



AGA KHAN SCHOOLS

Brief for the appointment of
Director, Global Advancement & Partnerships



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Aga Khan Schools, an agency of the Aga Khan Development Network, is a globally connected education system comprising schools, hostels and non-formal education programmes that serves more than 120,000 learners annually across 12 countries in East Africa, the Middle East and South and Central Asia. Supported by over 7,000 teachers and staff, alongside dedicated volunteers, we are building a high-performing, high-impact global school system that advances educational excellence through values-based, globally recognised and locally relevant learning; develops ethical leaders; expands opportunities for every learner; and improves quality of life for individuals and communities.

For more than 120 years, the Aga Khan Schools has combined educational excellence with social impact. Guided by the values of the Aga Khan Development Network, our schools prepare young people to become ethical leaders, lifelong learners and engaged global citizens who contribute to more peaceful, prosperous and inclusive societies.

As we continue our transformation into an integrated global school system, the successful candidate will play a foundational role in building a globally integrated Advancement & Partnerships function, establishing strategies, capabilities, systems and operating models that will shape the long-term sustainability and influence of the Aga Khan Schools.

This is a rare opportunity to help shape the future of one of the world's most distinctive international education systems by advancing strategic partnerships, strengthening institutional influence, mobilising resources and enhancing the global reputation and impact of the Aga Khan Schools.

Location: Geneva, Switzerland or North America (with regular international travel)

Reports to: General Manager, Aga Khan Schools



AGA KHAN SCHOOLS

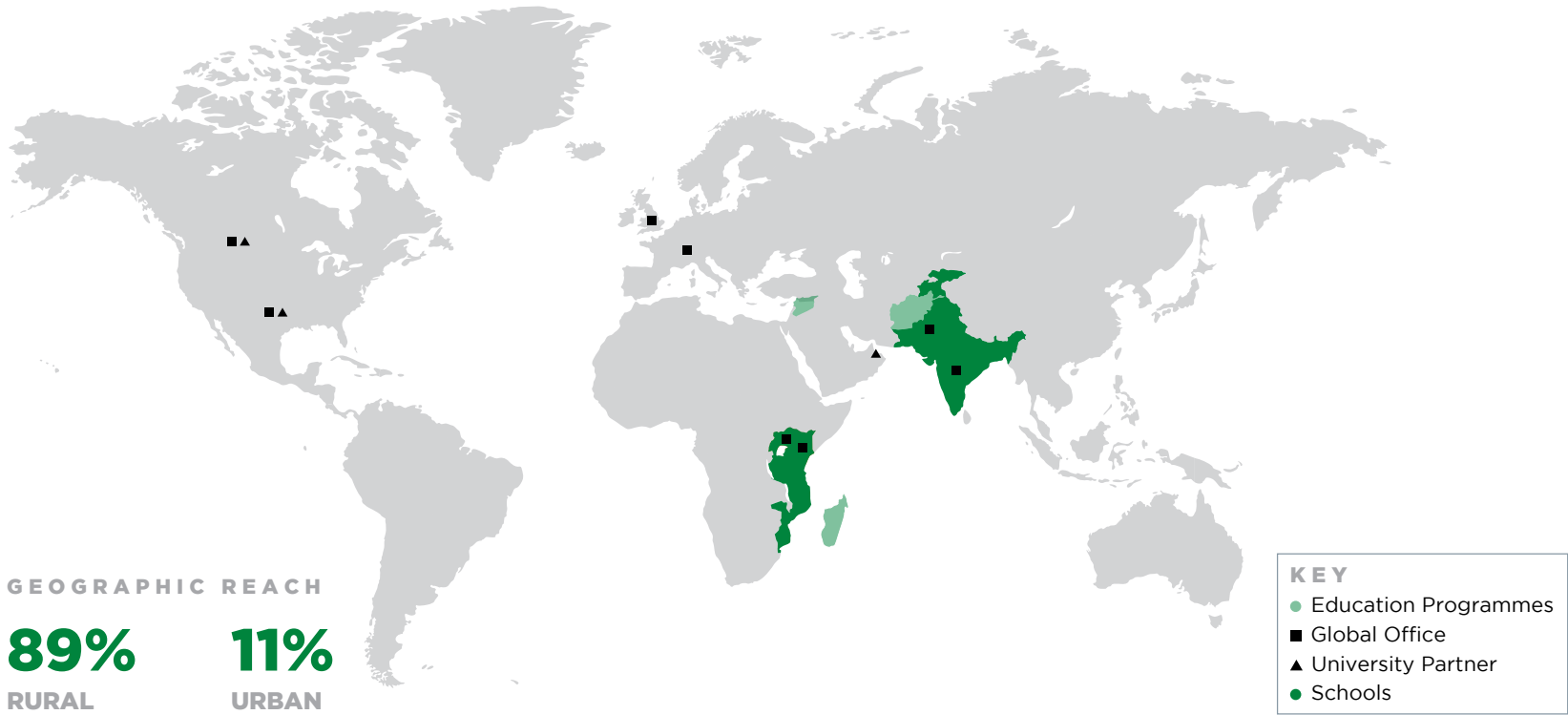
12
Countries

200
Schools

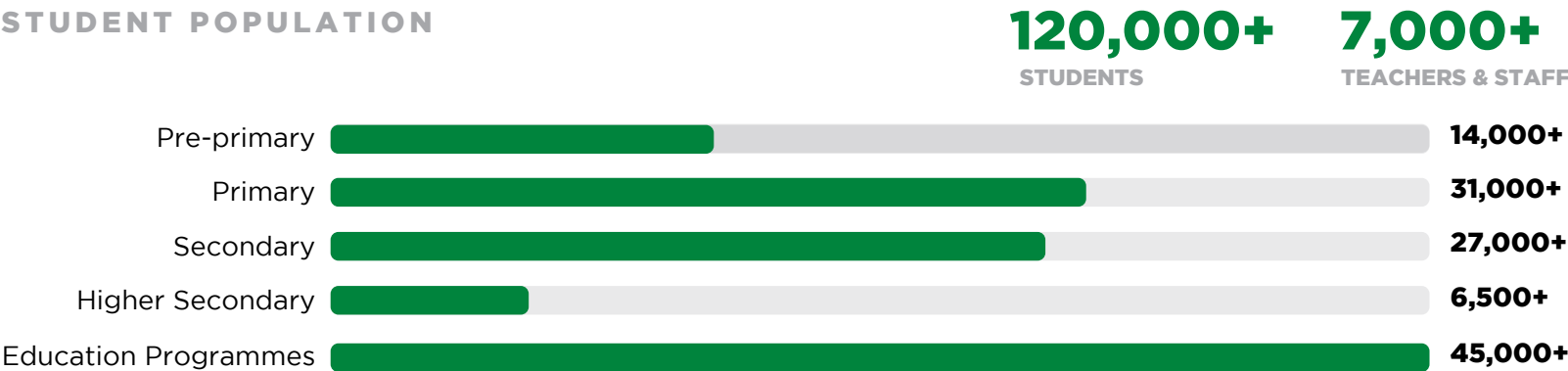
100+
Non-formal
Education
Programme
Centres

11
Hostels &
Residential
Programmes

A Global Education Network



STUDENT POPULATION



MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Thank you for your interest in the Aga Khan Schools (AKS).

We are at an exciting and defining moment in our history. For more than 120 years, AKS has provided high-quality, values-based education that has transformed the lives of generations of learners and contributed to stronger, more inclusive communities across the regions we serve. Today, we are building on this remarkable legacy as we shape the next chapter of AKS, creating a high-impact, high-performing and globally integrated school system that prepares young people not only for academic success, but for lives of purpose, ethical leadership and service.

We are bringing together our schools, people and expertise across countries to build **One AKS**: a globally connected education system that is values-based, globally recognised and locally relevant. While we are investing in new capabilities, systems and ways of working, our transformation is fundamentally about people: how we learn together, lead together and create greater impact together. We are strengthening educational quality, investing in our people, embracing innovation, building strategic partnerships and fostering a culture of collaboration, accountability and continuous improvement. Above all, we are expanding opportunities for every learner and improving quality of life for individuals, communities and society.

Achieving this ambition requires exceptional people. We are seeking leaders who combine strategic vision with humility, collaboration and a genuine commitment to service. These are not simply leadership positions; they are opportunities to shape the future of AKS.

The individuals appointed will help build new capabilities, strengthen our global system and create lasting impact for learners, educators and communities across multiple countries.

This is an opportunity to work alongside talented colleagues who share a common purpose and believe in the transformative power of education. It is an opportunity to contribute to one of the world's most distinctive international education systems, where academic excellence is inseparable from ethical leadership, pluralism and a commitment to improving quality of life.

If you are inspired by the opportunity to build, to lead and to make a meaningful difference, I encourage you to consider joining us on this journey. Together, we have an opportunity to shape the future of AKS and, through education, improve the quality of life of individuals, communities and society.

I look forward to learning more about you.



Dr Rahim Somani
General Manager,
Aga Khan Schools

THE OPPORTUNITY

The Director, Global Advancement & Partnerships is the senior leader responsible for advancing the resource mobilisation, strategic partnerships and external engagement agenda of AKS, while strengthening the organisation's strategic relationships and institutional influence.

Working closely with the General Manager, who establishes the organisational vision, strategic direction and priorities, the Director informs and shapes the organisation's advancement and partnerships agenda through strategic insight, relationship leadership and global engagement.

The Director translates the organisational vision and strategic priorities into an integrated Advancement & Partnerships Strategy that strengthens organisational sustainability, expands strategic relationships, enhances the reputation and influence of AKS, and mobilises the partnerships and resources required to advance its mission. The role leads a globally distributed team across four regions and multiple countries, providing strategic direction, coaching and performance oversight while strengthening local advancement capability and ensuring alignment to global priorities.

A key priority during the initial phase of the appointment will be establishing the global Advancement & Partnerships function, building organisational capability, implementing systems and frameworks, strengthening regional capacity, and developing a sustainable pipeline of partnerships and funding opportunities while delivering annual fundraising objectives.



The Director leads a diversified global advancement programme that supports the strategic priorities of AKS while delivering ambitious annual fundraising objectives, currently exceeding \$25 million, through philanthropy, institutional funding, corporate partnerships, foundations, alumni and community engagement.

As a member of the Global Leadership Team, the Director contributes to organisational strategy, institutional sustainability and system integration while strengthening the position of AKS as a globally recognised leader in values-based education.

Key Responsibilities

Lead Advancement and Resource Mobilisation

- Serve as the principal adviser to the General Manager and the Global Leadership Team on advancement, partnerships, external engagement and resource mobilisation.
- Provide strategic leadership for the global Advancement & Partnerships function, translating organisational priorities into an integrated Advancement & Partnerships Strategy.
- Develop and implement a diversified global resource mobilisation strategy that supports the strategic priorities and long-term sustainability of AKS.
- Lead philanthropy, fundraising and institutional resource mobilisation across the organisation through operating regions and global initiatives.
- Coordinate external resource mobilisation engagements, as appropriate, with the Aga Khan Foundation's Institutional Partnerships team to ensure strategic alignment, effective stewardship and collective impact across the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN).
- Cultivate, steward and strengthen relationships with major donors, philanthropists, foundations, corporations and institutional funders.
- Develop sustainable funding and philanthropic strategies that support educational programmes, innovation, scholarships, capital projects and strategic initiatives.
- Establish system-wide fundraising frameworks, standards and performance measures while enabling operating regions to achieve ambitious fundraising objectives.

- Monitor fundraising performance, identify emerging opportunities and risks, and recommend strategic actions to maximise organisational impact.
- Foster a culture of philanthropy, stewardship and shared responsibility across the AKS system.

Advance Strategic Partnerships

- Develop and strengthen strategic partnerships with governments, universities, foundations, corporations, development agencies, philanthropists and civil society organisations.
- Expand collaboration across AKDN to maximise collective impact and leverage institutional strengths.
- Build and sustain strategic partnerships that expand educational opportunities, strengthen innovation and enhance organisational sustainability and impact.
- Strengthen AKS' institutional influence by building relationships with policymakers, education leaders and international organisations.
- Represent AKS in strategic partnership discussions, national and international forums, and governance or stakeholder meetings as appropriate.
- Establish partnership frameworks that enable operating regions to develop high-impact local partnerships while maintaining a coherent global approach.



Advance Alumni and Community Engagement

- Develop and implement a global alumni engagement strategy that strengthens lifelong relationships with graduates, former staff and supporters of AKS.
- Foster alumni networks that promote mentoring, philanthropy, advocacy, professional engagement and lifelong connection.
- Strengthen engagement with parents, volunteers, communities and other key stakeholders.
- Build a culture of belonging that reflects the aspiration of *One Community. One Journey. One Future.*
- Promote alumni and community engagement as strategic contributors to educational excellence, institutional sustainability and long-term impact.

Strengthen Brand, Communications and Reputation

- Provide strategic leadership for the global communications, marketing and brand agenda.
- Develop and implement an integrated communications and brand strategy that reflects the mission, values and aspirations of AKS.
- Strengthen the global profile and reputation of AKS through strategic communications, compelling storytelling and thought leadership.
- Ensure a consistent institutional identity, messaging and brand across the global system.
- Showcase the achievements and impact of learners, educators, alumni and school communities.
- Strengthen digital communications and stakeholder engagement through effective use of technology, data and analytics.

Build Organisational Capability and Accountability

- Establish system-wide frameworks, standards, operating models and performance measures for advancement, partnerships, alumni engagement and communications.



- Lead the global Advancement & Partnerships function through regional team members, building organisational capability and fostering collaboration across the network.
- Develop implementation frameworks that enable operating regions to strengthen advancement, partnership and stakeholder engagement activities.
- Build organisational capability in fundraising, partnership development, alumni engagement, communications and stakeholder relationship management.
- Develop and maintain performance indicators, dashboards and reporting frameworks to monitor organisational performance and inform strategic decision-making.
- Foster a culture of collaboration, innovation, accountability and continuous improvement across the global Advancement & Partnerships function.

THE INDIVIDUAL

The successful candidate will be an accomplished and internationally experienced executive with a demonstrated record of advancing institutional growth, building strategic partnerships, mobilising significant resources and strengthening organisational reputation across complex, multi-stakeholder organisations.

They will combine strategic vision with entrepreneurial thinking, exceptional relationship-building skills and practical leadership. They will be equally comfortable influencing Boards and senior leaders, cultivating major donors and strategic partners, representing the organisation internationally, and leading organisational transformation through collaboration rather than direct authority. They will think strategically, build trusted relationships, inspire confidence and deliver measurable organisational impact.

The successful candidate will bring:

- A master's degree or equivalent professional qualification in business, communications, marketing, higher education, education, philanthropy, international development, public policy or a related discipline.
- At least 15 years of progressively senior leadership experience, including a minimum of 10 years in advancement, partnerships, philanthropy, fundraising, external relations, institutional development or related fields.



- A demonstrated record of developing and implementing organisation-wide advancement, partnership and resource mobilisation strategies that deliver measurable and sustainable outcomes.
- A proven track record of securing significant philanthropic, institutional and strategic partnership funding through the cultivation, negotiation and stewardship of major donors, foundations, corporations, governments and development partners.
- Demonstrated success in building and sustaining strategic partnerships with governments, universities, foundations, corporations, development agencies and other key stakeholders.
- Experience establishing, leading or transforming advancement, communications, partnership or external engagement functions, including building organisational capability, operating models and high-performing teams.

- Demonstrated success leading through influence, collaboration and partnership across complex matrix organisations where direct authority is limited.
- Experience presenting strategic proposals, fundraising initiatives and organisational performance updates to Boards, Trustees or governance committees.
- Experience working with volunteer-led organisations, membership-based institutions or complex stakeholder networks would be advantageous.
- Significant leadership experience within education, higher education or other mission-driven organisations is strongly preferred.
- Experience using CRM platforms, fundraising technologies, digital engagement tools and data analytics to strengthen resource mobilisation, stakeholder engagement and organisational performance.
- Outstanding communication, negotiation, influencing and relationship-building skills, together with strong commercial, financial and strategic judgement.
- A genuine commitment to values-based leadership, pluralism and improving quality of life through educational excellence.

The following would be considered an asset:

- International experience across multiple countries and cultures.
- Established networks across education, higher education, philanthropy, government, corporate and international development sectors.

Above all, the successful candidate will be an inspiring, collaborative and values-driven leader who can build enduring relationships, mobilise diverse stakeholders, secure significant philanthropic and strategic investment, and strengthen the long-term sustainability, influence and impact of AKS.

Our Commitment

AKS and AKDN are committed to fostering diversity and inclusion and welcome applications from qualified candidates regardless of gender, nationality, religion, ethnicity or disability.

Environment and climate are core strategic priorities and cross-cutting themes across AKDN. Working in some of the world's most climate-vulnerable communities, AKS is committed to environmental responsibility, reducing the impact of its operations and strengthening awareness and action through education.

AKS is firmly committed to safeguarding and promoting the safety and well-being of children and staff. All appointments are subject to appropriate safeguarding checks, and all employees and volunteers are required to comply with the AKS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.





Aga Khan Education Service, Pakistan



HOW TO APPLY

Please apply via AKDN's website here.

Deadline to apply: 27 September 2026



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www.agakhanschools.org | www.agakhanacademies.org