

## Job Description

# Managing Director

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### SUMMARY OF THE ROLE

**Purpose:** To lead the next phase of Wasafiri's growth, innovation and impact

**Reporting To:** Ian Randall, Chair of the Board

**Salary:** GBP75-90,000 plus benefits. Depending on sales and/or delivery targets

**Working Arrangements:** Flexible - minimum 80% full time

**Location:** Must live within 1-2 hours travel of our UK or Kenya offices

**Travel:** Some travel across office locations when travel restrictions ease.

## An exciting role for a purpose-driven leader

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### You'll be helping build a more peaceful, equitable & sustainable world

Following 11 years at the forefront of tackling some of the world's most complex problems, we're excited to launch this search for a new Managing Director to lead the next phase of our growth, innovation and impact.

This is a wonderful opportunity to deliver meaningful change at scale – ideal for a globally-minded, entrepreneurial and purpose-driven leader, with a passion for helping build a more peaceful, equitable and sustainable world.

Since our founding, we've grown into a respected, global consultancy, incubator and institute - helping leaders and organisations create system-level change in the face of some of the world's most complex problems. From our offices in Kenya, UK and the USA, we bring a well-established track record of helping our clients achieve impact at scale on the systems related to conflict and governance, extreme poverty, food insecurity, and environmental sustainability.

Wasafiri, means "travellers" in Swahili, and was inspired by the ethos that, "*traveller, there is no path: we make the path as we walk together*<sup>1</sup>." This statement evokes the spirit of how we work; as trusted adviser, collaborator, partner and systems-change entrepreneur, seeking transformative action. Our clients come from across the Private, Government, Philanthropic

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the works of Antonio Machado in *Campos de Castilla*. See [here](#) for more.

and Non-Profit sectors and value us for our ability to bring a practical approach to creating system-level change, for our collaborative way of working, our operational excellence and professional approach.

### Here's why we think you'll love the role

**Wasafiri has a decade of transformative impact:** We work with respected institutions spanning the development, government and private sectors to drive change at scale. For instance, we've partnered with the World Economic Forum to unlock [inclusive private sector investment](#) across Africa, worked with Yara to incubate [the leading youth agripreneurship](#) initiative on the continent, helped the UK's National Grid devise its [Net Zero Carbon Strategy](#), worked with the Government of Kenya to design the country's [first-ever poverty graduation policy](#), and partnered with FCDO to [counter the threat of violent extremism](#) across East Africa.

**Wasafiri is a systems-change thought leader and incubator:** Our Institute harvests learning from our work on the front lines. Our incubation advisory services help innovate and unlock new pathways to scalable impact. We're constantly working with systems-change leaders, thinkers and practitioners to deepen our understanding of how to generate positive impact at scale. We've developed [Systemcraft](#) as a framework to help decision makers identify new entry points and opportunities for systems-change.

**Wasafiri practices a different way of doing business:** Our clients, partners, staff and consultants are all valued members of Wasafiri. Together, we're proud to have been honoured by B-Corporation as a '[Best for the World Company](#)' for helping tackle deep problems such as poverty, insecurity and inequality. We're also a committed member of the [UN Global Compact](#), and are continuously exploring how to become a more adaptive and innovative [human-centred organisation](#). As an organisation we draw on principles of self-management and human-centric organisational design. We have a distributed leadership approach and an entrepreneurial culture that encourages participation in all aspects of Wasafiri's strategic development.

## We're looking for a very special person

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### Your energy and approach

We have a unique culture and way of working. To thrive here you'll feel at home in an informal work environment, have a collaborative leadership style, an entrepreneurial hunger to make things happen and a commitment to high quality in all you do. In particular, you'll bring;

**A hunger to grow our organisation and increase our impact:** We have an enviable track record and much to build on, so you'll share our ambition for growing our organisation, and increasing the impact we have on complex problems. Into this you'll be excited to bring your own vision for the next stage of our journey, and an energy to make it happen.

**An eagerness to build upon our collective team culture:** You're someone who recognises that your success is bound up in the success of the wider team, who is brilliant to work with, and who sees their contribution as part of a wider effort. You'll be excited to build deep relationships with the people you work with, and to invest in their wellbeing and development.

**An understanding of what it takes to deliver with quality:** You're someone driven by the desire to continually improve, who understands what quality looks like, and knows what it takes to deliver and operate with the highest level of professional integrity and standards.

**A desire to deepen our agile and devolved way of working:** You will be comfortable in an environment shaped by roles and responsibilities rather than hierarchy, where decisions are devolved to those accountable for their areas of responsibility.

## **The experience you'll bring**

This is a demanding role that will come with high expectations. We're looking for someone who will bring a track record of working across cultures with diverse teams to lead impactful projects and initiatives. You'll understand how to work effectively with a wide cross-section of organisations, seeking to enhance their impact on complex social and environmental challenges, often working within unique pressures and constraints. In particular, you'll bring;

**Senior leadership and decision-making experience:** You will have hard-won experience of decision-making at senior and strategic levels. You'll deeply understand the nature of the human, financial, operational and strategic challenges that come with leading an organisation; you will be able to point to a record of quality decision-making in navigating tough choices.

**Deep experience of our work and the context in which we work:** You will have years of being immersed in some of the areas we work in, and be able to highlight a record of impact in areas we're passionate about, whether they relate to conflict and governance, food systems or inclusive growth, or environmental sustainability.

**Entrepreneurial leadership & commercial savvy:** We're a purpose-led, impact-driven business; relentlessly exploring and innovating new ways to grow our impact in ways that are financially sustainable and which strengthen Wasafiri. You'll bring experience innovating, building, commercially viable organisations or initiatives which deliver social outcomes. As such, you'll be financially literate, with the skills and experience to oversee the financial performance of the business.

**Familiarity with systems-based approaches to change:** We are defined as much by our thought leadership as by our impact on complex problems. Ideally, you'll bring experience in applying systems or design-based approaches to change at scale; but what is essential is your intellectual curiosity and desire to deepen our learning about how to contribute to meaningful change on complex problems.

**Experience working globally, virtually and across cultures:** We're a vibrant, diverse team of staff and consultants living and working across four continents. You'll be someone deeply comfortable working cross-culturally, and internationally, particularly within Africa and Europe.

**Professional client-centric consulting experience:** We're a team that works with a wide range of respected organisations; government agencies, global corporates, multistakeholder platforms, international NGOs, development contractors. You'll know how to engage effectively and professionally at senior levels, with experience overseeing and delivering complex client assignments and projects.

**Communication and representative skills:** Externally, you'll be a key ambassador for Wasafiri. Internally, you'll be our most senior member of staff. We'll expect outstanding representative,

relationship and communication skills, and an ability to navigate sensitive issues and agendas. Fluency in English is essential.

## Your most important responsibilities

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**Co-define and deliver the next stage of our strategy and ambition:** Whilst we have a fantastic platform to build from, we're also looking for new energy, vision and leadership for the next stage of Wasafiri's growth. We have a broad strategy in place that has been developed by the team and Board shaped around three pillars of Impact, Finances and People. You will be responsible for both delivering the strategy and stretching us further in terms of the impact we can have, creating the culture we want and building a resilient financial foundation.

**Identify and position us for new strategic opportunities:** As a consultancy, institute and incubator, we will look for you to bring new ideas and drive for positioning ourselves for growth and impact. This could include contributing to our thought-leadership, identifying new commercial opportunities, growing our networks and profile in new markets and impact areas.

**Contributing to developing new business and leading projects:** The best way to contribute to the impact we have is by having a hands-on role. So we will look for you to work alongside our commercial team to help generate new business. You might also play a role in designing, directing and overseeing a number of client-facing projects in a delivery role. In either case we would see you having associated sales or delivery targets, designed to help you stay connected with the front lines of our work and be hands on with the impact we create.

**Evolving our systems-change practice:** We have a decade of experience creating imperfect change in the face of some of the world's most complex problems; and we still have much to learn. We seek someone who will work with the Director of Wasafiri's Institute to help develop our practice and understanding of '*how change happens*', ensuring we continue to learn from the work we do and push the ambition for the change we are part of.

**Contributing to our team, culture and distinctive way of working:** We're on a continual journey to evolve our way of working and strengthen our culture, with the wellbeing of staff and consultants at the heart of what makes us special. We will look to you to play a key role in this journey; you'll be proactively strengthening relationships across the organisation, helping us improve our management of and support for people, and contributing to our collective cultural development.

## Further information

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### Location

We have offices in Brighton UK, Asheville USA and Nairobi Kenya. Whilst we are open to flexible working arrangements, proximity to either our UK or Kenya offices is essential. Therefore we will only consider applications from people based within 1-2 hours travel of either of these offices.

### Compensation and benefits

**Salary:** Your salary will be based on experience, as well as the extent of your sales and delivery targets. We anticipate it to be within the range of GBP 75,000-90,000 plus package.

**Benefits:** Our standard company-wide international health insurance plan, retirement benefits and communication stipend.

**Paid leave** Employees have roughly 23 days of paid time off each year.

**Relocation:** For the right person we would consider relocation, but do not offer family packages.

### Further Information

#### How to apply:

1. Download and complete a brief application form. Please note that we will not accept submissions without a completed application form.
2. Include a CV that is not longer than 4 pages.
3. Please submit the application form and CV to [opportunities@wasafirihub.com](mailto:opportunities@wasafirihub.com)

#### Application process:

1. Closing date for applications: Friday 16 October
2. Interviews: November
3. Appointment: December
4. Likely start date: Tbd depending upon availability

#### Selection process:

1. We will review applications as they arrive.
2. Completion of satisfactory business references and background checks are essential conditions of employment.

**Ensuring equality of access:** Wasafiri values the unique skills and experiences each individual brings to the organisation and we are committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive and accessible environment for everyone.

**Queries:** If you have any queries on any aspect of the recruitment process, need additional information, or would like to have an informal discussion, please contact Kate Simpson by emailing [opportunities@wasafirihub.com](mailto:opportunities@wasafirihub.com).