

JOB DESCRIPTION

**Chief Operations Officer, Hanoi.
Reporting to the Executive Director**

Make a difference to development and poverty in a dynamic region by leading the operations management effort for a young, innovative organisation that works to reduce large-scale poverty through market forces.

OVERVIEW

Prosperity Initiative's (PI) objective is to identify and develop range of market sectors with demonstrated potential to provide income and jobs for large numbers of poor people. PI sees national and regional markets as an ideal mechanism to reach large numbers of poor. We work to find market based mechanisms for unlocking and creating new economic value to change the lives of the poor for good.

As a new and innovative organisation in its second year of operation, PI is formalising its technical approaches and demonstrating results. It has responded to various start-up challenges in a difficult financing climate to find itself in a consolidated position with a committed team of around 30 staff in Viet Nam, Lao PDR, Cambodia and the UK. There are several leadership tasks required to move to the second phase of organisational establishment – ensuring effective programme delivery, operationalising the renewed strategy, consolidating organisational structure and business processes, and ensuring a diversification of income streams and strategic relationships in support of PI's work. As PI moves into this phase, it requires a Chief Operations Officer reporting to the Executive Director to lead these strategic elements of business, spanning programme and operations support.

PI is a new UK-based organisation registered in 2007 as a spinoff from Oxfam. We are working to demonstrate the strengths of a novel but important approach to development. To date we have received core and project funding from Oxfam, the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation, The World Bank, The International Finance Corporation, AusAID and Irish Aid. We are developing relationships with donors prepared to invest in new approaches. We are also setting up an investment arm as a vehicle to support our own catalytic investment partnerships in key businesses to address specific finance constraints for lead firms looking to innovate in the bamboo sector.

With our experience to date, we believe in our potential to reach our current corporate impact and performance targets and to contribute to the eradication of poverty in the Mekong region (see attached Annex). We also expect that, if successful, we will be in a position in the future to take our experience to other parts of the world.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Principle responsibilities include:

1. Ensure the effective delivery of PI's programmes spanning the Mekong Bamboo programme and other areas:
 - Programme workplan implementation and contract delivery
 - Results (to match requirements of communication and marketing)
 - Support of technical implementation and PI's methods in areas of experience, (Potential technical delivery in areas of technical expertise required by PI)

2. Operationalise the renewed strategy,
 - Make contributions to strategic review Q3/4 2009
 - Integrate strategic refinements and changes into workplans and business processes
3. Consolidate organisational structure and business processes,
 - Project management systems and processes
 - Financial systems and procedures in support of programmes
 - HR, administration, and information management
4. Ensure a diversification of income streams and strategic relationships in support of PI's work.
 - Develop and implement an Income Strategy
 - Ensure strong client orientation/strategic relations focus of programme work
 - Act as Deputy to the Executive Director on strategic relations/donor liaison work

General duties of the post include:

5. Manage the preparation of various technical outputs and communications including technical notes and reports, etc to support PI's overall communication, contract delivery and marketing.
6. Build and lead a team and manage a group of associate local and international consultants to support the work of the post
7. Contribute with other leading members of the organisation to strategy development, management and implementation of PI's work in Viet Nam, Lao PDR and Cambodia
8. Contribute to plans for PI's work in new modalities (e.g. PI Investment vehicle) and in other regions (e.g. replicating bamboo to other countries).
9. Closely assist the Executive Director and other leads in the organisation to:
 - advance and formalise PI's innovative methods
 - build the team and the organisation

KEY CHARACTERISTICS and PROFILE

The ideal person for this position is likely to have had both professional technical experience and more recently business leadership/COO experience in the commercial, consulting and/or development sectors. We are particularly interested if your experience also includes finance, or strong client facing work including management consulting. The person will relish the opportunity to take up this leadership role in a young start-up in full view of the various risks that this includes.

We outline below a potential profile of the skills and experience that would be required for this position. Please ensure that your application illustrates how you meet these requirements by giving precise examples.

	Essential	Desirable
Experience/ Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A university degree in a relevant discipline from a leading university • At least 10 years' experience in a professional consulting-style or project-based environment • Experience in a business management/COO position • Strong client oriented/representational skills and the ability to act as deputy for the Executive Director to represent PI in a range of forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An MBA, Master's degree or similar international qualification • Experience in a start-up organisation • Work in developing country
Skills/ Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Management • Business process analysis and implementation • A strong practical sense of how markets function • A sensitivity to the local cultural environment • Excellent written and oral English language skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of a relevant regional language
Personal qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional commitment to the challenge of eradicating global poverty • Belief in the importance of markets as a leading solution to poverty • Strong commitment to an output and performance- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong alignment with the goals, purpose and methods of PI and the desire to be a key part of an organisation such as PI

	<p>based working style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong desire to participate in and contribute to an evolving and entrepreneurial organisation, including accepting and welcoming the personal opportunities and risks that this presents • Commitment to the development of staff and to leading a team • Willingness to travel and work in the region, occasionally in remote areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to engage with poor people and to understand the human experience of poverty
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TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

Contract period and terms may be flexible and are subject to mutual agreement

CLOSING DATE:

Applications will be accepted immediately.
Target start date: on or before **1 September 2009**

HOW TO APPLY

Please email a CV and cover letter to: recruitment@pi-email.org

The subject line of your email must be: **“Chief Operations Officer Application”**

ANNEX: PI'S BUSINESS CASE APPROACH TO PROJECTS

PI understands the challenge of poverty reduction. The root causes are complex, and many issues must be addressed concurrently to tackle it. PI's sees its work as complimentary to other development efforts, focussing its resources and skills on the creation of jobs and incomes for poor people through market mechanisms.

National and regional sub-sectors are large, complex systems and operate in a real world of interconnected markets and political realities. Inducing and supporting pro-poor change for hundreds of thousands of poor through the main market change agents first requires an uncovering of market opportunities and constraints, the nature of the future poverty impact mechanism and, importantly, the scale of potential impact. Project interventions are structured around what PI see as the main levers for change in that system.

An overall strategy and logic for change emerges through the staged approach we take. This strategy informs tactical interventions by PI's team of market and poverty practitioners. PI invests much time in building quality relationships with agents of change from both the public and private sector at multiple points in the system and anticipates that many years of work are required to reach our ambitious targets of hundreds of thousands in each subsector.

PI moves through carefully structured steps of (i) screening (weeks), (ii) identification (months), (iii) demonstration (1-3 years) and (iv) implementation and exit (several years+), building a base of evidence in each step to justify progression and the order of magnitude of increased donor investment that goes with each step. This approach across a portfolio of sectors helps manage risk and ensure overall corporate efficiency. We have found sectors that do not provide the justification for further investment (e.g. coffee in Viet Nam), but overall the approach aims to ensure a portfolio which will deliver PI's corporate target of \$200 per person over the poverty line, and a target of 750,000 by 2020 in Vietnam, Lao PDR and Cambodia.

The steps of screening and identification involve work in demand, supply, local and global market dynamics, value chain analysis, competitiveness, and poverty analysis to evaluate the potential for promising sectors to impact poverty. Projects that advance to the demonstration stage move to trials with key change agents as partners - public and private - to address market system constraints (e.g. technology innovation, enabling environment, frontier/risk financing, training and so on). The demonstration stage also marks the start of very detailed and statistically robust impact assessment for target populations to ensure we capture the evidence of success or failure of the project trials we undertake in the demonstration stage. The demonstration stage also provides important information to clarify the impact logic and to develop the design for the main project implementation stage.

PI also provides a learning platform for analysts and staff from PI's local partners, who work within PI's office and teams. This is PI's model of capacity development, and we see this mode of work as important in replicating our approach to market development, to expand the scope of our impact on the poor and to ensure our practices become sustained within the countries where work.

For more information on PI and its programmes, please visit our website at www.prosperityinitiative.org.