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THE POSITION AND THE PERSON

Title: National Chief Executive Officer

Reports to: The Chair, MIFA Board of Directors

**Location:** Remote (home based)

Location within easy commute to Canberra and Sydney

**Salary:** Executive package to be negotiated

NFP salary sacrifice available

**About MIFA**

Established in 1994, MIFA is a national federation of mental health organisations supporting people with severe and complex mental health challenges. Our six member organisations, Mental Health Foundation (ACT), MIFWA (WA), MIFA(NT), Karakan (SE QLD), selectability (regional QLD), and Skylight Mental Health (SA) provide frontline support to individuals, families and carers.

MIFA advocates to governments for mental health reform. We work collaboratively with national and state/territory mental health peak bodies to amplify the voices of lived experience.

MIFA contributes to Parliamentary Inquiries and formal consultations. We meet with Federal Ministers, Shadow Ministers and parliamentarians to advocate for reform. MIFA leads 40 organisations in a national advocacy campaign to close the gap in psychosocial support. Each year, we conduct two Parliament House Dinners for the Parliamentary Friends of Mental Health, two national media campaigns, and two roundtable discussions of national mental health peak bodies and Government.

MIFA auspices [Finding North](https://findingnorth.org.au/), a website designed to help people understand and navigate the mental health system in Australia. [Finding North Network](https://findingnorthnetwork.com.au/) is a safe, exclusive online platform for people with first hand experience of a mental health condition to connect with eachbother and with information to assist them to develop their lived experience leadership. A ‘Rights in Action’ training and development initiative strats in 2025 to further develop lived experience advocacy skills and opportunities. Each year Finding North conducts the [Perspectives](https://findingnorth.org.au/news-and-events/events/perspectives-2025/#:~:text=Perspectives%202025%20will%20focus%20on%20Amplifying%20Lived%20Experience,for%20updates%20on%20dates%2C%20speaker%20submissions%2C%20and%20more%21)  online symposium.

[Out From The Mist](https://www.outfromthemist.com/) is an international phjotography, music and short film competition that attracts over 200 entries from over 20 countries each year. The annual exhibition and awards night is held in the prestigious Judith Wright Centre and is streamed globally. Travelleing exhibitions are held nationally each year.

Further information about us and our work can be found at [Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia Inc](https://mifa.org.au/).

# Overview of the Position

As the National CEO you will work under the direction of the MIFA Board and will assume responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the organisation. With a modest resource base and the support of a small remote team, you will work closely with MIFA members to ensure that their interests are well represented from a government policy, funding, service delivery and public awareness perspective.

The MIFA CEO is a key national influencer of mental health social policy and reform, with strong relationships with key decision-makers, and should ensure that MIFA continues to be acknowledged as an authentic and up-to-date source of information on mental illness related issues.

# Key Responsibilities

* + Identify advocacy priorities within mental health reform and develop strategies and campaigns to effect reform
  + Identify and pursue opportunities to respond in person and in writing to relevant government policies and reforms, through submissions, appearances before inquiries and meetings with politicians and government staff.
  + Proactively lobby at a national and state level to support MIFA and member organisations to achieve policy and service outcomes consistent with and supporting the principles, priorities and strategic objectives of MIFA.
  + Assist members with Commonwealth funding issues affecting their organisation and advise on the impact of policy decisions.
  + Generate public awareness and discussion about matters to do with mental health, through the media, in conferences and other forums, and through a variety of awareness campaigns.
  + Ensure coordinated management and resourcing of agreed national projects, many of which are led by other MIFA member CEOs.
  + Facilitate collegial opportunities for the MIFA membership to share knowledge and capabilities to progress joint initiatives and find solutions to common challenges.
  + Identify external resources to support the work of MIFA (additional to contributions from members (who currently provide about 22% of the MIFA Core budget)
  + Support the financial, governance and strategic activities of the Board.
  + Manage MIFA in accordance with the principles of effective governance, including compliance with all funding, statutory and regulatory requirements.
  + Provide regular reports to the Board on the activities of the National CEO and project teams

## Relevant Experience

Our next CEO will be an ambassador for the mental health sector, championing the perspectives of consumers and carers, and the value of the not-for-profit service provider sector. They must be able to win and hold the respect of other key sector leaders, political and bureaucratic decision-makers, and people with lived experience.

Career familiarity with this sector would be advantageous.

At a personal level, lived experience with a mental health challenge (and/or family/caring responsibilities), while not required, would also be favorably considered.

You will be a skilled and proven executive with deep leadership and representational experience, preferably gained in a federated or similar environment.

Your first-class leadership, communication and advocacy skills will enable you to generate opportunities in a complex sector where success will depend in large part on your interpersonal and relationship building capabilities.

You will also have a good understanding of government processes and, in particular, policy development and funding issues. Professional and/ personal knowledge of mental health services will be highly regarded, as will media experience, including the use of social media.

## Skills, Knowledge and Personal Attributes

The current key performance indicators are set out in the appendix below and will be negotiated with the successful applicant. Nonetheless, the appointee will be expected to:

* Possess a high level of professional and personal integrity.
* Demonstrate sound judgement and a balanced and professional approach.
* Have the ability to communicate effectively with both lay, lived-experience and professional audiences through a variety of mediums including in the media.
* Have a good understanding of the intersection of the government, private and NGO sectors in terms of mental health service provision.
* Have a proven capacity to develop and sustain strategic and collaborative working relationships across sectors to deliver system level outcomes.
* Be articulate, persuasive and capable of guiding negotiations to a point of resolution in a facilitative and respectful way.
* Be capable of engendering loyalty and respect and generating a high level of support from member organisations.
* Be comfortable working in a small organisation and in a 'hands on' position.
* Understand and support a geographically spread, diverse team to ensure a positive culture, connectedness to the organisation, and a commitment to work/life balance.

**APPENDIX – KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

**Results Area 1: Strategic Objectives – Advocacy**

* 1. MIFA amplifies the voice of lived experience (individuals and families and carers).
  2. MIFA identifies what needs to change to reform the mental health system and how to change it.
  3. MIFA raises awareness to reduce discrimination.
  4. MIFA builds a strong partnership with lived experience leadership to contribute to advocacy.
  5. The MIFA Network brings together the knowledge and skills of its members to enhance our advocacy.

**Results Area 2: Strategic Objectives - Sustainability**

2.1 MIFA’s financial sustainability is secure across all its operational areas.

**Results Area 3: Strategic Objectives Lived Experience Leadership**

* 1. MIFA is seen as a strong, collaborative, and valued ally to the lived experience community.
  2. MIFA builds its capacity to embed lived experience leadership systematically, organisationally, and individually.

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* 1. MIFA supports a strong lived experience sector and actively contributes to thought leadership in this space.
  2. MIFA and the Finding North initiative is a trusted source of information, inspiration, connection, and doorway to lived experience opportunities.

**Results Area 4: Strategic – Recognition**

* 1. MIFA is recognised for the role it plays in empowering lived experience leadership.
  2. MIFA is recognised for the role it plays in leading national mental health reform through collaboration and partnership-building.
  3. MIFA is connected to and valued by the mental health sector and Government.