

# **Terms of Reference**

**Position Title:** Executive Director

**Location:** Flexible within Southeast Asia (Indonesia preferred)

**Reports To:** Board of Trustees

**Application Deadline:** 30 September 2025

## **Purpose of the Role**

The Executive Director (ED) provides strategic leadership at the regional and country levels, operational oversight, and external representation for the Samdhana Institute. The new ED will lead the organization in strengthening its role as a key ally and partner of social movements, enhancing its resource mobilization capacity, deepening its programmatic impact, and ensuring strong internal governance and organizational development.

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## **Key Responsibilities**

- **Strategic Leadership and Vision**

- Lead the implementation and periodic review of Samdhana's strategic plan taking into consideration new and emerging challenges, i.e digital futures/AI and continuing challenges i.e climate change, human rights defense bringing Samdhana into the next 20 years of the organization.
- Champion a values-driven approach that prioritizes the needs and voices of grassroots communities, Indigenous Peoples, and local social environmental movements.
- Build strategic alliances with civil society and social environmental actors, networks, regional and global platforms to enhance Samdhana's influence and impact.

- **Resource Mobilization**

- Develop and execute a robust resource mobilization strategy to secure diversified and sustainable funding that is aligned with Samdhana's mission, values, and priorities.
- Manage relationships with existing Samdhana donors and cultivate relationships with new donors, philanthropic organizations, individuals and funding networks.
- Promote and advocate for greater resources directly to local social and environmental movements; marginalized groups led funding and support the development of financial sustainability of movement partners (particularly in SEA).

- **Program Strategy and Development**

- Oversee the design and implementation of innovative programs that respond to the evolving needs of communities and movements, particularly in terms of rights to control, manage and benefit from their natural resources.

- Ensure programmatic coherence and a systems-based approach across thematic areas, including territorial rights (land and sea), environmental governance, climate justice, and community resilience.
  - Promote participatory approaches and local leadership in all programming.
  - **Organizational Development and Management**
    - Provide oversight for financial, human resources, and administrative systems to ensure operational effectively, efficiency and transparency.
    - Foster a positive and inclusive organizational culture rooted in respect, solidarity, and accountability.
    - Support Samdhana staff growth and leadership development across the organization.
  - **Representation and Advocacy**
    - Serve as the primary spokesperson of Samdhana in regional and international forums.
    - Advocate for the rights and interests of grassroots movements in partnership with allies and coalitions.
    - Grow and strengthen the organization's roots in the region and its integrity through participatory knowledge management, effective communications and the development of strategic local and regional resource and support base not just generating flexible and sustained funding but also wider public support for its purpose and programmes.
  - **Governance**
    - Ensure compliance with legal and ethical standards in all jurisdictions of operation.
    - Support the development and management of a functional governing board with an accountable decision-making process that adopts fair and just policies and procedures and ensures subsequent fair and just implementation of these.
    - Support the effective participation and engagement of the Samdhana Fellows in their evolving roles in sustaining the organization and as actors in the social environmental movement in the Global South.
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## **Qualifications and Experience**

- Proven leadership and organizational management experience preferably in the civil society or non-profit sector, with at least 5 - 10 years in leadership, executive and/or management roles.
- Demonstrated success in resource mobilization and donor engagement.
- Strong understanding of the socio-political landscape in Southeast Asia, especially related to Indigenous rights, climate and environmental justice, and social and environmental movements.
- Experience in designing and managing complex, multi-stakeholder programs.

- Excellent people management and organizational development skills.
  - Proven commitment to Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) and rights-based leadership models.
  - Strong communication skills are required, with fluency in English. Proficiency in another SEA language i.e Bahasa Indonesia is highly desirable.
  - Strong and working understanding of the next generation activists and a digital future
  - Ability to travel regionally and internationally as needed.
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## **Desirable Attributes**

- Deep alignment with Samdhana's values of solidarity, justice, humility, and community empowerment; preferably a Samdhana Fellow and if not has worked with Samdhana in a certain capacity.
  - Experience working in or with grassroots movements, Indigenous Peoples, and/or local communities.
  - Familiarity with regional and global policy frameworks on Indigenous, human and environmental rights.
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## **Contract and Compensation**

The position is a full-time role. Compensation will be internationally competitive and commensurate with experience within the parameters of a mission-driven non-profit organization.

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## **Application Process**

Please submit the following to [hrd@samdhana.org](mailto:hrd@samdhana.org) by **30 September 2025, 17.00 Jakarta time** at the latest.

- A cover letter expressing interest and alignment with Samdhana's mission.
- A comprehensive CV.
- Names and contact details of three references.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.