



AGA KHAN FOUNDATION  
CANADA

## Terms of Reference

### Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Aga Khan Foundation Canada

#### Leadership Opportunity

This is a significant leadership opportunity to guide one of Canada's leading global development organizations at a time of important institutional transition and opportunity. The next CEO of Aga Khan Foundation Canada will be expected to build on AKFC's strong reputation, deepen its Canadian partnerships, broaden and diversify its resource base, and help position the organization for its next phase of impact within Canada and across the Aga Khan Development Network.

The successful candidate will combine strategic judgment, external presence, operational discipline, and a strong commitment to AKFC's mission. They will bring the ability to work effectively across Canadian public, philanthropic, community, and institutional contexts while also contributing constructively to the global priorities and operating culture of AKF and the broader AKDN.

#### Overview

Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC) is a leading Canadian global development organization and a member of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), a group of private, non-denominational agencies working to improve quality of life in some of the world's most vulnerable regions. AKFC works with Canadian and international partners to advance inclusive and sustainable development, mobilize resources, deepen public understanding of global development, and strengthen Canada's engagement with the AKDN's work across Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

Based in Ottawa, the CEO is charged with the overall leadership and management of AKFC, developing and executing an ambitious strategic vision that responds to Canadian opportunities and priorities while remaining closely aligned with AKF and AKDN global directions. The CEO ensures that AKFC operates with clear strategic focus, a healthy and high-performing organizational culture, strong governance, and rigorous management across its programmatic, partnership, resource development, communications, and corporate functions.

The CEO will position AKFC as a trusted partner of choice for Canadian institutions, donors, communities, and public audiences relevant to AKDN priorities. The role requires sustained focus on strengthening AKFC's public profile, expanding and diversifying resource mobilization, advancing strategic partnerships with government and institutional actors, and building broad-based support for the AKDN's global quality of life mission. The CEO will lead AKFC's external relations across Canada and work closely with AKF, AKDN agencies, the leaders of the Ismaili community, the Board, National

Committee, volunteers, and other partners to contribute to coherent outreach, partnership, and fundraising efforts.

## Priorities and Responsibilities

- 1. Organizational leadership.** Develop, articulate, and implement AKFC's strategic direction in the context of broader AKF and AKDN global priorities. Build and lead a strong team of professional staff and volunteers, and foster an organization committed to excellence, collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement. Lead the organization in identifying and adopting appropriate technologies that enhance program quality, evidence, learning, collaboration, and operational performance. Ensure appropriate governance through effective engagement of the Board and National Committee, rigorous human resources management, disciplined planning and execution, and a vibrant and productive organizational culture.
- 2. External relations and communications.** Oversee communications, public engagement, and marketing to Canadian audiences, including developing strategies to position AKFC with current and potential partners, donors, policymakers, communities, and public audiences relevant to AKFC's objectives. Work with AKF and AKDN communications colleagues to shape content that draws from Canadian-supported and broader AKDN initiatives to inspire, inform, and activate current and potential supporters. Build strategic platforms to engage donors, volunteers, supporters, influencers, and institutional partners across Canada.
- 3. Institutional partnerships and resource mobilization.** In close collaboration with AKF, AKDN partners, and relevant regional and global colleagues, strengthen AKFC's relationships with Global Affairs Canada, other government departments and agencies, foundations, universities, and other institutional partners based in Canada. Contribute to partnership strategy, pipeline development, policy engagement, and senior-level relationship management in support of AKFC's development priorities and AKDN's broader objectives.
- 4. Individual and corporate fundraising.** Drive growth of AKFC's individual, corporate, and community-based fundraising in support of the AKDN's global development work. Working closely with the Board, National Committee, senior volunteers, and staff, lead the development and execution of strategies to sustain the generosity of current donors while establishing and scaling new funding channels that broaden the donor base, deepen engagement, and position AKFC for long-term growth and resilience across funding and economic cycles. Strengthen donor stewardship, legacy giving, corporate partnerships, campaigns, events, and other initiatives that mobilize Canadian support for AKFC's mission.
- 5. Lead and/or support new initiatives.** As the AKDN presence in Canada grows through new institutional activities and engagements, leverage AKFC's institutional infrastructure, track record, financial strength, and capabilities to contribute to the overall architecture of these new initiatives, and to take the lead on those as agreed to by the Board.
- 6. Financial management and corporate services.** Provide executive oversight of AKFC's financial management, budgeting, planning, risk management, compliance, human resources, technology, facilities, and other corporate functions, including the adoption of new digital tools, data systems, and emerging technologies to improve efficiency, scale impact, and create opportunities for speed, agility, and collaboration. Work closely with senior finance, legal, and operations leaders to ensure high standards of performance, regulatory compliance, stewardship of resources, internal controls,

and transparent reporting to the Board, National Committee, AKF, donors, and other key stakeholders. Contribute to the evolution of the AKDN's overall presence in Canada through risk-aware and practical legal structuring and financial stewardship.

## Reporting lines

The CEO's primary reporting line is to the President of AKF's head office in Geneva, with ongoing engagement of the Geneva Senior Management Team to ensure alignment with global organizational priorities. The AKF Board governs and provides strategic direction for AKF globally, including its individual country offices. The AKFC Board and National Committee provide local oversight, statutory governance, and strategic guidance in Canada, and for these purposes, the CEO has a reporting line to the Board Chair and relevant governance bodies.

## Profile and Qualifications

A seasoned executive with strong experience and interest in external relations, fundraising, communications, institutional partnerships, and organizational leadership; at least 5–7 years of senior leadership experience; and familiarity with the AKDN context and/or global development issues. Specifically,

1. Experience in executive management, preferably in roles with significant external engagement, fundraising, partnership, and/or communications responsibilities, including financial oversight, budget management, people leadership, and board relations. Completion of a graduate degree in a relevant field is required, reflecting the leadership and expertise expected of this role.
2. Track record in mobilizing funding and strategic partnerships with a wide variety of actors to drive results.
3. Track record in leading medium-sized teams to develop strategy, set priorities, build business plans, and drive results. Experience working effectively with volunteer leaders, committees, and community-based networks is a strong asset. Interest and track record in understanding and deploying new technologies in creative and impactful ways to improve operations and program impact.
4. Collaboration and interpersonal skills to operate effectively within a multi-level governance framework, regional and global management structures, and an expansive network of staff, volunteers, donors, institutional partners, and AKDN colleagues. Successful experience in a matrix structure is an asset. Demonstrated ability to build and sustain relationships across diverse groups in a pluralistic, diplomatic, and respectful way will be critical.
5. Ability to represent AKFC and AKDN entities effectively across a wide variety of Canadian and international contexts and audiences, including government, philanthropy, civil society, community, academic, and public-facing settings. Proficiency in both English and French is considered a strong asset.
6. Knowledge of AKDN and familiarity with, and enthusiasm for, global development, public policy, international cooperation, pluralism, and Canada's role in global affairs are strong assets. Drive to make a difference and contribute to improved quality of life.

## Apply

Qualified applicants who are authorized to work in Canada are invited to submit a cover letter and resume via the [AKDN Career Centre](#).

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Short-listed candidates will be invited to participate in the next stages of the selection process.

Deadline for submissions: **Tuesday October 13, 2026**

*Please note that applicants must be currently eligible to work in Canada. The position is based in Ottawa and will require regular presence at the Delegation of the Ismaili Imam.*

*AKFC is committed to advancing gender equality and inclusion through our programming and operations in Canada and overseas. AKFC requires all employees to review and abide by the [AKFC Gender Equality Policy](#).*

*AKFC recognizes the importance of [safeguarding](#) and is committed to ensuring it manages a wide range of risks such that beneficiaries, staff, other associates, and the organization as a whole are kept safe from harm.*

*AKFC welcomes and encourages applications from people with disabilities. Accommodations are available on request for candidates taking part in all aspects of the selection process.*

*AKFC does not use artificial intelligence tools to assess or select applicants during the recruitment process. All application reviews and hiring decisions are conducted by selection committee. AI tools may be used in drafting communication, editing or interview question sourcing from time to time.*