



Commonwealth  
Foundation



Appointment of

# Deputy Director-General

February 2025



AMERICAS ASIA PACIFIC EMEA

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# Welcome from the Chair

Dear Prospective Applicant,

On behalf of the Board of Governors of the Commonwealth Foundation, I am delighted that you are considering applying for the role of Deputy Director-General. The mission of the Foundation: – to strengthen the voice of civil society and foster greater participation in governance – has never been more important, or more urgent.

Our Deputy Director-General occupies a crucial role in the organisation: overseeing and managing the day-to-day operations of the Foundation, including a flourishing set of world-class programmes that are delivering real impact.

We are looking to welcome someone who is passionate about making a difference to the lives of Commonwealth citizens; someone who will work closely with the Director-General and a strong, committed team to connect civil society with governments in ways that spark and sustain meaningful change.

Our new Deputy Director-General will be joining the Foundation at an exciting time. Under the leadership of our outgoing Director-General, Dr Anne Gallagher, we have greatly expanded our public profile, enhanced our reputation both within and outside the Commonwealth, and increased our capacity to make a difference to people’s lives. Our focus has sharpened, ensuring our energies and resources are directed towards the issues that matter most to the 2.7 billion people of the Commonwealth. We have deepened our relationships with the Foundation’s 50+ Member States, who support and guide our work, as well as with civil society leaders and organisations across the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth Foundation has never stood still. We are firmly committed to learning and to continuous improvement; we are open to fresh perspectives; energised by challenge and unafraid of change. If this resonates with you – and if you feel that you could be part of the next chapter of our exciting journey – we would be delighted to hear from you.

**H.E. Winnie A. Kiap CBE**

Chair of the Board of Governors



# About the Commonwealth Foundation

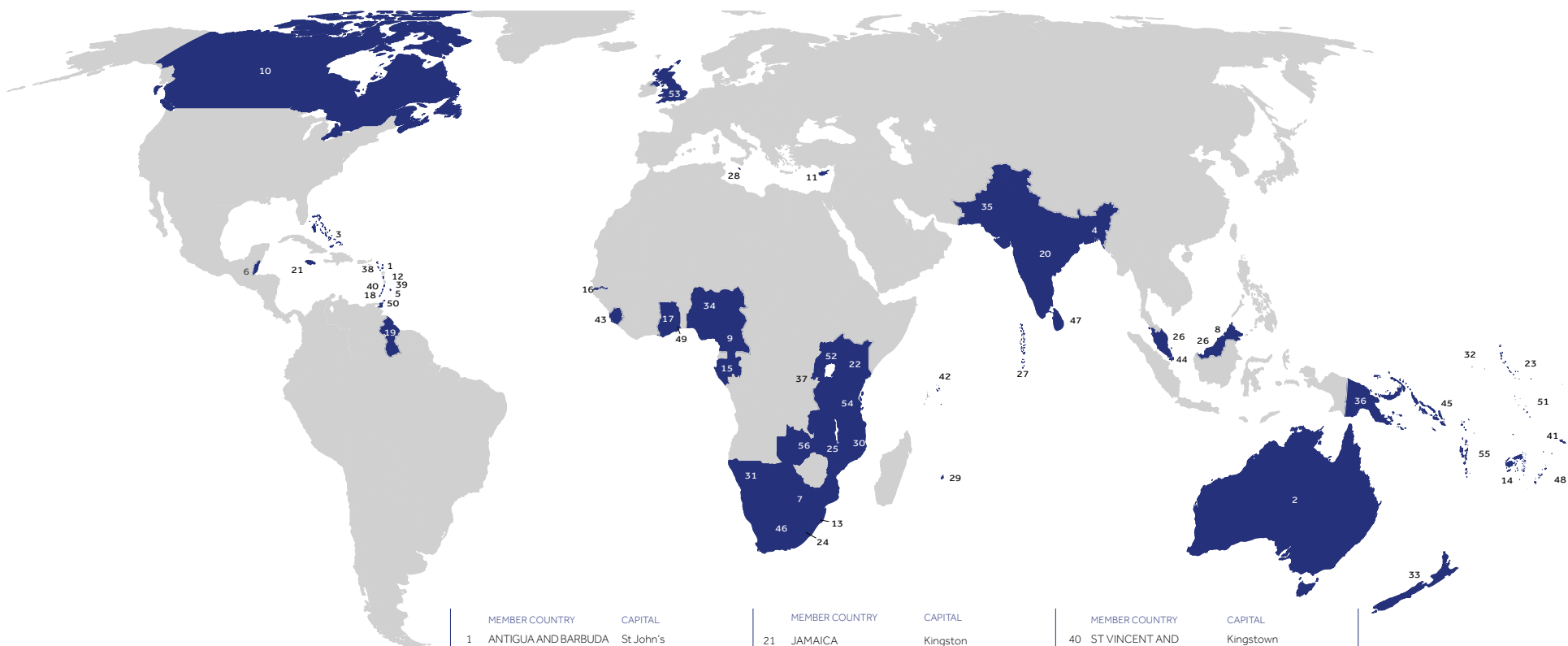
The Foundation is unique among intergovernmental organisations in being explicitly mandated to advance the interests of Commonwealth civil society. Its establishment by Heads of Government in 1965 reflected the commitment of Member States to ensuring that the Commonwealth family would be as much an association of peoples as of governments.

.....  
As one of the three intergovernmental pillars of the Commonwealth, the Foundation operates within that critical space between government and the people. Since its establishment, the Foundation has worked to bring the voice of civil society into all aspects of governance, supporting civil society engagement in shaping the policies and decisions that affect people's lives.

Our vision is of a Commonwealth of equal, just and inclusive societies. Our mission is to contribute to that vision by:

- Supporting the active and constructive participation of Commonwealth citizens in all aspects of their governance.
- Nurturing the growth of vibrant and free civil societies in all Commonwealth countries.
- Advancing the principles and ideals of the Commonwealth.

# Where we Work



While our focus is Commonwealth-wide, our membership currently stands at 51 of the 56 countries of the Commonwealth. We are working hard to secure universal membership within the next few years.

MEMBER COUNTRY

1	ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA	St John's
2	AUSTRALIA	Canberra
3	THE BAHAMAS	Nassau
4	BANGLADESH	Dhaka
5	BARBADOS	Bridgetown
6	BELIZE	Belmopan
7	BOTSWANA	Gaborone
8	BRUNEI DARUSSALAM	Bandar Seri Begawan
9	CAMEROON	Yaoundé
10	CANADA	Ottawa
11	CYPRUS	Nicosia
12	DOMINICA	Roseau
13	ESWATINI	Mbabane
14	FIJI*	
15	GABON	Libreville
16	THE GAMBIA	Banjul
17	GHANA	Accra
18	GRENADA	St George's
19	GUYANA	Georgetown
20	INDIA	New Delhi

MEMBER COUNTRY

21	JAMAICA	Kingston
22	KENYA	Nairobi
23	KIRIBATI	Tarawa
24	LESOTHO	Maseru
25	MALAWI	Bridgetown
26	MALAYSIA	Kuala Lumpur
27	MALDIVES	Malé
28	MALTA	Valletta
29	MAURITIUS	Port Louis
30	MOZAMBIQUE	Maputo
31	NAMIBIA	Windhoek
32	NAURU*	
33	NEW ZEALAND	Wellington
34	NIGERIA	Abuja
35	PAKISTAN	Islamabad
36	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	Port Moresby
37	RWANDA	Kigali
38	ST KITTS AND NEVIS	Basseterre
39	SAINT LUCIA	Castries

MEMBER COUNTRY

40	ST VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES	Kingstown
41	SAMOA	Apia
42	SEYCHELLES	Victoria
43	SIERRA LEONE	Freetown
44	SINGAPORE*	
45	SOLOMON ISLANDS	Honiara
46	SOUTH AFRICA	Pretoria
47	SRI LANKA	Colombo
48	TONGA	Nuku'alofa
49	TOGO*	
50	TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	Port of Spain
51	TUVALU*	
52	UGANDA	Kampala
53	UNITED KINGDOM	London
54	UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA	Dodoma
55	VANUATU	Port Vila
56	ZAMBIA	Lusaka

\* Not currently a Commonwealth Foundation member.  
Map source: Commonwealth Secretariat/Maps-in-Minutes™  
The designations and the presentation of material on this map, based on UN practice, do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Commonwealth Secretariat concerning the legal status of any country, territory or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.  
Information correct at time of printing, September 2022  
This is a free poster



# What we Do

**The Foundation’s broad mandate enables us to engage in a range of issues that matter to the 2.7 billion citizens of the Commonwealth.**

In 2021 we decided to take a much more focused approach to our work: identifying specific issues where we could have real impact on people’s lives and where we could help advance the principles and values of the Commonwealth Charter. For our current Strategic Plan (2021-2026) we have directed our energies and resources into three areas:

## Health Justice

Health justice identifies and acknowledges the social determinants of health, as well as the structural barriers that hinder equal access to quality healthcare. Our strategic focus on health justice reflects an appreciation of persistent inequities in the provision and quality of healthcare - and the obligation of the Commonwealth to acknowledge and seek to address these inequities. Under this thematic focus area, we take an approach that explicitly seeks to reduce inequities in the provision of health services within and between countries and regions and that explicitly works to advance the realisation of universal healthcare (UHC).

## Climate Justice

The Commonwealth is home to most of the world’s small island states, and to other countries that are on the frontline of the climate emergency. We see ourselves as responsible for bringing the voices of those who are especially vulnerable, and whose rights and interests are too often silenced.

Climate justice recognises that the worst effects of climate change are disproportionately felt by small and vulnerable states and communities that bear little or no historical responsibility for causing it. Our strategic focus on climate justice also carries with it an acknowledgement that appropriate and proportionate responses will accurately reflect existing vulnerabilities, resources, and capabilities.

## Freedom of Expression

Freedom of expression – including media freedom – is a core priority for the Commonwealth: recognised in the Charter as a prerequisite for democratic societies in which Commonwealth citizens are constructively engaged in governance and decision-making and can hold their governments to account. The Foundation’s work, over many years, has confirmed that without freedom of opinion and expression, all else is at risk. We see that erosion of freedom of expression is a global trend that has not left the Commonwealth unscathed. Our mandate – to support vibrant and free civil society throughout the Commonwealth – places a special obligation on us to help advance freedom of expression.

The strategic plan affirms two main cross-cutting themes: gender equality and small and vulnerable states. Those two themes reflect and inform how we understand climate justice, health justice and freedom of expression.

We have begun a review of the impact of our Strategic Plan and the results will feed into the development of a new Plan to guide the Foundation’s work after 2026.

# How we Work

The Foundation is structured around its three work programmes. The Office of the Directorate provides guidance and support to the three programmes, bringing together the Director-General, the Deputy Director-General and the team that leads on people, finances and general administration.

Our work programmes are:

## Commonwealth Civil Society (CCS):

this is the home of most of our grant work. Each year, the Foundation ringfences around one third of our total income for direct financial support to strong projects being implemented by Commonwealth civil society organisations within our areas of focus. CCS oversees our two largest grants streams. It also runs a range of capacity strengthening initiatives for civil society.

## Advocacy and Creative (A&C):

the Foundation delivers its Advocacy and Creative workstreams together: a reflection of our commitment to advancing creative expression as a tool of transformative change. The programme brings together multiple projects and workstreams including the Commonwealth People's Forum; the Critical Conversations event series; our work to engage civil society in Commonwealth and other multilateral policy spaces; creative grants; the Commonwealth Short Story Prize (CSSP); adda, our online literary magazine; and our partnerships and community building initiative, the Foundation's online discussion forum.



## Knowledge, Learning and Communications (KLC):

the Knowledge, Learning and Communications programme encompasses a range of functions that are critical to the identity, coherence and effectiveness of the Foundation including monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL). The KLC programme assesses and refreshes the Foundation's systems and approaches to: (i) increase engagement with our work; (ii) capture and share ideas and learning from our activities; (iii) ensure that we have the data and evidence to tell our story of change; and (iv) affirm the Foundation's place in the Commonwealth system and our role as advocates and champions for the people of the Commonwealth.



# Appointment

**We are seeking to appoint a highly competent individual who will work with our Director-General in driving the Foundation forward as we build on a strong platform of achievement while leaning into new strategic challenges.**

The role reports to the Director-General. The Deputy is, effectively, the Foundation’s chief operating officer: responsible for overseeing and managing the day-to-day operations of the Foundation, ensuring operational efficiency and the achievement of our strategic goals.

The Deputy Director-General will play a pivotal role in providing the strategy, leadership and vision to ensure that the Foundation has in place the appropriate business planning, programmatic design and implementation, governance, operational controls, systems, administrative and reporting procedures. They will ensure continuous quality improvement and innovation to ensure we deliver real, measurable value to the Commonwealth and its people.

## Vision and Strategy:

- Work with the Director-General and the wider team to craft, refine and implement an ambitious strategic vision for the Foundation, based firmly on the values and principles of the Commonwealth Charter.
- With the Director-General, lead on the development and implementation of an integrated strategy with a clear performance framework.
- With the Director-General, ensure that the Foundation’s strategic plan and annual work plans are implemented successfully.
- Advise the Director-General on any issues or risks that impact or could impact on the full achievement of the vision and strategy.

# Appointment

## Management for results:

- Lead the work of the Foundation's three programmes: supervising and supporting the three programme managers: exercising full oversight of all aspects of programme development and implementation; ensuring teams are high performing, well-motivated and innovative, working to clear deliverables and within agreed budgets.
- Lead all planning processes for the Foundation including annual planning.
- Working with the Senior Office Manager: oversee the programme budget: monitoring budget allocation and expenditure and aligning internal resources to meet or exceed operating and strategic goals.
- Working with the Senior Office Manager: oversee the human resources functions of the Foundation, advising the Director-General on issues as appropriate.
- Establish and maintain systems of oversight, information collection, and analysis appropriate to requirements relating to quality control, reporting, monitoring, evaluation and learning.
- Ensure final quality control over all deliverables including all internal and external reporting.
- Ensure the continuous improvement of knowledge sharing through the Foundation's operational processes, including strengthening links between knowledge sharing, information systems, learning and communications, improving integration and facilitating knowledge exchange across programmes and systems.

- Coordinate with the Director-General and the Senior Office Manager to ensure the Foundation is operating to the highest standards of financial probity and accountability.

## Governance, relationship management and support:

- With the Director-General ensure effective governance processes, facilitating and maintaining strong relationships with the Board and Member States.
- Develop and nurture strong relationships with external stakeholders, including partner and civil society organisations in accordance with the Foundation's vision, mission and strategic plan. broader civil society to further the Foundation's vision.
- Support effective governance including through provision of high-level, responsive reporting to the Board, the Executive Committee and sub-Committees of the Executive Committee; assisting the Chairs of these bodies in discharging their responsibilities as required.
- Support the Director-General in maintaining a strong and mutually supportive relationship with Member States based on shared values of transparency and mutual accountability.
- Act for the Director-General when they are absent or on leave.
- Perform any other reasonable duties and tasks as requested by the Director-General or Board of Governors.

# Appointment

## Skills and Experience:

- Proven ability to lead strategically within complex funding and policy frameworks.
- Demonstrated skills and experiences in effectively leading and managing high-performing teams within a comparable organisational setting.
- Strong experience leading and supporting planning, processes, systems, decision making, innovation and change management in a comparable context.
- Strong experience designing and managing programmes in a comparable context.
- Evidence of strong time-management skills: ability to prioritise, organize and deliver under time pressure.
- Evidence of excellent reporting skills: ability to use reporting to communicate, inform and inspire and to present technical information concisely and accessibly.
- Experience working in or with complex governance structures.
- Experience in active problem-solving and in identifying and effectively managing risk within a complex organisational and political setting.
- Exceptional interpersonal, advocacy, diplomatic, negotiation and communication skills.
- A strong understanding of the social, economic and political context in which the Commonwealth operates and experience working in diverse settings that reflect the diversity of the Foundation's member states.
- Advanced university degree in a relevant field or comparable experience.



## Personal Qualities and Attributes:

- Person-centered, emotionally intelligent, resilient and bold with very high self-awareness.
- Kind, inclusive, empathetic and approachable leader.
- A commitment to transparency, honesty and fairness.
- Demonstrates a collaborative and collegial approach while also being able to take decisions.
- Passionate about motivating teams and embedding a culture of learning.
- An exceptional communicator who can maintain clear and consistent communication with a wide variety of staff, partners and stakeholders.
- Committed to fostering innovation and new ways of thinking; responsive to change.

# How to Apply

To apply, please submit a concise CV of no more than three pages and a covering letter of no more than two pages, detailing how you fulfil the role description and personal specification to <https://candidates.perrettlaver.com/vacancies> quoting reference **7563**.

The deadline for applications is **9am GMT Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025**.

The role is based in London. Candidates must be a Commonwealth citizen (see Commonwealth countries listed by Region **here**). The appointment is for an initial term of three years, renewable for up to three years dependent on Leadership transition needs. The Foundation offers a competitive salary and above-market benefits including, for the Deputy Director-General recruited from outside the UK, generous relocation, rental and other allowances.

We are based in Marlborough House, Pall Mall, central London. We are currently operating a flexible working policy which requires all staff to work from the office at least five days per fortnight including every Wednesday, and applicants must be able to affirm their capacity and willingness to work within this policy.

The Commonwealth Foundation is dedicated to ensuring that the diverse voices of the Commonwealth are fully represented in our workforce, driving innovation, creativity, and meaningful impact in all that we do. We encourage applicants from all backgrounds to join us in our mission to create a more equitable and inclusive world.

*Perrett Laver will conduct an executive search process in parallel with the public advertisement of the role.*

*Longlisted candidates will be invited to interview with Perrett Laver in mid-April and the Appointments Committee will subsequently meet to decide upon a final shortlist for the post in early-May.*

*We are expecting that online interviews will be conducted in mid-May and, for the final shortlist, in-person interviews shortly thereafter. If you require any reasonable adjustments to assist you in the selection process, please advise us of these so that we can make appropriate arrangements.*

*The search will be led by Arabella Chichester, Global Senior Partner and Kundai Mtasa, Consultant. To confidentially get in touch about this role, or for advice on your application please contact, George Hourmouzios, Principal Research Associate [george.hourmouzios@perrettlaver.com](mailto:george.hourmouzios@perrettlaver.com) for a confidential conversation.*

*Should you require access to these documents in alternative formats, please contact Esther Elbro [esther.elbro@perrettlaver.com](mailto:esther.elbro@perrettlaver.com).*

*If you have comments that would support us to improve access to documentation, or our application processes more generally, please do not hesitate to contact us via [accessibility@perrettlaver.com](mailto:accessibility@perrettlaver.com)*

## **Perrett Laver's GDPR Policy**

*Protecting your personal data is of the utmost importance to Perrett Laver and we take this responsibility very seriously. Any information obtained by our trading divisions is held and processed in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation. The data you provide us with is securely stored on our computerised database and transferred to our clients for the purposes of presenting you as a candidate and/or considering your suitability for a role you have registered interest in.*

*Perrett Laver is a Data Controller and a Data Processor, and our legal basis for processing your personal data is 'Legitimate Interests'. You have the right to object to us processing your data in this way. For more information about this, your rights, and our approach to Data Protection and Privacy, please visit our website <https://perrettlaver.com/privacy-statement/>*



AMERICAS ASIA PACIFIC EMEA

One Embassy Gardens

8 Viaduct Gardens

London

SW11 7BW

UK

T: +44 (0)20 7340 6200