

Role Profile: Principal, Engagements Ark Education Partnerships Group

1. Context

Every child deserves a great education – one that allows her to follow her dreams and achieve her potential. But education is complex and difficult to get right. Teachers, schools and systems all face deep and embedded challenges, and it is in the poorest countries and communities where those challenges are greatest.

Ark knows firsthand that great schools can transform a child's life. We know this because we run 35 schools in deprived inner city areas of the UK, and we recently launched our school network in Delhi, India. But to be truly impactful we need to think and work beyond the confines of our own schools. We need to reform education systems, so that teachers, schools and governments are held accountable for the education of each and every child. There are no silver bullets in education reform. Instead it needs bold leadership, entrepreneurialism, determination, hard work, incremental steps with doses of innovation, all underpinned by rigorous and reliable data and analytics.

2. About the Education Partnerships Group

Education systems the world over – but particularly in less-developed countries – are failing to give poor children the education they need to succeed in life. We know this is an injustice, an injustice that needs to be addressed because the future of children, communities and nations is at stake.

But we also have reason to be optimistic. The scale of the education quality crisis is increasingly visible at sub-national, national and global level. Citizens are calling for better schools, and politicians know education policy is increasingly central to electoral success. A growing generation of education entrepreneurs is refusing to accept the status quo and is working tirelessly to find sustainable models that will contribute to better education for all.

Ark's Education Partnerships Group (EPG) has the opportunity to seize these opportunities and work with partners in the government and private sectors to bring about tangible and enduring change. EPG believes that excellent outcomes for students can come from the public or the private sector – but the state must play a key role as the guarantor of a quality education for all students. Our vision is to help governments in developing countries provide a quality education to every child, by bringing the public and private sectors closer together. We have active engagements in South Africa, Uganda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Kenya and India, and a strong pipeline in other geographies in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

3. About the Role

The purpose of this role is to manage the existing portfolio of EPG engagements, ensuring a high quality of planning, execution and evaluation. You will manage the engagement team, currently composed of four managers. You will also contribute to the strategic vision of EPG and the development of the organization. Over time, as the portfolio grows, we expect to hire a second Principal and split the portfolio on a regional basis.

As Principal, you will be accountable for the performance of each engagement within the portfolio, tracking performance and ensuring a high visibility of progress to our stakeholders. You will provide oversight, strategic guidance and support to the team, and ensure that projects are delivered with fidelity to our engagement model and to a high standard.

Your responsibilities will include:

- **Relationship management:** ensure that every EPG partner receives the same high quality service from EPG. Build excellent and long-lasting relationships at senior level with our government partners, working closely with them and the EPG manager to define the strategic direction of education systems.
- **Planning:** Together with the relevant manager, develop draft scopes of work to enable discussion with the EPG team and steering committee about the viability and potential of new engagements. Work with the government client to produce a detailed workplan and budget for the engagement. Agree on the project management model, governance and funding mechanisms and evaluation plan. Engage relevant partners in the initiative.
- **Monitor project delivery:** ensure that projects are being delivered to a high quality, on time and on track. Provide support to the relevant manager to to implement the engagement including ensuring the transfer of expertise and build the capacity of the government partner to manage the initiative following EPG exit. Ensure that reliable and regular performance data is collected and communicated to partners.
- **Team management:** provide leadership to the team, ensuring that each manager has clear objectives and a professional development plan.

4. Candidate Profile

Ark-EPG is looking for someone with a proven track record of managing complex multi-stakeholder projects. With at least seven years experience gained from a top-tier management consultancy or international development agency, you will have deep experience and and first rate networks in education, preferably in developing countries.

You will know that education is the most important investment a country can make in its future. You will share Ark-EPG's sense of urgency to address the injustice in the current state of education systems that are failing to give children the education they need and deserve.

You thrive in entrepreneurial, fast paced cultures and you are able to travel regularly, sometimes at short notice. You might have led a start-up organization before, or a new team within a larger organization. We want to know that you have the skills, the commercial acumen and the drive to deliver on our ambitious goals.

We need someone amazing. Please get in touch and tell us why you think you are the right person for this role.

5. Application

- For an informal discussion about the role please feel free to contact Susannah Hares (Susannah.hares@arkonline.org)
- To apply, please send a copy of your CV (two pages maximum) along with a brief covering letter explaining why you are interested in applying for the role, to jobs@arkonline.org ensuring you specify the role you are applying for in the subject line of the e-mail. Please include the details of at least two referees within your application.
- Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis so please apply as soon as possible.
- All new staff will be subject to a probation period of six months, with the possibility of extension to one year based on performance.