STRATEGIC AND COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIPS – ADVISER

Salary	£42,180 - £43,290 per annum
Location	**London, United Kingdom** (hybrid – min. one day per week in the office)
Team	Strategic and Commercial Partnerships Team
Line Manager	Strategic and Commercial Partnerships Senior Manager
Line Reports	None
Hours	35 hours per week
Contract	Fixed term 24 months
Grade	3A
Safeguarding	Basic

WHAT IS START NETWORK?

Our purpose is to be a catalyst for system-level change that improves the efficiency, effectiveness and ethics of humanitarian action. We do this by working as a network to develop, test & spread new ways of collaborating and resourcing locally led crisis response and anticipation.

Our current membership is made up of ~150 local, national and international NGOs based all around the world. We also support 9 national and regional hubs made up of civil society organisations and NGOs as our vehicle for devolving power, resources and accountability.

OUR SOLUTIONS

DECENTRAISLING & LOCALLY-LED ACTION: Shifting power and resources and decentralising decision-making to locally led networks and organisations.

EARLY & RAPID FINANCING: Building a global financing system that reduces risk, anticipates, and acts ahead of predictable crises.

COMMUNITY-LED INNOVATION: Incentivising innovative, locally led, and contextual solutions and learning from them together with people affected by crises.

For more information about Start Network and what we do, please visit our website.

OUR VALUES

WE PUT PEOPLE FIRST: Communities come first in our decision-making and programming.
WE ARE BRAVE: We have great ambition and are willing to explore new things and take risks to achieve it
WE OPERATE COLLECTIVELY: We leverage the value of working as a network, sharing risk and resources, and learning together.
WE ARE INCLUSIVE: We see the value in diverse perspectives and work to remove the barriers that prevent voices from being heard.
WE ARE OPEN: We work transparently and with integrity, building mutual trust in all levels of our work, from governance to programming.
WE ARE ETHICAL: We behave and operate based on key principles of anti-racism, non-discrimination, and anti-colonialism. This is a work in progress.

JOB PURPOSE

The Strategic and Commercial Partnerships Senior Adviser will support one of Start Network's most exciting new areas of work. This role will be part of a new team, created in 2025, to scope, engage and manage relationships with strategic partners across the humanitarian ecosystem and beyond that will bring non-monetary added value in pursuit of our mission and vision for a locally led and proactive humanitarian system. Our vision is that by partnering and building strategic relations we can achieve much greater impact,, enhance our ability to influence system change, improve operational effectiveness and engage in the exchange of knowledge around our innovation ambition.

The team will focus on strategic partnerships in areas such as – but not limited to- system change, innovation, disaster risk finance, humanitarian insurance, digital transformation, AI, and capacity strengthening. For example, one of our current partnerships include a Nairobi-based systems-change organisation, Warande, collaborating to enhance our organisational strengthening offer to our members and to explore central issues pertaining to systems change. Another example is Ibisa, an InsurTech specialist that is partnering with us to design a new parametric climate insurance tool to support farmers in Zimbabwe. We also partner with NetHope is working with us to catalyse the digital readiness of our members. All these incredible partnerships were facilitated by the team you would join. The Strategic and Commercial Partnerships team will also explore the value offer and commercialisation potential behind specific initiatives and services.

Based in the Business Development directorate, the Adviser will work closely with the Strategic and Commercial Partnerships Senior Manager to further strengthen the new function. The role will support on the external facing partnership development and management, whilst also playing a central role in ensuring the value-add catalyses inward impact at Start Network. As such, the role will engage with colleagues across the organisation and gain full insight into the full breadth of Start Network's portfolio of programmes and initiatives. The role will also contribute to researching and analysing commercialisation potential and options for Senior Leadership consideration.

The successful candidate will have a strategic mindset and leverage their ability to creatively identify opportunities to maximise impact. They will be motivated by the opportunity to be proactive and take initiative. It will be key for the candidate to build strong relationships internally and externally, with excellent communication skills and an ability to convey complex ideas simply. They will also have strong organisational skills and be comfortable balancing multiple priorities.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

MANAGE AND MAXIMISE PARTNERSHIP IMPACT

- Build and manage a portfolio of strategic partners, including external engagement and internal coordination with relevant teams
- Develop plans to maximise the impact of current partnerships, in line with our strategic priorities and mission, in collaboration with relevant teams
- Develop partnership governance agreements (e.g. contracts, Statement of Collaboration, and Memorandums of Understanding)
- Develop joint proposals to advance partnership potential, and manage subsequent budget and reporting obligations
- Manage delivery and project management of strategic partnership initiatives

- Act as key focal point to lead on communications related to partnerships, liaising with the Communications Team as necessary (e.g. develop case studies, briefs and external-facing material)
- Monitor partnership performance and strategic value-add

PROSPECTING & PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Research and identify prospective partners and engagement opportunities globally - particularly in the global south - that will add non-financial value to our mission and will help us accelerate our impact and system change ambitions
- Liaise with teams to identify gaps and opportunities for leveraging strategic partners in priority areas
- Travel to key events globally to meet and build strategic relations
- Engage senior stakeholders in prospecting and help them understand the value add each partners can bring to the mission
- Secure opportunities for engagement with prospective partners by developing and pitching ideas for collaboration. Prepare supporting material as needed and coordinate with relevant internal teams (presentations, pitches, briefings, engagement plans, etc)
- Build relationships and collaboration with academia, think tanks and other organisations that can strengthen our work and influence
- Manage the partnership assessment process for prospective partners by assessing strategic alignment, coordinating appropriate risk assessments/assurance reviews, and facilitate discussions with colleagues from relevant teams to guide decision-making
- Identify key events, forums and engagement opportunities for the team, and coordinate participation with managers, heads and directors based on strategic priorities and partnership needs
- Support the Senior Manager to manage, develop and formalise new partnerships

RESEARCH & ANALYSIS OF COMMERCIALISATION POTENTIAL

- Support data collection and analysis of key areas in which there may be potential for commercialisation, liaising with internal and external stakeholders
- Support the Senior Manager to undertake a competitor and stakeholder analysis, and feasibility assessment in shortlisted areas
- Contribute to the articulation of value offers and a menu of options for Senior Leadership consideration
- Support the Senior Manager in developing the commercial partnerships strategy and implementation plan
- Scope prospective partnerships in line with commercialisation ambitions

ELEVATE FUNCTION SERVICE OFFER

- Act as primary focal point for socialising and advising on partnership processes across the organisation (engage team focal points, organise trainings/inductions, etc.)
- Support the continuous strengthening of the strategic partnership service offer and partnership development processes to guide internal ways of working, aligned with the Start Network mission and culture
- Maintain knowledge management systems to enhance visibility, coordination andinstitutionalisation of partnerships (e.g. ASANA Partnership Tracker and dedicated strategic partnership pages)

- Develop tools, templates and frameworks to support teams engaging with strategic partnerships
- Support the preparation of value offers for capacity strengthening internally, including but not limited to how strategic partnerships can be mobilised to support the Hubs
- Identify opportunities to collaborate across teams to amplify the effectiveness and visibility of our partnerships. For example:
    - Liaise with the assurance team to standardise partnership agreements and templates
    - Work with the communications team to develop innovative communication strategies and outputs to attract prospective partners, expanding outreach
    - Liaise with the MEAL team to do co-develop case studies to evidence impact
    - Coordinate with advocacy colleagues around sector-wide events and publications, identifying opportunities for strategic partnership engagement and outreach
- Promote a positive culture around strategic partnerships

START NETWORK CULTURE

- To carry out the responsibilities of the role in line with the Start Network Code of Conduct and with a commitment to safeguarding adults and children
- A commitment to the Start Network vision, principles, values, and approach
- The Start Network team is an agile group of individuals who use their experience and skills across the network, so flexibility to work in and with different teams and functions is a part of our culture.

PERSON PROFILE

ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Bachelor's Degree or equivalent in a related field
- Experience in the humanitarian or development sector
- Experience managing or coordinating partnerships, contracts, or stakeholder relationships, particularly in a nonprofit, social enterprise, or business development setting
- Natural networker (this role is all about relations)
- Team player with the ability to build relationships and collaborate effectively with diverse stakeholders, and with a flexible and adaptable approach to working across teams and functions;
- Ability to adapt to evolving priorities and timelines, responding effectively to opportunities and stakeholder needs'
- Proactive self-starter and entrepreneurial mindset, with a willingness to organise own work and take initiative to identify opportunities
- Strategic thinker with the ability to interpret and synthesise information for decision-making
- Confident speaker with the ability to present complex information adapted for different audiences and represent Start Network externally to build partnerships
- Experience writing communication pieces or reports for external audiences
- Experience developing and maintaining knowledge management systems and templates/tools to strengthen processes
- Passion for Start Network's mission and for developing partnerships in the Global South

DESIRABLE

- Project management skills, or experience in coordinating programmes and projects.
- Experience working with commercialisation or social enterprise models and approaches
- Subject matter expert and/or experience working within priority strategic areas, such as system change, innovation, disaster risk finance, humanitarian insurance, digital transformation, and AI
- Experience in negotiating Memorandums of Understandings/contracts/partnership agreements
- Experience working in a multi-cultural or international setting
- Masters or equivalent in relevant subject

KEY COMPETENCIES

Communication *Communicate openly and transparently with integrity, promoting inclusivity, timeliness and clarity of messages, actively listening to build trust.*	Flex communication style to convey complex information concisely to different audiences, avoiding jargon and using simple language
Strategic Thinking *Able to see the bigger picture and make connections between the parts and the whole, use networks and systems thinking to support our work.*	Hold both a strategic perspective and enough detail to work with one part of the organisation whilst understanding the impact on other parts of the organisation and network through listening and engaging with other teams Able to plan and deliver flexibly to take account of changing internal and/or external factors by reprioritising and asking for help
Collaboration *Work effectively with others, embracing diverse perspectives, knowing when to step up and when to step back.*	Actively promote collaboration by spotting and breaking down barriers to siloed working, connecting colleagues, teams and initiatives
Ability to adapt and learn *Able to respond to change in external and/or internal circumstances and to uncertainty and risk to continue to deliver.*	Seek to learn lessons and apply the learning to future work by actively asking questions, being honest, curious and brave to abandon things that aren't working
Getting things done the Start Network way *Strive to deliver results in pursuit of our vision and purpose, taking initiative, being action-oriented and resourceful.*	Identify opportunities and take calculated risks to capitalise on opportunities that further our purpose and mission without compromising our vision