



Global Social Service Workforce Alliance

Role Description for Steering Committee Member

Summary

The Global Social Service Workforce Alliance, at a time of growing inequality, social injustice and violence against children and women, needs to build its long-term capacity to help develop and strengthen the global workforce that is best placed to help individuals, children, families and communities to overcome these challenges, enhance their wellbeing and build resilience.

Background

The Global Social Service Workforce Alliance, hereinafter referred to as 'the Alliance,' is a non-profit network of over 3,000 members in over 140 countries. It was officially launched as a network in 2013 having been developed as a result of commitments made at a global conference held in Cape Town in 2010, responding to the identified need for a platform and movement to promote and enable the strengthening of the overall social service workforce.

The Alliance works toward a world in which a well-planned, developed and supported social service workforce engages people, structures and organizations to strengthen and build individual, child, family and community well-being and resilience. The mission of the Alliance is to promote and strengthen the social service workforce to provide services when and where they are most needed, alleviate poverty, challenge and reduce discrimination, promote social justice and human rights, and prevent and respond to violence and family separation.

To achieve this goal, we work to build and channel the political will, actions, resources, and structures necessary for a social service workforce that is knowledgeable, capable, critically reflective, resilient and committed.

The Alliance pursues this mission and vision by:

- Serving as a convener for an inclusive, representative network of stakeholders including government organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions, donor groups, professional associations and community practitioners to create a forum for discourse and collective learning.
- Generating knowledge and build the evidence base for effective social service workforce strengthening by developing and sharing research, resources, tools, models and best practices.
- Building the capacity of humanitarian and development actors to implement strategies to strengthen the social service workforce.
- Promoting effective advocacy and stimulate an active network of workforce strengthening advocates through information sharing, collaboration, and networking.

The Alliance is a social venture project hosted by Tides Center, a 501(c)(3) non-profit foundation, registered in the USA, which supports the Alliance, among many other similar social ventures, through administrative, financial, legal, HR and advisory services. It is currently managed by two full-time staff, and one part-time grants manager, located in the US and Central Asia, and led and supported by a strong, diverse and globally distributed Steering Committee.

Context

Since it was established, the Alliance's Steering Committee (SC) has included a diverse representation of senior experts, academics and experienced practitioners from the social services field. It is composed of members from different parts of the world, and from different sectors. Currently, the Committee includes 13 individuals based in 9 countries. In a recent assessment of current skills and experience, the Committee identified a gap in expertise in fundraising, including securing sustainable funding for an organisation through development of relations with individuals and organizational/Foundation donors .

A key challenge for the Alliance is that almost all its funding, both current and past, comes from time-bound and deliverable-driven grants and contracts, instead of unrestricted and individual funds. When these time-limited funding mechanisms end, there is a risk to the organisation's continuity and survival. A current key steering committee priority is therefore to identify and make connections with new, long-term sources of funding, from private donors, trusts and foundations, as well as institutional donors, as well as to help the Alliance continue to develop collaborations with a range of partners, with whom it can develop, and propose to donors, new joint projects.

Commitment

The Alliance Steering Committee holds six online meetings a year. Each one lasts up to two hours, generally held once every two months. One of the six meetings per year is a one half day annual strategy meeting (sometimes divided into two parts of two hours each, over two days). In the past this strategy meeting was held immediately prior to, and in the same location as, the Alliance's main external event, the annual symposium, but the two meetings have been held separately in 2020 and 2021, as both were held online.

The Steering Committee (SC) also has two sub-committees, with 3-4 SC members volunteering for each, one for HR (which is consulted on secretariat staff matters, and whose responsibilities include revising the JD and recruitment of the director) and one for fundraising. There are other ad hoc SC working groups to advise on specific initiatives or projects.

General specifications for Steering Committee members

SC members are asked to use their specific skills, knowledge and professional experience to help the SC collectively reach sound decisions, this includes:

- Scrutinizing SC papers and actively contributing to SC discussion.
- Participating in relevant SC sub-committees or working groups.
- Responding to any request from the Director for advice and support, or from other team members on specific initiatives.
- Remaining conscious of any conflicts of interest, and submitting annual conflict of interest declarations.
- Taking decisions solely in the best interests of the Alliance.

The SC's core governance responsibilities include:

- Ensuring the Alliance complies with its governing document, other relevant laws and regulations.

- Ensuring the Alliance pursues its objectives as defined in its Mission, and acts in line with its Vision, Mission and Approach¹.
- Safeguarding the reputation and values of the Alliance.
- Ensuring the financial stability of the Alliance and its effective and efficient administration.
- Protecting and managing the property of the Alliance and ensuring proper investment of funds.
- Appointing and monitoring the performance of the Director.
- Representing the Alliance externally, as and when suitable opportunities arise.

Selection criteria for Steering Committee members include being:

- Engaged in and knowledgeable of social service workforce strengthening initiatives.
- A leader in areas of work directly related to the Alliance objectives, with knowledge and experience of good practice in non-profit governance.
- Able to provide strategic advice to the Alliance on the fulfilment of its main functions: knowledge development, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation, research, fundraising, communications, system strengthening, network development and governance.
- Able to represent, at a senior level, a key institutional partner active in the Alliance's priority areas, or advise the Alliance as an independent, recognized expert or activist in this area.
- Willingness to support the vision and mission of the Alliance.
- Ability to fulfil the governance and advisory responsibilities outlined in the Steering Committee's Terms of Reference, and make a commitment of time and energy to the Alliance.
- Commitment to become familiar with and fulfil the Alliance Steering Committee's legal duties and responsibilities
- Ability and willingness to identify funding opportunities and make introductions for the Alliance Director with potential funders, both for specific Alliance projects and for individual or institutional donations to the unrestricted fund.
- Willingness of the SC member's employing organization, (if the member is full time employed), for their employee to become an Alliance SC member and in doing so commit support in:
 - time (average estimated time commitment, including reading and replying to correspondence, and attending meetings, is 4 – 6 working hours per month),
 - financial support to send their representative to attend at least one in-person SC meeting per year and other financial contributions and forms of support as appropriate,
 - promoting the work of the Alliance to influence decision-makers and donors to increase their support for SSW strengthening

Governance terms:

- Each Steering Committee member of the Alliance shall be elected to serve for a staggered term not to exceed three years. They can serve no more than two full consecutive three-year terms.
- A Steering Committee member shall hold office for the term for which he or she was elected and through the end of the meeting at which his or her successor has been elected, or until the Steering Committee member's prior death, resignation or removal.
- It shall be the policy of the Steering Committee to review the status of any Steering Committee member who has not attended at least 75% of the meetings during any twelve-month period.

¹ <https://www.socialserviceworkforce.org/vision-and-mission>

- Any vacancy occurring because of the death, resignation or removal of a Steering Committee member, or because of an increase in the number of members of the Steering Committee, shall be filled by the Steering Committee for the unexpired term of such Steering Committee member.

Any Steering Committee member who has served two consecutive terms or who has resigned or been removed from his or her position as Steering Committee member, shall not be eligible for re-election for a period of one calendar year (365 days).