



searchlight group

executive recruitment & advisory



Candidate Information Pack

General Manager Corporate Services

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ABOUT WAYSS

WAYSS is one of South East Melbourne’s leading providers of housing and family violence support. Established in the mid-1990s, it now has around 230 staff delivering a \$30m service portfolio across Greater Dandenong, Casey, Cardinia and the Frankston–Mornington Peninsula.

Family violence work has grown to represent approximately 60% of what WAYSS does, alongside its housing and homelessness work. A new chair and CEO have recently joined, bringing a period of leadership renewal to a close — the next chapter is about strengthening the operating platform and growing impact.

VISION, VALUES AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

VISION	PURPOSE
People have a safe home and freedom from discrimination and violence.	Provide housing and support options for people in our community experiencing family violence, housing insecurity and homelessness.

OUR VALUES		
Compassionate, inquisitive and non-judgemental in the way we work.	Courageous and not afraid to speak up when it matters.	Thoughtful and intentional in what we want to achieve.

Who we support

- Individuals and families from all backgrounds across Melbourne’s south-east region and beyond.
- We meet people on their own terms — working to their expressed needs and respecting their choices.
- We strive to ensure safe and equitable access to resources and support for everyone we work with.



WAYSS STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Strategic context

WAYSS's priorities for the next two to three years:

- Stabilise the operating platform, then drive disciplined growth.
- Diversify funding through Quality Improvement Council (QIC) accreditation — opening revenue pathways beyond DFFS, including the SE Melbourne Primary Health Network.
- A multi-year uplift of finance and client systems.
- Property efficiency rather than expansion, after a long period of portfolio growth.
- A productivity step-change across the organisation.
- Openness to strategic partnerships and consolidation opportunities over the medium term.

Our vision, values and the five strategic pillars guiding our work.

Five strategic pillars

01 Good quality housing options — and more of them	Tackle the chronic undersupply of accommodation in the south-east. Secure more housing and improve existing stock to better meet client needs.
02 Wrap-around supports tailored to individuals	Accommodation alone is not enough. Support clients into employment, education and training so they can sustain a positive trajectory.
03 A strong voice for a better future	Listen to the people we support and use what we hear to drive positive systemic change.
04 Support and invest in our people	Be an employer of choice — attract, retain and develop staff who live our values and have clear pathways to grow.
05 A sustainable, innovative and resilient organisation	Strong processes, systems and growth opportunities, with continuous reinvestment in our services and workforce.



ABOUT THE ROLE

Scope

Package	To be negotiated
Reports to	Chief Executive Officer
Direct reports	Team of 11 (2 part-time)
Scale	~\$30m revenue, ~230 staff
Location	Dandenong — single office
Working arrangement	Hybrid

“A stewardship role inside a \$30m, mission-driven organisation now in its rebuild-and-grow phase. Real scope to modernise the systems infrastructure, lead a quality-accreditation program that unlocks new funding, and shape the corporate services function for the next decade — alongside a commercially savvy CEO and a contained, capable team.”

The opportunity

As a peer to the rest of the Executive Leadership Team and a trusted partner to the CEO, this is a stewardship role at the centre of WAYSS’s rebuild-and-grow phase — with real scope to modernise the systems infrastructure, lead a quality-accreditation program that unlocks new funding, and shape the corporate services function for the next decade.

What this role will deliver

- Modernise the technology and applications stack — bringing finance, payroll and integration up to current standards.
- Lead the QIC quality-accreditation programme — a strategic enabler of funding diversification.
- Innovate how labour is tracked and costed across programs and funding streams.
- Lift the maturity of risk, quality and compliance — building the frameworks and capability for the next phase of growth.
- Drive efficiency in the property portfolio and productivity across corporate services.
- Be a commercially minded partner across the Executive — shaping strategy, not just running a function.

The team & culture

Corporate Services is a capable team of eleven across Finance & Administration, ICT, Quality, Risk & Compliance, and Facilities & Assets. Culture is evolving and settling, with a “brave conversations” program being warmly received. The workforce is around 90% female; WAYSS actively welcomes candidates who will broaden diversity at the senior table.

** A Position Description is available further in this document



ABOUT YOU

WAYSS is looking for a commercially minded executive who can strengthen the systems backbone of a mission-driven organisation and partner with the CEO and Executive to drive its next phase of growth. You will bring the following capabilities and experience.

Key selection criteria

- Relevant tertiary qualifications (finance, business management or a related field), current CPA or equivalent registration, and extensive experience in senior leadership roles in complex organisations — ideally in the property development or community housing sector.
- An extensive track record in executive leadership, with highly developed skills working with boards, peers, community, business and government stakeholders.
- Outstanding leadership and management skills within a dynamic environment, with effective people, financial and systems management, and a record of leading, motivating and developing teams to make strategic decisions that weigh risk, capability and impact.
- A track record in developing funding models and budgeting, and in building relationships across property, development and/or acquisitions.
- Demonstrated commercial acumen and strong organisational and project management, with highly developed influencing, negotiation and communication skills, both verbal and written.
- A proven ability to evaluate opportunities and develop solutions grounded in an understanding of the business, the regulatory environment and organisational objectives.
- Commercial management experience with a sound knowledge of contracting principles and financial modelling.
- Adept at managing multiple priorities and deadlines and responding positively to change, while navigating complex challenges and driving the organisation forward.
- A values-led, creative and supportive leadership style — demonstrating emotional intelligence, personal integrity and the ability to motivate and harness talent.

Values Alignment

- WAYSS embraces diversity and inclusion across its workforce and service delivery, and is responsive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQ and culturally and linguistically diverse communities, people living with a disability, and people of all ages. WAYSS is proud to be Rainbow Tick accredited.
- People with lived experience are warmly encouraged to apply.
- WAYSS is committed to being a child safe organisation, with zero tolerance of any abuse or maltreatment of children and young people — treating their rights, interests and safety as paramount.
- WAYSS values the voices of its clients, recognising that hearing from people with lived experience makes for higher-quality, safer services.
- WAYSS aligns with the MARAM framework, ensuring its services effectively identify, assess and manage family violence risk.
- WAYSS is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of its staff and to meeting its statutory obligations, including equal opportunity, occupational health and safety, privacy and trade practice.



HOW TO APPLY AND KEY DATES

Searchlight Group is managing this process on behalf of WAYSS. We would be delighted to hear from candidates who bring the capabilities described in this document, and who are genuinely motivated by the opportunity to contribute to WAYSS next chapter.

To apply, please provide:

- A cover letter (no more than two pages) outlining your specific skills and experience relevant to the capabilities identified in this document, and why you are motivated to join WAYSS. **You are not required to address all of the selection criteria separately.**
- A current curriculum vitae / resume

Applications must be submitted via the portal on the link: <https://searchlightgroup.com.au/jobs/general-manager-corporate-services/>

Please contact Michael Holdway, Managing Director, Searchlight Group, with any questions that you may have and/or for a confidential discussion.

Ph: 0400 006 513.

Key Dates

- Applications close at midnight on Wednesday 24th June 2026
- All applications will be acknowledged by email within 48 hours of receipt.
- Preliminary interviews with Searchlight Group will commence as suitable applications are received via a virtual platform (Zoom, Teams).
- Shortlisted candidates for panel interviews held by WAYSS will be notified accordingly including date/ time and location. Candidates may be asked to attend interviews in person. Travel arrangements will be discussed at the time if from outside of Victoria.
- Reference, qualification, Working with Children and police checks of preferred candidate (s) will take place after panel interviews.
- Candidates may also be required to disclose any interests that may affect their ability to perform in the role.

Candidates will be updated on their status at key decision points during the process. Please note that an Executive Search is being undertaken by Searchlight Group concurrent to the public advertisements.

Links

Annual Reports: <https://www.wayss.org.au/about/reports/>

Website: <https://www.wayss.org.au/>

ACNC: <https://www.acnc.gov.au/charity/charities/29427a12-2caf-e811-a95e-000d3ad24c60/profile>





Position Description

General Manager Corporate Services & Finance

Background

Wayss is the largest provider of family violence, homelessness, housing and services in the South East Melbourne area. Wayss exists so people can live a life free from family violence and have access to safe, sustainable, and affordable housing. Wayss beginnings can be traced back to the 1970s, when various charity groups sought to address a growing need for emergency accommodation services in the Westernport region of Melbourne.

Wayss Ltd was officially established in September 1997, after the Regional Housing Council ceased. Among the initial services included transitional housing for families, women and children escaping family violence and services for single adults and young people. Over the decades, Wayss has implemented and operated numerous housing, homelessness, and family violence services. Today, Wayss is the first point of contact for people experiencing, or who are at risk of, homelessness and / or family violence across the Local Government Areas of Greater Dandenong, Casey, and Cardinia, one of the most diverse communities in Victoria.

Wayss now have over 200 passionate team members, working across multiple locations throughout the Southern Melbourne region.

Position Purpose

Lead the organisation's corporate services and financial management functions to ensure strong governance, financial sustainability, and organisational resilience.

This role combines strategic financial leadership with oversight of corporate services, ICT, risk, compliance, facilities, asset management and major project governance to enable wayss to deliver on its strategic objectives and respond effectively to an increasingly complex operating environment.

The General Manager Corporate Services & Finance is a key member of the Executive Team and a trusted advisor to the CEO and Board.

Reporting Relationships

- Reports to: Chief Executive Officer
- Direct Reports: Finance, ICT, Corporate Services, Risk / Quality functions, Office/Facilities Management.
- Key Stakeholders: Executive Team, Board, Board Sub -Committees, external auditors, regulators, funders, project partners

1. Financial Strategy, Stewardship and Sustainability

- Lead development and implementation of financial strategy and long-term sustainability planning
- Oversee budgeting, forecasting, reporting, cashflow, and asset management
- Provide strategic financial advice, modelling and risk analysis
- Maintain robust financial controls and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements
- Drive performance through financial insight, data and benchmarking
- Support business cases, capital investments and growth opportunities

2. Corporate Services, Governance and Risk

- Lead compliance, legal coordination, quality and enterprise risk
- Ensure compliance with regulatory frameworks, contract requirements and acceptable risk parameters
- Oversee enterprise risk management framework
- Coordinate quality and accreditation processes, working closely with wayss leadership
- Support Board and Board subcommittees (Finance & Audit , Quality & Risk and Governance) reporting
- Lead coordinated response to critical incidents

3. ICT, Digital and Information Security

- Lead ICT and digital strategy
- Oversee infrastructure, systems, cyber security and data governance
- Ensure systems meet performance, accessibility and compliance requirements
- Drive digital transformation and continuous improvement
- Manage vendor and partner relationships

4. Programs, Projects and Property Development

- Oversee major organisational projects and programs, including smaller scale residential property developments
- Ensure strong governance over planning, budget and delivery
- Provide financial leadership in property development and housing initiatives
- Ensure projects are delivered on time, within budget and aligned to strategy
- Oversee facilities management, leasing and tenant relationships

5. Strategy and Organisational Performance

- Contribute to organisational strategy development
- Align financial and corporate services planning with strategy
- Provide insight into trends and risks, including alternative financial models
- Support performance monitoring and continuous improvement

6. Leadership and Culture

- Lead and develop high-performing teams
- Foster a culture of accountability and collaboration
- Build organisational financial capability
- Contribute and collaborate effectively as a member of the Executive Team

Key Selection Criteria

Qualifications

- Degree in accounting, finance or related discipline
- CPA or CA qualification (essential)

Experience

- Demonstrated outstanding senior leadership experience in finance or corporate services
- Demonstrated commercial acumen, strong organisational and project management, demonstrating highly developed influencing, negotiation verbal and written communication skills.
- Extensive track record in executive leadership and highly developed skills and experience working with Boards, peers, community, business, and government stakeholders.
- Outstanding leadership and management skills and experience within a dynamic environment, with effective people, financial and systems management, leading, motivating and developing teams to make strategic decisions considering risk, capability, and impact.
- Experience in financial management, governance and risk
- Experience in ICT, digital or project oversight
- Experience leading a diverse corporate services team

Capabilities

- Strong financial and commercial acumen
- Strategic thinking and systems perspective
- Ability to balance risk and growth
- Strong stakeholder engagement and leadership skills

Personal Attributes

- Values-driven and aligned to wayss mission
- Pragmatic, solutions-focused approach
- Strong judgement and ability to manage complexity
- Collaborative leadership style

What is important to wayss must be important to you

- At wayss, we embrace a culture of diversity and inclusion within our workforce and approach to service delivery. We are responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from LGBTIQ and culturally and linguistically diverse communities, people living with a disability and people of all ages. wayss is proud to be Rainbow Tick Accredited and welcomes everyone across the LGBTIQ community.
- We encourage people with lived experience to apply for roles at wayss.
- wayss is committed to being a child safe organisation. wayss has a zero tolerance of any abuse or maltreatment of children and young people. Every person who is part of the organisation must treat the rights, interests and safety of children and young people as paramount.
- wayss values the voices of our clients. We recognise that we deliver higher quality and safer services when we hear from people with lived experience. We are committed to providing opportunities for clients to participate and provide feedback on our service design and delivery.
- wayss aligns with the MARAM framework and ensures our services are effectively identifying, assessing and managing family violence risk.
- wayss is committed to the health, safety, and wellbeing of its staff. wayss and its staff must comply with a range of statutory requirements, including equal opportunity, occupational health and safety, privacy, and trade practice.



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Phone: (03) 9791 6111

wayss.org.au

Chief Executive Officer

General Manager, Corporate Services and Finance

CEO and Board Support

General Manager, Family Violence

General Manager, Homelessness and Housing

General Manager, People Enablement



