POSITION DESCRIPTION

GENERAL MANAGER
Learning Difficulties Australia

12 Month Initial Contract – with opportunity for longer term Part-Time or Full Time
National Role – location negotiable

Application Process: To apply for the position please provide your resume and a covering letter outlining your expertise and interest in this opportunity via email to admin@ldaustralia.org by no later than COB Monday 9 December.

For further information contact:
admin@ldaustralia.org
General Manager
Position Description

Organisation History

Learning Difficulties Australia (LDA) was established in 1965 as the Diagnostic and Remedial Teachers’ Association of Victoria. In 1987 it became an Incorporated Association under the name of the Australian Remedial Education Association, and in 1994 the Association was renamed the Australian Resource Educators’ Association. There was a further change of name in 2001, when it adopted the current name of Learning Difficulties Australia. Its current Journal, the Australian Journal of Learning Difficulties, was first established in May 1969 under the name Remedial Education (1969 to 1972), and then the Australian Journal of Remedial Education (1973 to March 1996). It was renamed the Australian Journal of Learning Disabilities in June 1996. In 2008 publication of the Journal was taken over by Taylor and Francis, a leading publisher of academic Journals, when it adopted its current name of the Australian Journal of Learning Difficulties.

General Manager Role Context

This newly created role is in response to addressing the increasing pressures on operating such an integral association in today’s complex environment. A recent review identified several emerging challenges that LDA faces, and the importance of maturing the organisation beyond the great volunteer support it has enjoyed and expanding its reach and influence with the support of a general manager.

Mission and Vision

Learning Difficulties Australia is an association of teachers and other professionals dedicated to assisting students with learning difficulties through effective teaching practices based on scientific research, both in the classroom and through individualised instruction.

Our aims are:

- To promote understanding in the community of the complex nature of learning difficulties and the need for intervention to be carried out by qualified and expert professionals.
- To support professionals in the field through high quality professional development programs and publications so that all members have access to theoretical advances and well researched teaching strategies in the field of learning difficulties.
- To support and promote scientific evidence-based research that will advance understanding of the theory and evidence underlying effective teaching practice for students with learning difficulties.
- To liaise with other related associations, thereby promoting co-operation and inter-disciplinary exchange of ideas.
- To advocate for improved services to students experiencing difficulties with learning through advice to relevant organisations and submissions to government bodies.
- To promote excellence in the field by recognising outstanding contributions through the following awards: the Mona Tobias Award, the Bruce Wicking Award and the Tertiary Student Award.

Governance

Learning Difficulties Australia (LDA) is a not-for-profit association incorporated under the Victorian Associations Incorporation Act 1981. LDA is managed by the LDA Council consisting of five (5) honorary officers and nine (9) members, who are elected each year at the Annual General Meeting. The Honorary Officers, who must be voting members of the Association, are the President, two Vice- Presidents, the Treasurer, and the Secretary.
Management and control of the business and affairs of LDA is vested in the Council which may do all such things required to be done by the association, and as are prescribed in the Constitution. The LDA Council may make, vary and repeal standing orders or Rules on the conduct and management of the Association and of any of the committees.

Position Overview

The General Manager (GM) will be responsible for managing the overall governance, secretariat and administrative functions with appropriate support as required. Importantly, the GM will need to ensure that LDA develops and expands its financial footprint to ensure a sustainable association that can also continue to support this role. Primarily, this is expected to be achieved through increased professional learning services and membership growth – being the two most significant revenue generating functions currently available.

The GM will carry out these responsibilities in accordance with the directions and policies established by the Council, as well as being committed to the values and purpose of LDA. The GM will not be the official spokesperson for the organisation, as this responsibility will remain with the LDA President. The successful GM will enable the Council to deliver on its objectives, with the comfort and knowledge that the GM is controlling the governance, secretariat and administration roles and actively supporting LDA’s growth agenda.

As a national body, without a head office, the GM will be required to largely operate from either their own premises or at a serviced office. This will be considered in the remuneration of the role. Whilst LDA operates predominantly via electronic methods (phone, video conference, email) there will be a need for some interstate travel – to meet with council members and in pursuit of LDA’s expansion objectives.

Personal Qualities and Experience

We are currently experiencing an exciting period of change. We are searching for an experienced General Manager Operations/Change Manager to develop, grow and mature our service to ensure future financial stability/viability.

The GM will need to demonstrate experience in successfully delivering in similar roles, and have key experience working in the Not-For-Profit sector. Whilst detailed knowledge of the learning difficulties sector is not essential, there is a need for an appreciation of the sector, the role that LDA plays within the sector, and a willingness to adopt and espouse LDA’s Code of Ethics. The applicant will also need to present capability in working with a diverse and committed leadership – including an appreciation of the education and academic sectors.

Key personal qualities therefore include:

- Excellent organisational and communication skills, including marketing and branding
- Capability and experience in professional development services, including capacity to enhance and coordinate professional learning services (both digitally and face to face), including logistics, administration and promotion.
- Experienced in working with a volunteer council and committees. Key to this will be the ability to quickly win the confidence of council and the membership
- Demonstrated financial acumen to ensure a sustainable financial operation
- Excellent representation, stakeholder management, negotiation and collaboration skills
- Project management skills of a high order
Key Performance Criteria

The GM will be assessed against key performance criteria that council has identified as critical to the success of LDA and the GM role, and these will also be used by LDA Council to determine any new contract arrangements beyond the initial 12 months.

The key performance criteria include:

- **Serve the Council**: Work effectively with and under the direction of Council members, and committee convenors, to develop and meet agreed targets and milestone. Identify and report to Council on growth opportunities in line with the organisation’s strategic plan and objectives. Develop strategies and systems to enhance performance and service.

- **Marketing and Communications**: Develop and deliver a marketing and communications plan to include a clean, easy to navigate website and seamless integration of social media feeds. Build a growing base of engaged consumers of LDA information, including both members and active social media followers.

- **Expand the Association**: Expand the membership base and membership satisfaction in all categories of membership and in all states through improved services and communication structures.

- **Professional Learning**: Enhance and expand services and other revenue generating activities (as approved by Council) to ensure LDA is financially sustainable. Research and plan for PD schedule and secure speakers and coordinate event management. Increase diversity and range of PD to increase membership and reach of target audience.

- **Partnerships**: Identify opportunities and secure sponsors, partners and grants as appropriate – initiate ventures to ensure financial viability of both LDA and GM role. Form partnerships with education sector (particularly mainstream settings/teachers and support staff) such as various education sectors nationwide.

- **Governance**: Effectively deliver on the governance, compliance, reporting, administrative, financial and secretariat duties of LDA. In conjunction with Council, manage the development and implementation of a revised constitution, operating processes and business structures that best fit the LDA now and into the future.

- **Publications**: Promote and support the dissemination of information on LDA’s key publications, the Journal, the Bulletin and the e-News.

- **Consultants**: Facilitate the provision of specialist teacher tuition to students with learning difficulties by our specialist Consultant members via the LDA Online Tutor Search service.

It is recommended that applicants pay particular attention to these criteria in submitting their application, along with a considered draft implementation plan, noting the limited information available, that presents a roadmap for their success in the GM role for LDA.

Key Accountabilities

**Strategic Leadership**

- In conjunction with the Council, develop and implement the strategic plan for LDA to achieve its goals.

- Establish and maintain LDA as a sustainable association

- Effectively promote the organisation and communicate its services and offerings to the community, including building membership, community and volunteer commitment.

**Stakeholder Engagement**

- Develop and enhance partnerships with all stakeholders to achieve strategic goals as well as engaging with other like-minded organisations across the sector.

- Liaise and network with other stakeholders to identify and assess market offerings and industry developments to support the achievement of business objectives, including identifying opportunities within the sector, across the diverse range of services
Foster positive relationships and strong links with supporting organisations, government bodies and the community. This includes supporting the council’s advocacy role, funding and other key support services.

Organisational Management

- Oversee the effective management of finances and work to improve the financial sustainability of the organisation, including compliance with legal obligations.
- Develop and deliver ongoing revenue streams that support future organisational growth including the negotiation of agreements and contracts. This includes growing and maintaining income streams and managing financial resources to enable the continued delivery of its recognised services.
- Ensure services, programs and projects are developed, delivered and evaluated in accordance with funding agreements/budgets including the preparation of appropriate risk management plans.
- Implement a performance management framework to ensure the delivery of quality services and outcomes in alignment with strategic priorities.
- Enhance the existing volunteering framework along with policy and procedures to ensure active and appropriate engagement with a large volunteering base.
- Be responsible for recruitment, orientation, training and management of staff and volunteers.
- Develop and maintain best practice human resource policies including workplace health & safety.
- Facilitate and foster effective internal and external communications.
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of the work of the organisation and seek to continually improve processes and outcomes.
- Develop and implement required policies, procedures and practices.

Governance

- Develop and maintain strong, professional and effective working relationships with the Council.
- Work to engage and build value through quality services and programs.
- Support the President, Secretary, Treasurer and Council to implement effective contemporary governance practices to fulfil corporate, regulatory and fiduciary accountabilities.
- In conjunction with the council prepare an annual strategic and business plan.
- Keep council members informed on the position of services, finances, management issues and all matters having real or potential risk to the organisation through comprehensive reporting and accountability systems.
- Ensure processes are in place to fulfil LDA’s statutory compliance obligations.
- Provide administrative support to the council and its committees.
- Undertake responsibilities as the Public Officer and adhere to corporate legislation.