

## **Vacancy: Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Urban Water Catalyst Initiative**

We are seeking a dynamic and visionary leader with proven expertise in water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) systems, water sector financing, and utility operations. The ideal candidate will have a strong track record in leading teams, fostering innovative solutions, and driving sustainable financial impact in the urban water sector. As the CEO of the Urban Water Catalyst Initiative (UWCI), you will play a pivotal role in building and scaling the Facility, ensuring its success, and advancing the UWCI's mission to transform urban water utilities in the Global South.

### **About the Urban Water Catalyst Initiative**

The Urban Water Catalyst Initiative (UWCI) is a joint initiative of KfW and GIZ (Germany) on behalf of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in partnership with WaterWorX, representing the Dutch water utilities. Its mission is to accelerate urban water utility performance in the Global South by enhancing creditworthiness, operational efficiency, and resilience, ultimately enabling utilities to bridge the financing gap to achieve SDGs 6 (Clean Water & Sanitation) and 13 (Climate Action).

The initiative offers tailored support to reform-minded utilities through executive mentoring, technical assistance, small grants for efficiency improvements, and later-stage repayable investment financing. The goal is to create financially sustainable, high-performing, and resilient urban water utilities capable of expanding water access and sanitation services.

### **The Stichting UWCI Turnaround Facility**

On 20 February 2025, the UWCI formally incorporated the Stichting UWCI Turnaround Facility (the Facility), an independent foundation designed to manage grants and provide essential support to urban water utilities in the Global South. The Facility will operate in close collaboration with the forthcoming UWCI Loan and Guarantee Fund, which is intended to offer corporate loans and guarantees for larger-scale infrastructure investments.

The CEO will lead the Facility from its inception, overseeing its operations, organizational development, and long-term growth. He/She reports to the Foundation's Supervisory Council.

### **Key Responsibilities**

#### **1. Operational and Financial Management**

- Ensure the Facility meets its objectives and is accountable to its Supervisory Council and financiers.
- Finalize and submit governance documents to the Supervisory Council of the Foundation.

- Hire talented team members, ensuring the right mix of skills and expertise to achieve the Facility's objectives.
- Further improve the Facility's basic financial systems, including controlling and accounting processes.
- Oversee the financial planning, budgeting and management of its financial assets in line with the Foundation's Investment Policy Statement.
- Manage and oversee all operations, projects, and partnerships.
- Ensure high-quality and timely reporting to stakeholders and donors.
- Lead and develop the Facility's team, appreciating commitment and a collaborative and performance-driven, digital and motivating work culture in line with the Foundation's core values.
- Oversee service-level agreements with external service providers (e.g., legal counsel, auditing).
- Oversee compliance with operational standards, policies, and governance frameworks.
- Act as the primary point of contact for all key stakeholders, including donors, utility partners, and external consultants.
- Support the effective functioning and work of the Supervisory Council in line with the Articles of Associations of the Stichting.

## **2. Strategic Development, Fund Raising and Growth**

- Raise awareness of the UWCI and the Facility's work in the international policy debate on financing SDG 6 and SDG 13.
- Cultivate trustful relationships with potential financiers and utility partners.
- Represent UWCI on international conferences and events.
- Contribute to the development of the fund financing instruments and support alignment with the future Loan and Guarantee Fund for utility financing.
- Explore new funding sources and mechanisms to support the continued expansion and impact of the UWCI.

### **Candidate Profile**

We are looking for a highly motivated leader who can navigate the complexities of international development and utility management, with a deep understanding of Water and Sanitation systems (WASH), water sector financing, and public policy. The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- University degree (Master) in economics, business administration, (environmental) engineering, social sciences or other relevant discipline.
- Proven leadership and management experience: At least 10 years of experience in managing organizations, including a minimum of 5 years in a senior leadership role.
- Expertise in water utility management and finance: Strong background in the financing and/or management of water utilities, development finance, and public policy, ideally with a focus on SDG 6 and SDG 13.

- Strategic thinker and communicator: Expertise in communicating effectively, and building consensus for innovative utility turnaround models.
- Experience in organizational development: Demonstrated ability to lead and manage diverse teams, with experience in building organizational units or independent entities.
- Fundraising and donor relations: Successful track record in raising development funding, particularly in the water and sanitation sector, and cultivating donor relationships.
- International experience: Familiarity with working in the Global South and navigating political and administrative structures in international development.
- Experience in working with international teams, also in digital / remote settings.
- Commitment, reliability, diplomatic skills, intercultural understanding and sensitivity to gender.
- Strategic and analytical thinking; Ability to grasp complex issues quickly and focus efforts, results orientation, creative drive and communication skills;
- Language skills: Fluency in English, with additional languages (French, Spanish, German, Dutch) as an asset.
- Willingness to travel frequently to project sites in the Global South and attend international conferences.
- Comfort working in diverse, sometimes challenging environments.
- Location: Although the Stichting has its statutory seat in Utrecht, The Netherlands, it is possible to work remotely most of the time. We ask you to be at the Utrecht office indicatively 1-2 days per month.
- Work permit: have a EU work permit or able to get one.

#### What we offer:

- Location: Although the Stichting has its statutory seat in Utrecht, The Netherlands, it is possible to work remotely most of the time. We ask you to be at the Utrecht office indicatively 1-2 days per month.
- Contract type: 0.8 or 1.0 fte, with terms and conditions in line with relevant public sector standards in Germany and The Netherlands.
- Contract: During the first 6-12 months through a dedicated payrolling agency. After that through a direct employment contract with the Stichting.
- Salary: Competitive, market conform, based on experience and qualifications.
- Team and stakeholders: working with an international team of experts and a network of committed organisations and people supporting the mission of the Facility.
- Travel: Frequent travel to project sites and meetings with stakeholders.

#### Your application:

If you are a strategic, innovative, and results-driven leader ready to make a tangible impact on global water utility performance and sustainability, we invite you to apply for this exciting opportunity by **latest 5 May 17.00 h CEST** by sending your motivation letter and CV to the current (interim) CEO, dr. Adriaan Mels, at email address [info@urbanwaterci.org](mailto:info@urbanwaterci.org). If you have questions related to the vacancy you can also contact us through this email address, leave your telephone number and we will contact you.