

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO)

Location:	Mostly at the Saïd Foundation office in central London, with some scope for remote working. Occasional international travel to the Levant region where deemed safe.
Responsible to:	The Chairman and Board of Trustees.
Line management:	Scholarships Programme Manager, Financial Controller, Finance and Programme Administrator.
Salary:	£80,000 - £85,000 pro rata.
Job type:	Part-time (three days a week), permanent.

ABOUT THE ROLE

We are looking for an experienced organisational manager, who will mentor our small and highly motivated team and bring proven expertise around financial and people management and governance as well as of building relationships with different stakeholders and providing strong accountability to charity trustees. You will have an understanding of the Levant region of the Middle East, a commitment to bridge building and respect across cultures and a conviction that education can change lives for the better, create enlightened and effective leadership and benefit wider society.

Our outgoing CEO originally came to the UK as a Saïd Foundation Scholar to study at Oxford University and has worked for the Foundation for over six years. He is leaving to return to Syria. We are looking for an experienced manager to carry on his work in leading our team, maintaining close relationships with our Trustees, partners and students and ensuring that the Foundation's programmes are run to the highest standards.

ABOUT THE SAÏD FOUNDATION

The Saïd Foundation was established as a non-sectarian and non-political charity in 1982 by Wafic and Rosemary Saïd to bring positive and lasting change to the lives of children, young people and the wider community with a focus on the Levant region of the Middle East and on the UK, and on education as a powerful tool to make change. It is governed by a Board of Trustees and the Board's Student, Projects, Audit and Investments Committees. Khaled Saïd has just become Chair of the Board.

Since 1984, our longest-standing programme, the **Scholarships Programme**, has offered opportunities to outstanding individuals with leadership potential to be drivers of positive change within our target countries of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine. It brings these change agents to the UK to study for Master's degrees at exceptional universities and maintains close contact with them during their studies and beyond. Our amazing community of over 700 alumni have gone on to become outstanding leaders in many fields and to build bridges and respect across cultures.

The Foundation's founder, Wafic Saïd, is also the founder of **Oxford University's Saïd Business School**, now one of the world's leading business schools. The Saïd Business School Foundation (SBSF), also an English charity, was established in 1998 to support the development of the School in its pursuit of excellence. Its Strategic Development Fund provides grants in support of initiatives that will have strategic value to the development of the School. SBSF is funded and administered by the Saïd Foundation.

The Foundation's **humanitarian work** has responded to the shifting needs of the region over immensely challenging times. Since 2011, it has focused on supporting Syrian refugee communities in Lebanon and Jordan through grants to major international non-governmental organisations. Most recently, it has provided support for Gazan children orphaned by the

destruction of their homeland. Before the conflict in Syria began, the Foundation ran a capacity-building programme across the country for those working to support Syria's disabled children. It helped to set up a sister organisation in Syria, the Saïd Foundation for Development, which will take forward future work in Syria and is now considering how to support the needs of a post-Assad Syria.

In recent years, the Foundation has also worked to promote **better health outcomes** for people everywhere by making grants to innovative and impactful projects at world-leading medical research institutions based in the UK and known to the Saïd family.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job purpose:

To lead a small, motivated team in the best-practice implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Foundation's programmes and grants and to build strong relationships with the Foundation's Trustees, partners and scholars.

Responsibilities:

1. Programme and grant management

- a) To oversee the management of the scholarships programme, ensuring the selection of outstanding students from the Levant region and the Foundation's duty of care to them while they are in the UK.
- b) To oversee the Foundation's grant-making programmes, ensuring that grants agreed by the Trustees are informed by rigorous due diligence and are monitored effectively.
- c) To provide guidance as necessary to the Board and staff of the Saïd Foundation for Development in Syria on governance and project management matters.
- d) To oversee the evaluation of the scholarships programme periodically, and grant-funded projects as necessary, to ensure they achieve their intended objectives and apply learning to their improvement.

2. Organisation and staff management

- a) To devise and implement annual plans for implementation of the Foundation's work, define the level and timing of human and other resources required to deliver the plans and develop key performance indicators to report progress against plans to the Board.
- b) To foster a supportive work culture, managing staff in line with best human resource practice and ensuring high levels of motivation and strong performance.
- c) To recruit staff, when necessary.
- d) To oversee the effective operation of all office systems, including IT and the scholarships platform and database, and introduce improvements (for example, in the use of AI).
- e) To ensure that health and safety aspects are taken into account appropriately when the Foundation's staff, students and Trustees are travelling in connection with the Foundation's activities.

3. Governance and Trustees

- a) To meet regularly with the Chairman to ensure he is fully informed of developments and to support planning for Board and Committee deliberations.
- b) To engage Trustees actively, drawing on their expertise to enhance the work of the Foundation, and report to them regularly on the Foundation's work.
- c) With the help of other staff, to make recommendations to the Foundation's Committees on their focus areas and ensure high quality papers for Board and Committee meetings and timely follow up of action points.

- d) To remain up to date with developments in charity governance and regulation to ensure that the Foundation follows best practice and is compliant with regulations.
- e) To identify key risks to the Foundation's funding, operation and reputation, ensuring that controls are in place for their mitigation and their inclusion in the risk register.

4. Financial, accounting and investment matters (with the Financial Controller)

- a) To ensure that accurate annual budgets for the Foundation's programmes, staff, administration and property management costs are approved by the Trustees and that cash flow projections support decision-making on the timely funding of the Foundation.
- b) To ensure that monthly management accounts and annual statutory accounts provide all necessary information for accountability and management purposes.
- c) To oversee rigorous internal controls for the Foundation's payments and receipts.
- d) To support the Investment Committee in ensuring the effective management and secure custody of the Foundation's financial and property assets and monitoring of the performance of these investments.

5. Saïd Business School Foundation (SBSF)

- a) To ensure that all Strategic Development Fund (and other) grants meet the objectives agreed with the School and monitor the impact of the grants through the School's reporting.
- b) To oversee high-quality reporting to SBSF's Board of Directors and its Committees including on the overall development and performance of the School.
- c) To monitor the continuing fulfilment of undertakings made to SBSF by Oxford University so that any departure from these undertakings can be assessed by the Board.
- d) To ensure that all SBSF's accounting and other regulatory requirements are met.

6. Representing the Foundation

- a) To represent the Foundation externally at events and meetings and ensure that its own events provide a warm, welcoming and inspiring experience for invitees.
- b) To build enduring relationships of trust with existing and new partners.
- c) To ensure that the Foundation's engagement with its students and alumni creates a strong sense of belonging to the Saïd Foundation "family".

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Knowledge, skills and experience

Essential

- a) Strong relationship building skills with a wide range of people (such as Trustees, partners and students).
- b) Experience of managing, motivating and mentoring a team to achieve their potential.
- c) Excellent and engaging communications and presentation skills, in person and in writing.
- d) Strong experience of the UK charity sector and charity regulation and governance.
- e) Proven experience in budget setting, financial planning, and financial management.
- f) Excellent organisation and management skills, with the ability to manage a number of tasks at the same time.
- g) An understanding, and personal experience, of the Levant region of the Middle East.
- h) An existing and unrestricted right to work in the UK.

Desirable

- i) Experience of recruiting exceptional students and of supporting their needs as overseas students.

- j) Experience of developing, implementing and delivering educational and/or humanitarian programmes.
- k) Experience in grant making, including due diligence, agreement management, monitoring and evaluation.

Attributes

- a) A commitment to bridge building and respect across cultures.
- b) A conviction that education can change lives for the better, create enlightened and effective leadership and benefit wider society.
- c) An adaptable approach including the flexibility to undertake a wide range of tasks.
- d) A “can do” attitude, enthusiasm, resilience and energy.
- e) Integrity, humility and discretion.

OTHER BENEFITS

- Employer’s pension contribution of 5% of salary.
- 25 days’ holiday in addition to bank holidays.
- Private health insurance.

HOW TO APPLY AND RECRUITMENT PROCESS

To apply, please email (to Hani Jesri at hanijesri@saidfoundation.org) a CV outlining your relevant experience, including how it meets the requirements of the job description, along with a cover letter of no more than two pages explaining your interest in the role and addressing the criteria set out in the person specification.

Deadline for applications: Monday 9 March 2026 at 10:00 UK time.

Interviews: First interviews on 19 and 20 March; second interviews on 23 and 25 March. First interviews will be in person in central London or, if necessary, by video call depending on candidates’ ability to travel. Second interviews will be in person in central London.

We are happy to offer informal, pre-application conversations about the role. If you would like to have a conversation, please email hanijesri@saidfoundation.org.