex Acland or Sarah James-Bryan of Heidrick & Struggles, please call Jane Carter on 00 44 20 7075 4021 or email Jane at jcarter@heidrick.com.

**Key dates**
December 2014 through to January 2015: interviews with Heidrick & Struggles consultants

February 16th and 17th 2015: interviews with search committee in London and informal meetings with UWC International Office staff.
CONTACT DETAILS

Alexander Acland
direct line +44 (0)20 7075 4350
e-mail aacland@heidrick.com

Sarah James-Bryan
direct line +44 (0)20 7075 4119
e-mail sjamesbryan@heidrick.com

Jane Carter
direct line +44 (0)20 7075 4021
e-mail jcarter@heidrick.com

Heidrick & Struggles (UK) Ltd
40 Argyll Street
London W1F 7EB
telephone +44 (0)20 7075 4000

www.heidrick.com