

Position description

Position title	: Systems Lead, Early Childhood Development
Reports to	: Director, Early Childhood
Employment type	: 12 months (part time 0.8 FTE) (ideally ongoing depending on funding)
Location	: Australia
No. of direct reports	: One
Date	: April 2021
Approved by	: Executive Director, Ventures

The operating environment

SVA overview

Social Ventures Australia (SVA) is a not-for-profit organisation that works with partners to alleviate disadvantage – towards an Australia where all people and communities thrive.

We influence systems to deliver better social outcomes for people by learning about what works in communities, helping organisations be more effective, sharing our perspectives and advocating for change.

As a values-driven organisation, accountability, integrity, respect and humility underpin our work.

Team overview

Within SVA, this position is situated within the Young Children Thriving program team within the Ventures Team.

The role is externally focussed to work with an advisory Leadership Table, comprising a collective of leading national child and family organisations to build a sector-wide approach to effectively redress the root causes and systemic forces creating and sustaining disadvantage in the early years.

Partners include The Front Project, ARACY – Australian Research Alliance for children and youth, Families Australia, The Every Child Campaign, Murdoch Children’s Research Institute, Goodstart Early Learning, SNAICC – National Voice for our Children, Parent-Infant Research Institute, Logan Together, The Benevolent Society and Social Ventures Australia.

SVA is working with the Leadership Table to form a collective ‘Early Childhood Development (ECD) Field Catalyst’ to lead systems mapping, collective strategy development, convening, mobilisation and advocacy across the ECD sector. We have 18 months funding from the BHP Foundation to pioneer and test this approach. SVA is the project manager of this collective for this period.

Position purpose

The ECD Field Catalyst seeks to build a collective and shared leadership of early childhood development senior leaders in order to ultimately create systems change and positively influence outcomes for all young children and their families in Australia.

This position will be responsible for facilitating, managing and testing, the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Field Catalyst work.

Position Responsibilities

Leadership

- Provide visionary, adaptive leadership, modelling and fostering a culture that reflects the collaborative Leadership Table guiding values, at all times.
- Convene, coach, support, and mentor the Leadership Table and sector working groups to drive systems change.
- Build the ECD Field Catalyst's identity as a respected, neutral convener and enabler among a broad spectrum of stakeholders.
- Manage, oversee, and support the Senior Policy and Communications Officer role, including setting goals, expectations, change management, providing performance guidelines, coaching and development support.

Partnerships and stakeholder engagement

- Build and maintain partnerships for effective collaboration across the early childhood development sector and with relevant decision-makers for optimised impact of the ECD Field Catalyst, including coordinating among the various early childhood coalitions to minimise overlap and align strategies.
- Provide direction and support to partner organisations in aligning their work to identified gaps and opportunities.
- Develop and implement strategies, practices, and processes to support meaningful engagement and participation of the ECD sector and directly affected families in the work of the ECD Field Catalyst.
- Support fundraising.

Strategy and project management

- Project manage the ECD Field Catalyst collaboration, including the implementation and successful delivery of KPI's according to timelines, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting on the project workplan and budget to a range of stakeholders including funders.
- Contribute to the ongoing development of the program strategy with the Leadership Table, including comprehensive solutions to seize new opportunities and address implementation challenges.
- Lead a significant, collaborative ECD systems mapping and analysis process.
- Lead the development and implementation of a monitoring and evaluation strategy for the ECD Field Catalyst.
- Develop and deliver communications and political engagement strategies for the ECD Field Catalyst.
- Responsible for reports for a range of stakeholders, including funders.

Special requirements

Ability to travel nationally as required.

Person requirements

To effectively perform this position, the person will require the following:

Knowledge

- Depth of knowledge on Australia's policy settings and effecting systems change.
- Knowledge of one or more of the key early childhood development domain areas (e.g., health, education, child protection).
- Passionate interest in the value of early childhood development to transform children's lives and address intergeneration disadvantage and experiences of vulnerability.

Experience

- Extensive demonstrated experience in managing complex stakeholder relationships and facilitating collaborative systems change processes.
- Knowledge and experience of current systems change thinking, adaptive leadership, co design approaches and collective impact.
- People management experience, including coaching, mentoring others, and building capacity for collective impact.
- Experience operating in diverse cultural settings and with people experiencing disadvantage.
- Existing relationships within the early childhood development sector is desirable.

Qualifications

- Degree qualifications and or relevant experience in a relevant field, such as Public Policy, Social and Systemic Change, Collective Impact, or Change Management.

Skills & Abilities

- The successful candidate will bring an openness to building collaboration and collective responses to complex issues by facilitating new ways of thinking and building the mindsets, structures, systems, and processes foundational to collaborative systems change.
- Advanced strategy and planning skills, including an ability to think strategically on both organisational and systemic levels over multi-year horizons.
- Comfort with ambiguity and ability to thrive in a fluid, entrepreneurial environment.
- Outstanding communication (written and oral) and relationship-building skills, including the ability to build authentic relationships with and consensus among a diverse set of high-profile stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively independently, to prioritise use of time and limited resources toward meeting ambitious, measurable goals.
- Excellent organisational and project management skills – ability to manage large, long-term, complex projects.