



Director Program Strategy and Innovation (DPSI)

## Description

### About CUSO International

Cuso International is a Canadian non-profit organization committed to ending poverty and inequality. Cuso works with local partners worldwide to improve economic opportunities for all, enhance women's and girls' empowerment and advance gender equality. By sharing skills, Cuso is building sustainable futures. Each year, they amplify their impact by mobilizing hundreds of professionals who volunteer their time and share their experiences.

### About the Role

After 60 years, Cuso International has embarked on a renewal process. In an era of rapidly changing contexts for development cooperation, they are looking for a Director of Program Strategy and Innovation (DPSI) who will be part of helping to chart a new course for the organization.

Reporting to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), as part of the Cuso International Leadership Team (LT), the DPSI is vital in integrating all programs, monitoring strategies, and partnerships in line with strategic priorities. They will build Cuso International's thematic expertise and influence while establishing a culture of program innovation and entrepreneurship across all teams. The DPSI will manage Cuso International's approaches to achieve the Strategic Plan objectives. They will ensure impact with programs that fit into the strategy. The person will provide thought leadership and represent the organization among partners, governments, and donors.

Working in tandem with the Director of Program Quality and Impact (DPQI):

The DPSI will work closely with the Director of Program Quality and Impact (DPQI). The DPSI focuses on strategic vision and facilitates the evolution of Cuso's programs, external engagement, and thought leadership. At the same time, the DPQI ensures that Cuso International delivers on its program commitments and champions program excellence.

Together, they will lead Cuso International's Program Department. As such, they are jointly responsible for reporting to the CEO and the Board on program-related matters, managing a high-performing team, establishing and monitoring performance goals, and maintaining high ethics and standards to deliver on the strategic plan. They are also responsible for building and leading a team of international cooperation professionals to advance social justice and contribute effectively to a better, fairer, and more sustainable world.

### Purpose of the Role

Cuso International seeks a leader driven by passion and principle to advance human progress in all its forms, including social justice, human rights, gender equality, environmental sustainability, and economic development. This person should have significant experience in the development sector, including work with civil society, governments, the private sector and other funders. The ideal candidate will understand the complexities of international cooperation.

They should relish challenges and be self-aware, with a track record of entrepreneurship in a career of progressively greater responsibilities while demonstrating effective teamwork. The candidate must have experience with organizational programs, finance, and human resource management. Superior communication skills, principled views, and a desire to bring people together for the greater good will be assets.

### Duties and Responsibilities

Complementing the DPQI responsibilities and collaborating with Leadership Teams, the DPSI holds direct ownership of these responsibilities:

- *Program strategy* – Set objectives and goals for the evolution of all programs to align with Cuso International's mission, values and strategy. Identify and research opportunities and shape the future growth of Cuso International's programs.
- *Partnerships* – Pursue partnerships in line with strategic plan priorities. Review and guide overall organizational partnership strategies. In developing new programs, ensure close consultation with partners and prominence of community ownership and priorities.
- *Program Development* – Guide, design and expand program development in line with Cuso International's priorities and partner needs. Motivate, train, and support country program teams to expand Cuso International's global programming by creating innovative ideas and partnerships based on local

needs. Ensure quality proposals are developed and funded by institutional donors.

- *Thought leadership and influence* – Organizational thematic program expertise, supporting program delivery, and thought leadership/advocacy. Ensure visibility, profile, and influence of Cuso International's programs and expertise with key strategic stakeholders (donors, sector leaders, partners) via presentations, events, coalition/network engagement, and donor meetings.
- *Donor relations* – Manage relationships with institutional donors in all forms (in-person, regular meetings, events, etc.). Liaise closely with Resource Development to support fundraising goals and approaches.
- *Canadian Program* – As Cuso International re-affirms its commitment to contribute constructively to reconciliation with Canada's Indigenous peoples, lead efforts to build partnerships and program strategy for programs in Canada and follow through to implementation.

## Skills and Experience

- Strong program conceptualization and leadership skills, including proven success in designing and securing funding for large programs (CAD 5M or more).
- Leadership experience, preferably in the international cooperation sector.
- Relevant progressive senior management and leadership experience.
- Solid educational background, including a master's in international development/studies or equivalent experience.
- Track record of achievement in partnership development and securing institutional funding for international cooperation programs.
- Demonstrated understanding and experience with Canadian, US, EU, UN, and other public and private donors and government funding modalities.
- Strong understanding of evolving sector norms for integrated and localized approaches.
- Experience building, leading, and managing large, high-performing teams globally.
- Experience managing budgets, tracking financial performance, and providing financial oversight for donor-funded projects in the non-profit sector.
- Experience with results-based management.
- For-impact expertise with work experience in developing countries in gender equality, inclusive livelihoods, social justice, sexual, reproductive, and health rights, climate and environmental sustainability, and similar.
- Excellent organizational skills with the ability to prioritize and manage multiple responsibilities.
- Demonstrated commitment to social justice, feminist principles, equality and human rights, climate action, and environmental sustainability.
- Strong oral and written communication skills; must be comfortable as a spokesperson for Cuso and representing Cuso with donors, partners, and key networks.
- Ability to leverage existing networks of donors and partners to strengthen Cuso networks in Canada and internationally.
- Strong computer skills and experience with Microsoft Office applications in a virtual office setting.
- Professional English fluency plus an additional language (Spanish or French) is mandatory.

If you are interested in this position and wish to give full flight to your feminist principles, you are welcome to apply your professional experience to an organization re-inventing itself for greater impact.

## Meta Fields