

## JOB DESCRIPTION

# DIRECTOR - PROGRAMS

Full-Time | Bhubaneswar, Odisha

<b>Position Title</b>	Director - Programs
<b>Employment Type</b>	Full-Time
<b>Grade / Level</b>	Senior Leadership
<b>Remuneration</b>	INR 12 - 14.4 Lakhs per annum (commensurate with experience)
<b>Number of Openings</b>	1 (One)
<b>Reporting To</b>	Executive Director
<b>Direct Reports</b>	Program Managers, Field Coordinators, Grants & Partnerships Team
<b>Location</b>	AJSA India Head Office, Bhubaneswar, Odisha
<b>Last Date to Apply</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
<b>Apply To</b>	jobs@ajsaindia.org   Subject: Application for Director - Programs

## 1. About AJSA India

At AJSA India, we have been facilitating community-led development initiatives since 1989, working with rural and marginalized communities to address the root causes of poverty and vulnerability. As a non-government, not-for-profit organization, AJSA promotes sustainable development through a holistic and community-driven approach that strengthens local institutions, improves livelihoods, and enhances resilience to social, economic, and environmental challenges. Our work focuses on empowering communities through climate-resilient agriculture, sustainable livelihoods, natural resource management, and strengthened local governance systems. By working closely with Panchayati Raj Institutions, community-based organizations, and government departments, AJSA supports inclusive development pathways that ensure long-term and locally owned solutions.

## 2. Position Overview

The Director - Programs is a senior leadership role that provides strategic direction, programmatic oversight, and institutional stewardship for the entire portfolio of projects and initiatives at AJSA India. The incumbent will serve as a key member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) and will act as the primary bridge between the organisation's vision and its on-ground implementation realities.

This role demands a dynamic, mission-driven professional who combines deep development sector expertise with strong fundraising acumen, stakeholder engagement skills, and the ability to mentor and build high-performing teams. The Director - Programs will be accountable for delivering impact at scale while ensuring financial discipline, donor compliance, and strategic alignment across all programmes.

### 3. Organisational Context and Reporting Structure

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The Director - Programs reports directly to the Executive Director / CEO and is a member of the Senior Management Team. The role provides leadership to:

- Program Managers (thematic and geographic portfolios)
- Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability & Learning (MEAL) Team
- Grants, Partnerships & Resource Mobilisation Team
- Field Coordinators and Block-level Implementation Staff
- Documentation and Communications Associate

The Director - Programs will be expected to deputise for the Executive Director during absences and to represent the organisation externally at senior levels.

### 4. Key Responsibilities

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#### 4.1 Strategic Leadership and Organisational Direction

- Provide visionary leadership for all programmes and projects of AJSA India, ensuring alignment with the organisational mission, strategic plan, and annual operational plan.
- Lead the development and implementation of thematic program strategies in areas such as livelihoods, climate resilience, disaster risk reduction, education, health, and governance.
- Participate actively in Senior Management Team (SMT) deliberations, contributing a programmatic perspective to organisational decisions on governance, finance, HR, and institutional strategy.
- Identify emerging development priorities and integrate innovative and scalable program approaches.
- Lead annual programme planning processes, including work plan development, budgeting, and the setting of targets in consultation with thematic leads and the MEAL team.
- Identify and manage programme risks, developing mitigation strategies and escalating critical issues to the Executive Director in a timely manner.
- Ensure programs adopt community-led, gender-responsive, and inclusive development approaches.
- Provide technical leadership to program teams and guide the design of high-impact development interventions.

#### 4.2 Programme Planning, Implementation, and Quality Assurance

- Oversee the planning, design, and implementation of all projects across AJSA India's thematic portfolios (climate-resilient agriculture, livelihoods, NRM, governance, gender equity, and others).
- Ensure all programme activities are evidence-based, rights-oriented, and delivered in accordance with AJSA's programmatic standards, donor requirements, and relevant national/state policies.

- Establish and maintain robust systems for project cycle management – from inception and planning through implementation, review, and close-out.
- Conduct regular programme quality reviews (quarterly and annual) and facilitate joint reviews with donors, partners, and community stakeholders.
- Ensure integration and mainstreaming of cross-cutting themes - gender equality and social inclusion (GESI), safeguarding, environment and climate change, and disability inclusion - across all programme interventions.
- Ensure programs comply with donor requirements, humanitarian standards, and sector best practices.
- Integrate international standards such as Sphere Standards, Core Humanitarian Standards, and safeguarding principles where relevant.
- Provide strategic support to program managers and field teams to ensure timely delivery of program outputs and outcomes.
- Facilitate documentation of field learnings, good practices, innovations, and case studies for organisational knowledge management and external dissemination.
- Ensure programs are implemented effectively, efficiently, and in accordance with donor guidelines and organizational standards.
- Review program implementation plans and ensure alignment with annual organizational work plans and targets.
- Promote cross-learning and integration across different program areas.

### **4.3 Fundraising, Resource Mobilisation, and Donor Management**

- Lead and coordinate AJSA India's fundraising and resource mobilisation strategy, including identifying and cultivating relationships with bilateral and multilateral donors, corporate foundations, government schemes, and individual philanthropists.
- Research, identify, and track funding opportunities aligned with AJSA India's programmatic priorities through regular prospecting, donor mapping, and sector intelligence gathering.
- Lead the development of high-quality concept notes, expressions of interest (EOIs), and full grant proposals, coordinating inputs from thematic leads, MEAL, and finance teams.
- Manage donor relationships from pre-award to close-out, including onboarding, regular communication, site visits, reporting compliance, and renewal discussions.
- Ensure timely and high-quality preparation of donor narrative reports - progress, annual, mid-term, and final reports - in alignment with grant agreements and donor formats.
- Maintain a comprehensive grants management tracker covering proposal pipelines, award status, reporting schedules, budget utilisation, and compliance obligations.
- Develop and update AJSA India's organisational capacity statements, programme briefs, and donor pitch materials to support fundraising efforts.
- Explore and develop diversified funding streams, including fee-for-service contracts, consultancies, government MoUs, and social enterprise pilots.

#### **4.4 Partnership Development and Stakeholder Engagement**

- Build and maintain relationships with donors, foundations, academic institutions, government departments, and civil society networks.
- Explore strategic partnerships for joint initiatives, consortium projects, and knowledge collaborations.
- Represent AJSA India in relevant forums, coalitions, thematic networks, and policy platforms at state, national, and international levels.
- Negotiate partnership agreements, MoUs, and sub-grant arrangements with implementing partners, ensuring clarity of roles, accountability structures, and compliance obligations.
- Engage proactively with Panchayati Raj Institutions, block administration, district collectors, and line departments to ensure programme convergence and government buy-in.
- Coordinate with media and communications to strengthen AJSA India's public profile and thought leadership on development issues.

#### **4.5 Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL)**

- Provide leadership in establishing and strengthening the organization's Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) framework.
- Ensure all programs have clear results frameworks, indicators, monitoring systems, and evaluation plans.
- Oversee the development and periodic review of MEAL Plans, indicator tracking sheets, data collection tools, and data management protocols.
- Promote data-driven decision-making and adaptive program management..
- Commission and oversee baseline surveys, mid-term evaluations, end-line assessments, and thematic studies, ensuring high methodological rigour and independence.
- Strengthen systems for impact measurement, outcome tracking, and learning documentation.
- Ensure program teams regularly analyze monitoring data to improve program effectiveness and accountability.
- Facilitate internal and external program evaluations and learning reviews.
- Promote a culture of continuous learning, knowledge sharing, and evidence-based programming.
- Ensure evaluation findings, research outputs, and MEAL data are systematically documented, disseminated, and used to influence programme design, organisational learning, and external advocacy.
- Contribute to sector-level knowledge building by presenting AJSA India's programme evidence at conferences, publishing learning briefs, and contributing to policy dialogues.

#### **4.6 Financial Management and Budget Oversight**

- Oversee the preparation of programme budgets, ensuring realistic costing, alignment with project objectives, and compliance with donor and organisational financial policies.
- Monitor programme budget utilisation on a monthly and quarterly basis, reviewing variance analysis reports with Finance and Program Managers and initiating course corrections as necessary.
- Ensure that all programme expenditures are properly authorised, adequately documented, and aligned with approved budgets and donor-specific financial guidelines.
- Review and approve financial reports, budget revisions, and no-cost extension requests before submission to donors.
- Work collaboratively with the Finance team to prepare for internal and external audits, ensure audit readiness, and address any audit findings related to programme finances.
- Support the development of indirect cost recovery and cost allocation frameworks to ensure sustainable programme resourcing.

#### **4.7 Human Resources, Team Leadership, and Capacity Building**

- Directly supervise Program Managers and MEAL and Grants staff, providing structured line management, regular one-on-one supervision, and performance appraisals.
- Create a motivating, inclusive, and high-performance team culture built on mutual respect, clear accountability, and professional development.
- Lead the identification of staffing needs for new projects, contribute to the recruitment of programme staff, and support effective onboarding and induction.
- Design and implement an annual capacity development plan for programme staff, addressing technical, managerial, and professional growth needs.
- Facilitate cross-learning opportunities, peer exchanges, study tours, and knowledge-sharing platforms across programme teams.
- Ensure all programme staff are aware of and adhere to AJSA India's HR policies, code of conduct, safeguarding policy, and organisational values.

#### **4.8 Institutional Strengthening**

- Contribute to strengthening AJSA India's organizational systems, policies, and program management structures.
- Support development of institutional strategies, operational guidelines, and program frameworks.
- Ensure integration of cross-cutting themes such as gender equality, social inclusion, climate resilience, and community participation.
- Promote strong coordination between program, finance, administration, and monitoring teams.

## 4.9 Safeguarding, Compliance, and Organisational Risk

- Ensure all programme activities are implemented in full compliance with AJSA India's safeguarding policy, child protection policy, and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) commitments.
- Embed safeguarding risk assessments in project design, ensure reporting mechanisms are accessible to beneficiaries, and respond appropriately to any safeguarding concerns.
- Oversee compliance with legal, regulatory, and statutory requirements related to programme implementation.
- Maintain and regularly update a programme risk register, identifying emerging risks and ensuring mitigation actions are tracked and reported.
- Ensure data privacy and data protection standards are observed in all MEAL and programme data management activities.

## 5. Qualifications and Experience

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### 5.1 Educational Qualifications

- Master's degree (essential) in Social Work, Development Studies, Public Policy, Rural Management, Public Administration, Environmental Studies, or a closely related discipline from a recognised university or institution.
- Additional certifications or training in Project Management (e.g., PMP, Prince2), Monitoring & Evaluation (e.g., USAID MEAL, CARE PIIRS), or Fundraising & Grant Management will be an advantage.

### 5.2 Professional Experience

- Minimum 10-15 years of progressively responsible experience in the development sector, with a proven track record in programme design, management, and delivery.
- At least 5 years in a senior leadership or management role with demonstrated people management responsibilities.
- Demonstrated experience in fundraising, grant acquisition, and donor management with bilateral donors (e.g., DFID/FCDO, USAID, EU, GIZ), multilateral agencies (UN, World Bank), or major foundations (Ford, Tata Trusts, Azim Premji Foundation, etc.).
- Strong experience with MEAL systems design, results-based management frameworks, and participatory evaluation methodologies.
- Experience in managing multi-year, multi-location projects.
- Experience of working in Odisha or comparable Eastern India states, and understanding of local governance, tribal welfare, and social development context will be highly preferred.

## 6. Key Skills and Competencies

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### Technical Competencies

- Programme Design & Logical Framework Development

- Fundraising, Proposal Writing & Grant Management
- Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability & Learning (MEAL)
- Budget Development and Financial Oversight
- Partnership Negotiation and MoU Management
- Knowledge of Relevant Thematic Areas (agriculture, livelihoods, NRM, GESI, governance)
- Understanding of FCRA, CSR, and Development Financing Landscapes in India

### Leadership & Managerial Competencies

- Strategic Thinking and Organisational Vision
- Team Leadership, Coaching, and Mentoring
- Decision-Making Under Uncertainty
- Conflict Resolution and Adaptive Management
- Organisational Change Management

### Interpersonal & Communication Skills

- Excellent written and verbal communication in English; proficiency in Odia and/or Hindi strongly preferred
- High-quality report writing, proposal drafting, and policy brief development
- Strong public speaking and representation skills for external forums
- Ability to communicate complex programmatic information to diverse audiences

### Personal Attributes

- Deep commitment to social justice, equity, and community empowerment
- Integrity, accountability, and transparency in all professional conduct
- Collaborative, inclusive, and culturally sensitive leadership style
- High resilience and adaptability in complex and resource-constrained environments
- Willingness to travel extensively to field locations across Odisha

## 7. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The Director - Programs will be assessed against the following performance indicators during annual performance reviews:

Performance Area	Key Indicator
<b>Fundraising</b>	New donor acquisition of at least 3-4 donors per year
<b>Proposal Success Rate</b>	Minimum 40% conversion rate on proposals submitted to donors
<b>Programme Delivery</b>	90%+ of annual programme milestones achieved as per approved work plans
<b>Donor Compliance</b>	Zero critical audit findings on programme expenditure; all donor reports submitted on time
<b>MEAL Quality</b>	100% of active projects with updated logframes, MEAL plans, and quarterly monitoring data

<b>Team Performance</b>	100% of direct reports receive structured performance reviews; staff retention rate above 85%
<b>Safeguarding</b>	All programme staff trained on safeguarding annually; zero unaddressed safeguarding incidents
<b>Partnerships</b>	At least 3-4 new strategic MOUs/partnerships signed per year
<b>Learning &amp; Documentation</b>	Minimum 4 knowledge products (case studies, learning briefs, reports) published annually

## 8. Working Conditions and Travel Requirements

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- Primary place of work: AJSA India Office, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- Frequent field travel required to project districts (estimated 30–40% of working time).
- Occasional national and international travel for donor meetings, conferences, and partner engagement.
- Flexible working hours may be required during peak proposal and reporting cycles.
- AJSA India provides a supportive, mission-driven work environment with opportunities for professional development and sector leadership.

## 9. Remuneration and Benefits

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- Gross Annual Compensation: INR 12 – 14 Lakhs per annum, commensurate with qualifications and relevant experience.

## 10. Equal Opportunity Statement

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AJSA India is an equal opportunity employer committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace. AJSA India strongly encourages applications from qualified women candidates, persons with disabilities, and individuals from socially marginalised.

## 11. How to Apply

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Interested candidates who meet the above criteria are invited to apply by submitting the following documents:

- Updated Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Cover Letter - explaining suitability for the position (not exceeding 1 page)
- Contact details of two professional references (references will not be contacted without prior consent)

### Submission Details:

- Email To: [jobs@ajsaindia.org](mailto:jobs@ajsaindia.org)
- Subject Line: Application for Director – Programs
- Last Date to Apply: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Shortlisted candidates will be contacted for an online screening interview followed by a panel interview. Only shortlisted applicants will receive a response. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered. No telephone enquiries please.