Australia’s Group of Eight

The Group of Eight (Go8) is a coalition of Australia’s leading research universities. Go8 universities are distinguished by the intensity and breadth of the research they perform, the research-informed nature of the education they offer, and the leadership they bring to community consideration of complex issues.

The Go8 adds value for member universities and for Australia by:

- facilitating collaboration between Go8 universities;
- offering a trusted network through which the leaders and administrators of Go8 universities share ideas and expertise;
- influencing national policies for higher education and university research;
- sustaining quality brand recognition;
- building community support for research universities;
- developing international strategic alliances and networks; and
- benchmarking for performance improvement.

Government, business and community leaders recognise the Go8 as an authoritative and trusted source of policy advice and analysis. The Go8 informs and positively influences the policy agenda and is responsive to changes in the policy environment. In improving their performance and visibility, the Go8 universities play a critical role in preparing the current and next generation of leaders and innovators, discovering new knowledge, extending understanding and building relationships, locally and globally.
Characteristics of Go8 universities

Go8 universities can be distinguished in the following ways:

• Go8 universities are the most research-intensive of all Australian universities.
• They attract the highest levels of industry and competitive government grant funding for research.
• Various international rankings consistently rate Go8 universities as the top-tier institutions in Australia.
• Go8 universities have nurtured every Nobel Prize winner educated at an Australian university.
• They have much lower student staff ratios than other Australian universities.
• They attract the highest performing Australian school students.
• International students succeed at a similarly high level as Australian students.
• A focus on the teaching-research nexus at Go8 universities leads to the development of advanced curricula and research-based learning that produce distinctive graduates.
• They enrol over half of all higher degree by research students.
• Go8 alumni take up senior positions in professional life, business and government in Australia and other countries.

Go8 Leadership

Go8 universities invest in world-class research in order to drive discovery and innovation and to deliver world class education.

Go8 universities are leaders in medical and health research, and in translation of that research into both teaching and learning, and patient care.

The Go8 Quality Verification System promotes discussion on best practice in teaching and learning across institutions. It assists Go8 universities in maintaining and improving their academic standards and learning outcomes.

The Go8 Credit Transfer and Foundation Program agreements demonstrate the mutual recognition of high standards of teaching within the group.

Go8 research training has achieved domestic and international recognition. This is because of the high quality of the experience it provides, with access to world leading research infrastructure and facilities, supervision by leading researchers, an intellectually stimulating, diverse and supportive academic environment, and a rigorous, consistent and transparent assessment process.

Go8 committees meet regularly to collaborate on issues such as quality research training, credit transfer, international promotion, international research cooperation, human resource and financial management, planning and benchmarking as well as specific education and research disciplines.

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds have better outcomes in terms of retention and success at Go8 universities than at other Australian universities. Go8 universities provide particular opportunities in postgraduate education for Indigenous students and students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

International Engagement

Global partnerships enable our universities to operate at the cutting edge of research and innovation.

The Go8 seeks to collaborate with like-minded university consortia around the world and facilitate the participation of its member universities in leading centres for research and higher education.
The Group of Eight (Go8) is a coalition of leading Australian universities, intensive in research and comprehensive in general and professional education. The group has been operating as an informal network of vice-chancellors since 1994. It was formally incorporated in September 1999. The Go8 is governed by a Board, comprised of the current Vice-Chancellor of each of the eight member universities.

**Secretariat**

The Go8 secretariat, located in Canberra, Australia’s national capital, works to maximise the potential for collaboration in a competitive environment, adding value for individual universities and for Australia through:

- influencing national policies for higher education and university research;
- providing high quality policy analysis and advice services to its members and their staff;
- facilitating collaboration;
- developing international strategic alliances and networks;
- sustaining quality brand recognition;
- benchmarking for performance improvement;
- offering a trusted network through which ideas and expertise are shared among the leaders of Group of Eight universities; and
- building community support for research universities

**Mission**

The Go8 exists to:

- enhance the contribution of its member universities to the nation’s social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being and prosperity;
- extend the contribution of its member universities to the generation and preservation of the world’s stock of knowledge;
- strengthen Australia’s capacity to engage in and benefit from global developments, respond to global and local challenges; and
- expand opportunities for Australian students, regardless of background, to participate in world class higher education.
Position Statement

The Executive Director is the spokesperson, advocate and ambassador for Group of Eight universities, providing vision, leadership and outstanding management to one of the leading peak bodies in the higher education sector both in Australia and internationally. S/he ensures through policy leadership that member universities have a voice at all levels of government by representing and promoting their interests on current and emerging issues.

This is a unique opportunity for a dynamic and highly motivated leader with exceptional interpersonal skills and a passion for developing influential strategic communications and stakeholder engagement. Key to the position is the ability to build and maintain strategic relationships with stakeholders across the political spectrum; and to influence and engage with other thought leaders and executives in education at the local, state, national and international level.

Responsibilities

- Position the Group of Eight as a leading voice within the higher education sector.
- Develop, enhance and promote the collective interests of Group of Eight universities in Australia and internationally.
- Build and reinforce a heightened awareness of the contribution made by Group of Eight universities.
- Develop, manage and leverage key external relationships with government and with public, private and third sector enterprises.
- Provide high-level, strategic advice to the Board.
- Provide leadership to the Secretariat, ensuring that the day-to-day operations of the organisation are efficiently managed and that its resources are effectively deployed.
- Oversee the organisation’s finances within a framework agreed by the Board.

Required Skills, Experience and Attributes

- A postgraduate tertiary qualification in an appropriate discipline, or an equivalent combination of relevant qualifications and experience.
- Demonstrated advocacy experience and the capability to build highly productive relationships with stakeholders and thought leaders across the political spectrum.
- The capacity for effective and engaging high-profile representation in shaping, analysing and responding to government initiatives and policy.
- Exceptional communication and influencing skills, including demonstrated high level interpersonal, written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong, energetic and inclusive leadership style and demonstrated leadership capabilities.
- Proven ability to develop and implement strategic plans to deliver organisational objectives.
- Experience of developing, managing and monitoring organisational budgets.
- Experience in working with boards of directors providing professional, accurate and strategic advice.

Reporting to:
Chair, Group of Eight Limited.
How to apply

For a confidential discussion about this unique leadership opportunity please contact either of the consultants advising the Go8, Alun Parry and Kirsten Ludlow of Crown & Marks, on +61 2 9225 7400.

Written applications should be presented as follows:

1. A full CV containing the following information:
   a. Title, full name, address, daytime and evening telephone numbers, and email address;
   b. Present and previous roles, detailing key responsibilities and achievements in each role held;
   c. Details of education and professional training and qualifications; and
   d. Any other relevant information such as offices held in professional bodies, community service etc.

2. Names, titles, and contact details for three referees (please note that referees will not be contacted without specific prior written consent)

3. A supporting statement/cover letter outlining your claim upon the position.

Applications are to be emailed to Alun Parry aparry@crownmarks.com or Kirsten Ludlow kludlow@crownmarks.com by 10 June 2014.