



**Funda  
Wande**

Reading for Meaning  
Calculating with  
Confidence

# Recruitment Of Chief Executive Officer





## Introduction

Funda Wandé is an influential non-profit organisation in the early grade reading and mathematics space in South Africa. It was founded by Dr Nic Spaul in 2017 at the request of the Allan Gray Orbis Foundation Endowment. The aim of the organisation was, and still is, to ensure that all children in South Africa learn to read for meaning and calculate with confidence by age 10 by 2030. The organization has grown rapidly from 5 employees in 2017 to over 50 employees in 2021. Funda Wandé creates high quality learning and teaching support materials, including videos and stills, and learning and teaching guides in African languages. The team includes literacy and numeracy specialists, language specialists, designers, formatters, project managers, administrators and operations personnel. We currently have programme interventions in 30 schools in the Eastern Cape, 80 schools in Limpopo and 50 schools in the Western Cape trialing various methods of improving early grade reading and mathematics. The three main interventions relate to using workbooks and teacher guides combined with three different methods of support: (1) specialist teacher-coaches (EC), (2) teacher assistants (LP), and (3) subject advisors (WC). All interventions are being independently evaluated through randomised control trials to create evidence for scale at national level. Funda Wandé is also involved in advocacy and policy engagement in the early grade reading and mathematics space.

The Founder and current CEO, Nic Spaul, is leaving Funda Wandé after five years in order to focus on thought leadership, advocacy and research. The Funda Wandé board will select the successful candidate who will fill the CEO role. The board is chaired by Prof Sizwe Mabizela who is supported by four other board members: Maya Makanjee, Dr Benjamin Piper, Anthony Farr and Zimkhitha Peter.



## Our Vision and Mission

Funda Wandé is a not-for-profit organization that aims to equip teachers to teach reading-for-meaning and calculating-with-confidence in Grades R-3 in South Africa. We do this by hiring the best people we can find and work as a team to create high-quality materials, experiment with different teacher training approaches, and independently evaluate everything we do. Our materials and training are created in the languages that children speak and understand and are freely-available for anyone to download and use (Creative Commons 4.0). Every year the South African government spends 99 times more money on education than all local and international philanthropies combined. That's why we believe that the best use of private money is influencing how public money is spent. It is also the only way to create impact at scale. We see our organization as a coral-reef that incubates programs and people that will eventually be incorporated into national and provincial government and civil society institutions. In order to influence government our programs and materials are all evidence-based, independently-evaluated, policy-aligned, cost-effective, politically-palatable and well-advocated. Everything we do is about prioritizing and thinking whether this will lead to all children learning to read for meaning and calculate with confidence by age 10 by 2030.

## The 2030 Goal

Funda Wandé has a well-established, explicit and measurable organisational goal that is commonly referred to internally as "the 2030 goal." In its simplest form this is as follows: "By 2030 all children in South Africa will learn to read for meaning and calculate with confidence by age 10." This goal is non-negotiable and part of the DNA and raison d'être of the organisation. While the goal is not up for debate, the means of reaching this goal are entirely flexible. In other words, we are stumbling forwards towards this goal, learning what works, how well it works, and in what contexts and constantly iterating based on our best collective thinking and the best evidence emerging in South Africa and internationally.

## Our Values: The Funda Wandé Way

- 1 Take initiative and be bold.** Don't wait to be asked to do something, be proactive, challenge each other, take risks. We don't have time for timidity and small-thinking. Be bold. Speak up.
- 2 Be flexible and adaptable.** Be open to changing and adapting based on new information and needs.
- 3 Teamwork:** To go far, go together Work as a team not just individually: "We not me". Collaboration > Competition. If we want to go far we have to go together, that means getting people's active buy-in and support, not coercing them or forcing them.
- 4 Delegate down & manage on objectively-verifiable time-bound goals.** Growth is built into the Funda Wandé Way. Delegate, trust and manage...or sink :)
- 5 Rigid on goals, flexible on process** The destination is fixed, how we get there isn't.
- 6 Trust:** Give people the benefit of the doubt.
- 7 Insist on high standards:** Speed and quality both matter.
- 8 Prioritise, prioritise, prioritise:** 60% of successful work is successful prioritisation.
- 9 Communicate clearly and often:** Communication is like oxygen. Be clear, be succinct and say exactly what you mean. Communicate proactively, concisely and transparently.



## The Funda Wandé Team

The Funda Wandé team is made up of 54 people located in four offices: the head office in Cape Town (24 people), and programmatic offices in Gqeberha (ex Port Elizabeth, 14 people), Polokwane (13 people), and Johannesburg (3 people). The team is highly self-motivated and are given a lot of autonomy to decide how to do their jobs as best they can. There is little micro-managing and where it exists it is discouraged. People are only hired if they are competent, and dedicated, and the type of people who take initiative and problem solve and thus they should be allowed to do so. Given that Funda Wandé is very similar to a startup, and subsequently that many of the roles are new and 'pop-up' with little lead time, there is also a lot of on-the-job learning. The team has two layers of management, a five person Executive Committee (ExCo) and a 10-person Management Committee (ManCo) that includes the ExCo. Both of these teams are competent and knowledgeable about all areas of Funda Wandé and retain and embody the organizational values of 'Funda Wandé Way.'



## The CEO should...

- Have a deep-seated vocation in the early reading and early mathematics space with an enduring commitment to ensuring all children learn to read and do mathematics in the first three years of school.
- Be strategic, forward-thinking, and willing to take risks.
- Be flexible, adaptable and comfortable with uncertainty. Interventions and circumstances change (and change again) at short notice and require the leadership team to respond appropriately. As a result teams and job descriptions morph and adapt frequently. The concept of “not my job” is foreign to Funda Wandé. People typically step in to fill short term vacuums but the leadership team (and the CEO) are required to constantly recalibrate the team (hiring more people, moving people around, changing job descriptions, promoting etc.). The CEO is expected to manage this changing scene in a coherent way.
- Be familiar with a shared services environment. Finance, Legal and HR are performed by the founding funder of Funda Wandé, (Allan Gray Orbis Foundation Endowment).
- Be confident in their abilities to understand and articulate Funda Wandé’s interventions and goals both internally and externally.
- Understand the education-related philanthropic ecosystem of South Africa – what funders look for, what funders require in terms of reporting and sign-off.
- Able to write, speak and present well.
- Be a relational leader and willing to work collaboratively, learning from and seeking advice from the ExCo and ManCo (especially in the first year) and the Board of Directors.
- Have strong interpersonal skills with high EQ, able to read between the lines, have difficult conversations, motivate and inspire people, sense and head off relational conflict at an early stage.
- Align with the organisational culture.
- Have a strong understanding of the early grade reading and early grade mathematics space. This includes understanding who the main ‘players’ are, what their motivations and concerns are, what are the key risks in the sector, what are the early warning signs of problems to come, what are the main opportunities presenting themselves in the coming years, and what the main unknowns are.
- Have a good understanding of how the DBE works, its directorates and role-players, and how it interfaces with provincial departments of education.
- Have a clear understanding of and be able to articulate concepts in the early grade reading and mathematics space such as scalability, cost effectiveness, replicability, quantitative and qualitative evaluation.
- Be able to inspire both the Funda Wandé team and the broader South African community to achieve the 2030 goal.

## ADDED ADVANTAGES

- Understand the benefits and limitations of quantitative and qualitative evaluations, and how quantitative and qualitative evidence might feed into the 2030 goal.
- Understand key points of contention regarding literacy and numeracy in the Foundation Phase in South Africa (for example, the Reading Wars, scripted lesson plans, contested notions of evidence etc.)
- Understand how early reading and mathematics develop within the child between Grade R and Grade 3.
- Understand the ‘main’ reading and mathematics interventions in South Africa since the Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS) and how the thinking has shifted following the outcomes of these interventions.



By 2030 all children  
in South Africa will  
read for meaning and  
calculate with confidence  
by age 10.





## Person Specification

- Be able to identify with Funda Wande's Vision, Mission and Ethos.
- Be a visionary leader, knowing where to take the organisation next, being able to create a clear and compelling picture of the best future for the organisation.
- Be a relational leader who brings out the best in the team.
- Have a proven track record of leadership within the education and development sector.
- Hold yourself and others to the highest standards of excellence and accountability.
- Be able to effectively lead an Executive team.
- Be able to work effectively with the Board of Directors.
- Be a gifted strategist, bringing clarity across the organisation by defining and measuring clear objectives.

## Person Specification

AREA	SPECIFICATION	ESSENTIAL	PREFERRED
Education	Tertiary		
	Postgraduate	x	
	Degree(s) in Education, Business, Economics, Philosophy or related		x
Leadership	Leadership role in a fast growing agile organisation	x	
	Minimum 4 years leading a team of senior managers	x	
Strategy	Experience in developing and implementing strategy	x	
Change Management	Has experience in leading organisational change	x	
Financial	Managed Annual budgets and financial processes	x	
Stakeholder Relationship Management	Managed stakeholder relationships	x	
Strategic Communication	Excellent communication skills	x	
Philanthropy/ Development Sector Experience	NGO work experience / exposure	x	
	Has experience in the strategic areas of Education, Economics & Development	x	
Analysis & Reporting	Managed Board level reporting and analysis	x	



## How To Apply

The position will be a permanent appointment and will be based in Cape Town. Candidates should be available to take up the position in August of 2021. Any questions regarding this position should be directed to ([linzii@allangrayorbisend.org](mailto:linzii@allangrayorbisend.org))

### APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

All applications should comprise:

- A cover letter, no longer than two pages, outlining your motivation and relevant experience for the role. The cover letter should also include the names of three referees. Please note that these referees will not be contacted until late in the process and with your prior agreement. Your application and the names referees will be held in strictest confidence.
- A full CV, including educational and professional qualifications, a full employment history showing the more significant positions, responsibilities held and relevant achievements.

### APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Applications should be submitted via our online BambooHR portal. Please go to [fundawande.bamboohr.com/jobs](https://fundawande.bamboohr.com/jobs)

### CLOSING DATE

31 May 2021



# Contact



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For more information, and to  
access all of our resources visit

**fundawande.org**

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