



TERMS OF REFERENCE
Innovative Finance and Solutions Director

Organization	NEAR (Network for Empowered Aid Response) (Hosted by Adeso – African Development Solutions)
Position	Innovative Finance and Solutions Director
Reporting To	Program Director
Working With	NEAR Secretariat; NEAR members; partners and donors
Duty Station	Remote with Occasional Travel
Duration	12 months (with possibility of renewal)
Starting Date	As soon as possible

ABOUT NEAR

NEAR (Network for Empowered Aid Response) is a movement of local organizations with a bold ambition – to reshape the top-down humanitarian and development system to one that is locally driven and owned, and is built around equitable, dignified and accountable partnerships. NEAR is a membership-based organization with members coming from four regions: Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East.

ABOUT ADESO

NEAR is currently hosted by Adeso, an expanding and vibrant African based international development and humanitarian organization. Adeso and NEAR both aspire to prevent and overcome situations that adversely affect community well-being by: Influencing policy change and enacting systemic change through innovative solutions led by local and national actors.

SUMMARY

NEAR’s Strategic Plan for 2024-26 defines four strategic goals for the organization to work toward in the three-year period: (1) to build and amplify a collective voice of diverse, local, and national organisations as the key lead actors in the global aid system; (2) to position local actors as primary decision-makers in the global aid system to influence the operationalisation of localisation commitments; (3) to co-create, uplift, and amplify local solutions that radically increase local and national actors’ leadership and ownership of systems change initiatives; and (4) to generate and promote learning between and beyond NEAR members and partners to drive systems change. The Innovative Finance and Solutions Director will oversee the body of work that largely collates to Strategic Goal number 3, developing, testing, and scaling solutions that are locally led alongside NEAR members and partners.

POSITION PURPOSE

The Innovative Finance and Solutions Director will both oversee the innovative financing portfolio currently being incubated by NEAR, and will also provide visionary leadership in the development, implementation, and scaling of new financial and non-financial solutions that are co-created by NEAR members and partners. The Innovative Finance and Solutions Director at NEAR will play a pivotal role in advancing NEAR’s mission to reshape the humanitarian and development landscape to one that is locally led and owned. The Director will oversee a growing team, which currently consists of the



Innovative Finance Manager, the LIFT Program Manager, and the Compliance Officer. This team is likely to grow in the near- to medium-term.

SPECIFIC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic and Team Leadership

- Provide leadership to the Solutions Team, maintaining team programmatic goals closely aligned with NEAR's grants and broader Strategic Plan
- Drive the implementation and scaling of the team's various initiatives, in order to test and demonstrate how locally led and demand-driven aid can be more effective and sustainable.
- Work with various stakeholders across the aid sector to ensure Global South thought leadership, including NEAR members, are systematically embedded in the development and scaling of locally led solutions.
- Manage and lead a multidisciplinary Innovative Finance and Solutions Team, ensuring effective collaboration, communication, and cohesion.
- Foster a culture of innovation, continuous learning, and agile problem-solving within the team.
- Work closely with all NEAR secretariat team leads, to help ensure Solutions team practices, achievements and learning help coherently drive and complement wider team efforts.

Management and Expansion of the Innovative Finance Portfolio (Project Management)

- Oversee the management of complex initiatives in the Global South, from inception to piloting to scaling.
- Ensure projects are delivered on time, within scope, and in adherence to donor guidelines and high-quality standards.
- Manage NEAR's existing innovative finance portfolio, inclusive of NEAR's flagship Change Fund, the first ever global fund exclusively for local actors to respond faster and more effectively to humanitarian crises.
- Liaise with donors and supporters of the innovative finance portfolio, including multiple US foundations, UK charities, and bilateral government donors (including but not limited to USAID, DANIDA, NORAD, FCDO)

Development of the Solutions Practice (Project Development)

- Leverage human-centered design principles to shape solutions that address the unique needs and perspectives of communities in the Global South. Provide internal and external support to staff and members in utilizing human-centered design approaches in their work, specifically in the piloting of solutions.
- Work closely with the NEAR Secretariat, National / Regional Networks, and NEAR members in discovery, development and design of global, regional and local financing mechanisms.
- Develop strategies for deep community engagement, ensuring that local voices are heard, valued, and integrated into the design and implementation of initiatives.
- Capture Learning from ongoing projects and new solutions being tested, to be shared widely with Global South Stakeholders, to best inform new solutions and implementation, and also as a tool for ongoing fundraising.
- In collaboration with the Executive Director, participate in fundraising efforts for Innovative Finance and Solutions initiatives.

EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS



- Advanced degree in international development, humanitarian studies, education, or a related field is preferred
- 10+ years experience in managing complex initiatives in the Global South.
- Out-of-the-box thinker with the ability to manage multiple initiatives at different levels from inception to scaling
- Significant experience in designing, piloting, and supporting relevant initiatives.
- Strong team management skills with the ability to lead, mentor and inspire a diverse team.
- Experience working in multicultural and multilingual environments, particularly in the Global South.
- Commitment to NEAR's core values of local ownership, partnership, and accountability.
- Proficiency in English; knowledge of a second NEAR language (Arabic, French, or Spanish) is a plus.

APPLICATION PROCESS

All applications should be sent to jobs@near.ngo by **May 5, 2024** with “**Innovative Finance and Solutions Director**” on the subject line. The selection committee will review all applications as they arrive.

Each application package should include the following:

- Cover letter with the applicant's current contact information (limited to one page)
- CV
- Three Professional References, with complete contact information

All applicants must meet the minimum requirements described above. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. Adeso is an equal opportunity employer.