

Request for Proposals – HSG Secretariat

Introduction

[Health Systems Global \(HSG\)](#) is a diverse, global membership society of researchers, decision-makers and implementers who are dedicated to promoting health policy and systems research (HPSR) and knowledge generation. It was created as a legal entity in November 2012 and currently is incorporated in Switzerland. A summary of HSG’s work is available in its [annual report](#) and its aspirations are outlined in the [strategic plan 2022-2026](#). Currently, a 15-person elected Board governs HSG with members from across the globe featured [here](#) and supported by the HSG Secretariat. The current [HSG Secretariat](#) is currently operated by the [Canadian Association for Global Health](#) under the leadership of its Executive Director.

Working under the guidance and supervision of the HSG Board, the Secretariat with an Executive Director, is accountable for the implementation of the strategic vision set out by the Board. The Secretariat is responsible for the overall management of HSG’s operational, programmatic, and administrative functions. The Secretariat also maintains strong relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders that are essential collaborators in HSG’s efforts. The Secretariat is expected to exemplify values of high ethical standards, integrity, and fairness while acting in the best interests of HSG in all contexts and circumstances.

The HSG Board has started planning for a Secretariat transition. This document sets out the request for proposals (RFP) from eligible applicants to host the new Secretariat. A new Secretariat is expected start effective November 1st, 2023 (the legal transition date).

The duties and responsibilities of the HSG Secretariat

The Secretariat, through its Executive Director, reports to the HSG Board. Working on the strategic priorities established by HSG’s Board, the Secretariat and the Executive Director will work closely with the leadership of the Board and its standing committees and/or working groups, in fulfilling the Secretariat’s primary responsibilities in four areas, as set out below.

a) Managing finances, people and systems	<p><i>Operational management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Ensure that HSG’s organizational structure, operational policies and other business processes are sound and able to effectively monitor and successfully implement the strategic priorities defined by the Board and the membership;b) Supervise the performance of Secretariat personnel and address accompanying human-resource matters;c) Engender a positive work environment that facilitates collaboration and information sharing with the Board and membership; andd) Effectively manage operational issues to deliver on the mandate of HSG. <p><i>Financial management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">e) Develop annual operational budgets (including the operating costs of the Secretariat, such as salaries, travel costs, and website and membership database-related costs) for Board review and approval that link to operational work plans;f) Monitor and report on the Board approved budget implementation;
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	<p>g) Enter into and manage contracts regarding the acquisition of goods and services as required to perform the functions of the Secretariat and/or organization of the biennial symposium; and</p> <p>h) Oversee the management and implementation of all organizational contracts according to HSG’s (or host institution’s) procurement systems and practices.</p> <p><i>Official representation</i></p> <p>i) Represent HSG before any competent authority, when delegated by the Chair of the Board; and</p> <p>j) Represent the Secretariat as delegated, ensuring HSG’s role within the global health architecture is well understood, inter alia through the execution of an active social media and communication strategy.</p>
<p>b) Partner engagement</p>	<p>The Secretariat and Executive Director is responsible for building and maintaining effective alliances. This includes effective interactions with and responsiveness to the full range of public and private partners that are key stakeholders, in particular for the Global Symposium on Health Systems Research.</p> <p>To safeguard and continually strengthen the effectiveness, reputation and profile of HSG, the Secretariat through the Executive Director will work closely with the Board and its committees to:</p> <p>a) Build and maintain effective alliances and operational collaborations with public and private partners, such as governments, United Nations agencies, bilateral donors, non-governmental organizations, academic and research institutions, business sector and civil society actors;</p> <p>b) Represent HSG and its work with external stakeholders to build effective partnerships with public and private entities to support the work of the Society, in particular, the Global Symposium on Health Systems Research.</p>
<p>c) Working with the Board and mobilizing resources</p>	<p>To support the Board in its strategic leadership of the Society, the Secretariat will:</p> <p>a) Report to the Board on the strategic, operational, administrative and financial aspects of HSG quarterly;</p> <p>b) Ensure that the Board is made aware, in a timely way, of critical strategic and other operational and/or financial challenges the Secretariat is encountering in the course of its work;</p> <p>c) Ensure effective and timely preparation and distribution of all materials, such as the minutes and agenda supporting documents, following Board mandated policies and procedures;</p> <p>d) Communicate Board decisions to the Secretariat staff, partners and the membership, as relevant;</p> <p>e) Work with the Board to provide technical and programmatic input into the work of the Board sub-Committees and Working Groups and the Global Symposium on Health Systems Research; and</p> <p>f) Participate in the Global Symposium secretariat and as ex-officio member on its Executive Committee; joining other committees and fulfilling other duties as agreed on by the Board or required by the task.</p>

	<p>To support the Board in its core function of mobilizing public and private sector donors to support the overall mission and functioning of HSG including the Global Symposium, the Secretariat led by the Executive Director will:</p> <p>g) Support resource mobilization for HSG and the Global Symposia through development and implementation of resource mobilization strategies. By illustration, the Secretariat will identify and make suggestions to potential funders, actively seeking funding in agreement with the Board as well as the Symposium Executive Committee and Symposium fundraising lead.</p> <p>h) Maintain communication and provide documentation to public and private donors regarding HSG operations to ensure confidence in the Society's performance accountability.</p>
d) Working with the members of Health Systems Global	<p>Health Systems Global is a membership-driven society. The Secretariat will:</p> <p>a) Manage member registration and payments;</p> <p>b) Ensure regular communication with the membership including timely response to queries and comments from members and other communications, as requested by the Board including management of newsletter and blogs;</p> <p>c) Support member-led Thematic Working Groups; and</p> <p>d) Prepare and manage the annual General Assembly, including Board elections and the annual report.</p>
e) Communications and Marketing	<p>The Secretariat likely through a communications officer/manager will be responsible for the functions listed below:</p> <p>a) Website management (HSG & HSR)</p> <p>b) Monthly newsletter development</p> <p>c) Social media management</p> <p>d) Annual report development</p> <p>e) HSG comms support to board, TWGs, RNs)</p> <p>f) HSR comms</p> <p>g) Advocacy campaigns</p>

The capacity of the Secretariat

Health Systems Global seeks to maintain its global reach in each region of the world. Any organization which is proposed to host the Secretariat, should be able to demonstrate the following capacities:

Essential:

1. As English is the language of business of HSG, all members should be fluent in English
2. The ability and willingness to operate globally and in a sustained manner across 12 different time zones
3. Stable institutional structures that support excellent record keeping (membership, financial and administrative records, etc.) and prudent financial management policies and systems
4. Functional, reliable and high-speed internet connectivity
5. Excellent communications capacity as demonstrated by familiarity with and experience of multiple communications media (e.g. print, social media, video)
6. Flexible working arrangements that allow drawing upon the skills of specialist part-time staff.
7. An institutional record in health systems research

8. Ability to operate across cultural boundaries and commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion

Desirable:

1. Located in a low- or middle-income country setting
2. Awareness of, and familiarity with, HSG work, structures and processes
3. Fluency in other widely used languages (e.g., Spanish, French, Arabic, Chinese)

Qualifications for Executive Director (ED)

A named ED is expected to be part of the proposal; such an individual should have:

1. University master's degree or equivalent in a relevant field for Health Policy and Systems Research (HPSR) as well as extensive experience, work in and familiarity with the field. HPSR is a multi-disciplinary field and therefore, the basic degree alone is not enough. There must be evidence of actual work within the field of HPSR and understanding of the relevant issues. Since the Executive Director, along with the Board, represent HSG, they must be an individual who is recognized and respected in the field.
2. Additional to their qualifications in the field, given that they will be managing and leading the Secretariat they must also demonstrate/have a track record of having managed a large and complex program and/or an organization and have excellent communication and management skills. This includes the experience of managing complex organizations (preferably membership-based) and/or programs, which are essential requirements for the interested candidates.

The Secretariat staff and budget

The current Secretariat structure includes the following staff positions, with a total of 5 full time equivalent posts:

- a. Executive Director (part-time)
- b. Events Manager (part-time)
- c. Partnerships and engagement manager (full-time)
- d. Finance director (part-time)
- e. Accounting coordinator (part-time)
- f. Communications manager (full-time)
- g. Communications assistant (part-time)
- h. Program coordinator (part-time)
- i. Administrative assistant (full-time)

The applications for the Secretariat do not have to closely follow the current staffing structure of the Secretariat and should be reflective of the expected duties and responsibilities and commensurate to the structure of the host organisation. A possible distribution of roles and responsibilities is included in the Annex 2, *as a guidance only*.

All applications should follow the format set out in Annex 1, and will be assessed by the HSG Board using criteria set out in Annex 2.

However, *please note*: the HSG Board requires continuity of core operations and processes in several areas particularly:

- (a) organisation of the Eighth Global Symposium on Health Systems Research (HSR2024) in Nagasaki, Japan in -November 2024; and
- (b) engagement with HSG partners, funders and collaborators.

To protect and provide continuity of operations in these two areas the following two Secretariat staff are required to remain in the new/incoming Secretariat as consultants until at least 31 October 2024:

- a. Events and Learning Manager (currently based in Canada) and
- b. Operations and Partnerships Manager (currently based in Georgia).

Decisions on extending their contracts beyond October 2024 will be based on a review of performance, and suitability of the arrangements by the new ED/Secretariat and HSG Board Officers .

The maximum budget for HSG Secretariat staff is USD 250,000 per annum, exclusive of above-mentioned two full-time staff. However, financially competitive and feasible proposals are encouraged.

Recruitment and term of office

The Board will select the Secretariat (including all staff and Executive Director) through an open and competitive process, using assessment criteria in Annex 2.

The appointment will be for three years, renewable based on performance appraisal and Board’s agreement. The Board has final oversight over the appointment process and all decisions will be final.

Timeline

May 1, 2023	Request for proposals published
June 1, 2023	Information and clarification webinar with the current HSG Secretariat and Board
1 July 2023	Deadline for proposal submission
15 Jul – 1 Aug 2023	Clarifications as needed and final decision by the Board
Sept - Oct 2023	Transition period between the Secretariats

Submitting your proposal

Please send your proposal to info@healthsystemsglobal.org.

Annexes

Annex 1 Format for proposals

The proposal should follow the page limits below (font size 11, single-spaced) plus budget and relevant annexes and should address the following:

Section A – specification of interest, why the organization is interested in hosting the Secretariat, how the Secretariat role fits with existing institutional goals and ongoing work. (1 page)

Section B – vision of the role of the Secretariat – description of the role by the Secretariat, and proposer's vision for the future development of HSG (2 pages)

Section C –institutional capabilities, applicant's institutional capabilities to manage a Secretariat of this nature; prior experience in managing international initiatives and/or health systems research initiatives; capacity to convene stakeholders, and support exchange, fundraising, and communications capacity. (2 pages)

Section D – proposed organizational structure and budget – proposed organization of the HSG Secretariat. List of key positions within the Secretariat, the roles that these key positions would play and personnel who would serve in these roles. Explain reporting structures within the Secretariat. (3 pages plus budget). In an annex (not included in the page limit), please provide CVs for all staff in key positions (maximum 2 pages per CV).

Budget – a detailed budget that breaks down the budget according to staff costs, office administration, travel, communications, overheads. For staff, clearly, indicate how much time each staff member would spend on Secretariat work and what their salary levels are. Provide a budget justification as necessary and unpack the budget for the transition period as applicable.

Annex 2 Proposal assessment criteria

1. Fit with HSG objectives and clear institutional support for the Secretariat (10%)
2. Clarity and innovativeness of vision concerning tasks to be pursued by the Secretariat (20%)
3. Institutional capabilities in terms of health systems experience, communications capacity, management and finance expertise, and track record in managing similar initiatives (30%)
4. Skills, experience, and the reputation of proposed Executive Director and other key staff and clarity and appropriateness of Secretariat's structure (20%)
5. Value for money (20%)

Annex 3 Possible Secretariat staffing (*provided as illustrative guidance only*)

Position	Responsibilities
Executive Director (part time)	a. Official HSG representation in partner engagement b. Leadership, operations management, resource management c. Working with the selected Board committees and working groups (Board and Board leadership; Governance, Fundraising) to set workplan and priorities
Membership & communications manager (full time)	Membership management a) Membership strategy, expansion campaigns, daily management Communications a) Website management (HSG & HSR), Monthly newsletters, social media

Position	Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) HSG comms support to Board, TWGs, RNs c) HSR comms, advocacy campaigns, annual report
<p>Operations & Partnerships Manager (full time) *</p>	<p>Partnership management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Partnership strategy development; contract management b) Partner and donor relations/engagement / reporting c) Women’s mentorship <p>TWG management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Support in implementing TWG 2-year workplans (events, outputs) b) TWG calls oversight (semi-annual individual; quarterly cross-TWG) c) TWG funds management and TWG refresh <p>Regional Networks management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Implementing Regional 2-year work plans (events, outputs) b) Regional funds management <p>Board committees & WGs management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Board Leadership meetings b) Fundraising Committee c) TWG and Regional Support Groups <p>General secretariat management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Monitoring and evaluation of the strategic plan; Quarterly reporting to the Board
<p>Events and Learning Manager (full time)*</p>	<p>HSR symposium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) HSR2024 programme, committees (PWG & EC), TWGs and RNs at HSR b) HSR2026 selection and onboarding c) Management of the PCO, liaison with the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) d) Fundraising activities <p>Capacity Strengthening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Capacity Strengthening (SC) Working Group support b) CS activities (surveys, initiatives, publications), CS stream at HSR <p>Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Advocacy Working Group support b) Advocacy campaigns and activities, incl joint initiatives with partners. <p>Targeted Programmes: Journal Supplements, Societal Awards</p>
<p>Finance manager (part time)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Budget, Audit, Reporting to the Board and donors b) Support to Board Finance and Audit Committee c) Reviewing contracts; monthly financials; Swiss commercial registry
<p>Admin assistant (full time)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Meeting scheduling (calls, retreats), minutes, supporting documents b) Secretariat inbox management; reports, presentations assistance c) Secretariat work plan monitoring; overall admin support d) Support to TWGs and RNs, and HSR logistics

*Already in post for 2023-24