



# Position Specification

Chief Executive Officer  
LifeSource

Private and Confidential

### Our Client

The Upper Midwest Organ Procurement Organization, doing business as LifeSource, is the nonprofit, federally designated organ procurement organization (OPO) dedicated to saving lives through organ, eye and tissue donation in the Upper Midwest, serving more than seven million people in communities across Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Western Wisconsin. LifeSource facilitates organ, eye and tissue donation between hospitals and transplant centers, supports families and patients by honoring their decisions and educates the community about the impact of donation.

Established in 1989, LifeSource serves the second largest designated service area in the country, as one of the 57 federally designated OPOs across the United States. With over 100,000 people nationally on the waiting list for life-saving transplants, of which over 3,000 are residing in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Western Wisconsin area, LifeSource success requires a trusted network of partnerships and community participation. As a result, LifeSource partners with nearly 300 hospitals, 9 transplant centers and various tissue and eye banks—as well as medical examiners, coroners and funeral directors—throughout its designated service area to ensure all potential donors and their families have the opportunity to donate organs, eyes and tissues to help those in need.

LifeSource has enjoyed great sustained success, with a stellar reputation, due to extraordinary leadership and strong support from clinical partners and advocates throughout the region. The organization is dedicated to performance improvement and for over 10 years has applied the Malcolm Baldrige Excellence Framework and Criteria for Performance Excellence and has been awarded the Performance Excellence Award, the highest state level recognition. In 2021, LifeSource achieved a 10% year-over-year increase in the number of organ donors, the second highest number in its 32-year history saving 572 lives and a record number of tissue and eye donors. Last year, LifeSource team members pursued new methods to save or stop time – the pervasive enemy in donation and transplantation. Progress made included:

- **10-Mile Test Flight:** MissionGO, LifeSource & Mercy Hospital transported the [world's first human pancreas via unmanned aircraft](#).
- **Real-Time Organ Tracking:** GEGO global tracking devices are now attached to organ packages and provide real-time data to LifeSource and transplant centers throughout the process.
- **Investment in Organ Bank Research:** LifeSource joined The University of Minnesota and others across the country in forming a [Biostasis Research Institute](#) in pursuit of creating a human “organ bank.”
- **5 New Director Roles to Support Our Bold Aims of Saving More Lives & Inclusion:** Focus areas included Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Hospital Services, Human Resources, Information Services and Organizational Outcomes.
- **15 New Hospital Liaison Roles:** In support of the new “Hospital Collaboration Model” implemented in 2021, LifeSource team members are on-site at hospitals regularly to support care teams with existing and potential donation referrals.

These longer-term investments will help reach the goal to transplant 1,000 organs in 2027 – a 65 percent increase from 2021.

In 2021, LifeSource generated \$73.5 million in service-related and other revenue, with expenses of \$68.4 million, resulting in a net income of \$5.1 million. LifeSource maintained strong financial performance in 2021 based on the agility and resilience of the organization responding quickly to the unpredictable and unprecedented changes that have in the entire health care industry during the COVID-19 pandemic.

LifeSource is governed by an engaged, dedicated and professional Board of Directors including diverse voices from community leaders, donor family members, transplant recipients, hospital executive leaders, transplant surgeons and business executives, all driven to advance the strategic plan. Valued medical and clinical guidance from the Clinical Policy Board enhances organizational effectiveness in delivery of expert donation services.

LifeSource is certified by The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, accredited by the Association of Organ Procurement Organizations and the American Association of Tissue Banks, and is a member of the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), a private, non-profit organization established by the U.S. Congress in 1984 that manages the nation’s organ transplant system under contract with the federal government.

To learn more about LifeSource and the organization’s impact in the Upper Midwest, please visit: [www.life-source.org](http://www.life-source.org)

### **The Role**

Reporting to, and working closely with, the Board of Directors, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will provide the strategic, operational and financial leadership of the organization and ultimately be accountable for ensuring LifeSource increases the number of organ, eye and tissue donations available for those in need of transplant. Through the Sr. Leadership Team, the CEO is responsible for the overall management and day-to-day leadership of LifeSource’s operations and administrative staff functions, activities and programs. The CEO will be charged with leading LifeSource during a crucial time in its history, following the retirement of the organization’s founder and longtime CEO Susan Gunderson, as well as a critical time for federally designated organ procurement organizations across the country. In collaboration with the Board of Directors and senior leadership, the CEO will reinforce current and introduce new targeted and swift strategic and operational initiatives to safeguard the organization’s position as the trusted OPO partner for the Upper Midwest, while enhancing the organization’s long-range strategic objectives.

The CEO will develop and sustain collaborative relationships with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders to expand and enhance LifeSource’s impact and identify opportunities for the organization

to engage in discussions and support efforts that will ensure the achievement of unbeatable results on behalf of Midwesterners. Leveraging a combination of deep integrity, passion, strategic vision, operational stewardship, innovative thinking and change management principles, the Chief Executive Officer will establish and operationalize a path for success that will advance LifeSource's mission and propel the organization forward as one of the top performing OPOs in the country, as defined by CMS Tier 1 OPO classification. The CEO will work every day to ensure LifeSource saves lives, provides comfort, and strengthens legacies through organ, eye, and tissue donation.

*Specific responsibilities include:*

- Providing strategic vision and focus for a large, diverse, ambitious nonprofit organization, including actionable priorities, measurable goals and proactive timelines which will ensure LifeSource exceeds the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services OPO Tier One metrics and standards.
- Commit to achieving LifeSource's Bold Aims Initiatives:
  - Save 1,000 lives through organ donation and transplant in 2027, an increase of 57% over any prior year to date. This will require a reimagining of the organ donation service delivery model and sustaining annual gains.
  - Ensure LifeSource's workforce reflects the diversity of the community by 2025, meaning the percentage of people of color will need to reach 22% (up from 11% currently).
  - Work towards equity in participation in donation to ensure people of color feel comfortable saying yes to donation at the same rates as Caucasian populations.
- Support continued development of board governance policies and best practices to further the impact and mission of LifeSource.
- Develop and strengthen the organization's infrastructure and capacity with increased transparency and standardized policies and procedures.
- Champion change with an enduring and unwavering commitment to LifeSource's mission to ensure the organization continues to thrive as the nation's second largest OPO.
- Effectively manage, recruit, develop, and inspire a diverse, collaborative, high-performing team that is committed to excellence.
- Build, maintain and continually inspire a collaborative and empowering work environment to achieve the highest standards of performance and accountability.
- Develop and maintain strong collegial relationships with LifeSource partners and internal and external stakeholders throughout the organization's distributed network.

**Reporting Relationships**

- Reports to:
- LifeSource Board of Directors
- Direct Reports:
- Chief Strategy Officer
  - Chief Operations Officer
  - Chief Administrative Officer
  - Medical Director
  - Director of Transplant Center Relations
  - Executive Assistant
- Relates to Externally:
- Government regulators and other agencies
  - Hospitals and health systems
  - Transplant Centers
  - Tissue and eye banks
  - Elected officials, community partners and leaders
  - Donors and their families, transplant recipients and their families

**Location:** LifeSource’s headquarters is in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Relocation to the Twin Cities is strongly preferred for this position.

**The Twin Cities**

The next CEO of LifeSource will be warmly welcomed by the organization and the broader community. The Twin Cities is a dynamic metropolitan area that is a global economic leader, a hub for education and culture and renowned for its abundant cultural and natural resources. The Minneapolis-St. Paul metro is home to the 4<sup>th</sup> largest concentration of Fortune 500 companies in the country as well as thriving entrepreneurial and small-business sectors. Ranked as one of the country’s leading “creative economy” communities, the Twin Cities is renowned for its arts and nonprofit sectors, as well as its many lakes, rivers and parks providing a wealth of recreational and entertainment opportunities.

With over 3 million people, Minneapolis and St. Paul make up the 14th largest metropolitan area in the country. Downtown Minneapolis is energetic, convenient and picturesque with a postcard-pretty skyline, a comfortable feel and a vivacious atmosphere, with the Mississippi River winding through it. The Saint Paul area is rich in history, natural beauty and charm, and contains many of the state’s historic sites, the state’s capitol and the Minnesota History Center. It is an area that has preserved distinctive architecture, cherished nature’s beauty and offers a wide range of shopping and dining experiences.

The Twin Cities area is considered the capital for the arts in the Upper Midwest. There is a very high per-capita attendance of theatrical, musical and comedy events across the area, which may be attributed to the large number of colleges and universities providing strong supply and demand for arts. There are more theater seats per capita here than in any other American city, except New York City.

From quaint small-town celebrations to one of the largest state fairs in the nation, there is an event to attend every weekend no matter the time of year. Whether you are an outdoor enthusiast, a theatergoer, or someone who loves to shop, the metro area has an activity to fit your interests and budget. Visitors will find upscale lodging, dining and award-winning theater, all in an area with dozens of parks, trails and green space, including the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, a national park site that boasts 72 miles of public riverfront.

There are several lakes in the region, and cities in the area have some very extensive park systems for recreation. Studies have shown that area residents take advantage of this and are among the most physically fit in the country. This connectedness with the outdoors also brings a strong sense of environmentalism to many Minnesotans.

### **Candidate Profile**

LifeSource is seeking a dynamic, passionate, visionary, strategic and operationally savvy leader capable of leading a multifaceted and mission-driven organization. The ideal candidate will have a minimum of ten years of progressive leadership experience operating within a complex and collaborative environment, with a demonstrated capacity for providing strategic organizational leadership and outstanding interpersonal skills. This individual must be professionally respected and experienced, results oriented, data-driven, and decisive, while possessing a poised, confident, and energetic demeanor, with a demonstrated ability, grounded in change management principals, to lead LifeSource during a time of great evolution and transformation.

With an agile, nimble and action-oriented leadership style, this individual will have proven success in leading through vision, communication, inspiration, and action. A master relationship-builder, they will be capable of readily convening and partnering with key stakeholders, leveraging a direct and diplomatic communication style, to define a successful strategy for increasing the procurement of organs and tissues throughout the Upper Midwest. This individual will have a track record of building bridges and developing relationships in a variety of settings with diverse constituencies, as demonstrated through a broad and deep professional network. As a curious and futuristic thinker, this individual will bring a fresh perspective and passion for addressing the challenges associated with securing and increasing organ donation. The ideal candidate will be capable of developing a sophisticated understanding of the policy environment and serve as a passionate ambassador for the organization, whether it be in front of a camera giving an interview on national television or in someone's living room. This individual will be well positioned to lead LifeSource into its next era of visibility and impact to include pursuing innovative

solutions and making bold yet well-informed decisions that will ensure the organization provides lifesaving and life-improving organs and tissues to hospitals and transplant centers and their patients throughout Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Western Wisconsin.

*In terms of the performance and personal competencies required for the position, we would highlight the following:*

**Passion and Shared Values:** The successful candidate will have a passion for increasing organ, eye and tissue donation, supporting families and patients through the process and educating the community on the impact of organ donation with an understanding and sensitivity to the needs of marginalized and vulnerable communities. They must have an absolute commitment towards improving the process of organ donation in a way that preserves the dignity of donors and recipients through meaningful and thoughtful interactions focused on their holistic well-being. The successful candidate will have demonstrated the necessary fortitude and resilience for mission driven work across their career and be implicitly anchored by LifeSource’s mission, vision, and values.

**Strategic Vision:** The successful candidate will have a demonstrated record of setting priorities and leading organizations to success. They will be a strategic thinker who will collaborate with senior staff and Board of Directors to establish plans and infrastructure to achieve its mission, while providing the strategic direction necessary to evolve the organization. This individual will bring demonstrated experience in leveraging creative, data-driven, results-oriented thinking, and a capability for working with others to develop differentiated strategies with multifaceted approaches to address an issue area affecting diverse constituencies, cultures, and within changing political contexts. They will be able to articulate LifeSource’s vision and identify an actionable agenda that includes aggressive yet realistic goals to spur change. The successful candidate will have experience in using best-in-class benchmarks to measure impact and drive institutional accountability.

**Organization Management and Leadership Style:** An innovative, broad, and global thinker, the successful candidate will bring a consistent track record of empowering, motivating, and mentoring a highly skilled team, building a strong and cohesive organizational culture, and providing oversight for financial assets. They will have the capacity to effectively collaborate with multiple constituents including external stakeholders, government and legislative leaders, and the Board of Directors. Committed to cultivating a flat, lean, and efficient organization, this individual must be an involved and inclusive leader who can readily set strategic direction for the organization, prioritize, and define clear goals for staff, and manage performance toward achievement of those goals. The successful candidate will be an inspirational leader who embraces a culture of openness, transparency, and mutual respect, thereby believing deeply in the distinctive promise of differentiated individuals. They will bring a demonstrated ability to recruit, cultivate, support, and retain talent – with an unwavering commitment to diversity and inclusion.

**Building Relationships and Using Influence:** While the successful candidate must be a decisive, strategic leader, this individual must also have outstanding interpersonal skills. The successful candidate must possess the ability to mobilize and empower others towards a common goal. They will be an inspiring and persuasive communicator who can articulate LifeSource's vision and direction effectively through mass media, debate, advocacy, public speaking, writing, networking, fundraising and one-on-one discussions. This individual will be a collaborator, empathetic motivator, and movement builder. The individual must have the ability to build relationships and use influence effectively to accomplish LifeSource's Bold Aims Initiatives. This individual must also be able to represent the organization externally and be seen as an outstanding communicator: articulate and persuasive, able to convince others to act on information or recommendations based on compelling logic or common best interests.

**Interpersonal acumen:** The successful candidate will be a courageous, resilient, compassionate, and motivational leader with an unwavering commitment to LifeSource's mission. This individual must be able to inspire trust, commitment, and optimism within LifeSource while persevering in the face of challenges. The ideal candidate will be self-assured and sufficiently grounded not to be distracted by the public scrutiny that may come with the position. The successful candidate will need to readily master the organizational and political environment and must command an intellectual capacity to think critically and strategically and make decisions with deliberation and creativity. The ideal candidate maintains a healthy, balanced ego and is intrinsically service-oriented. This individual will be gracious in manner and comfortable in a wide variety of settings. They will be confident enough to hire and retain strong, intelligent staff members, valuing the contributions of diverse points of view, and possess a grounded understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses. The successful candidate should also demonstrate flexibility and a willingness to learn with a track record of the highest personal and professional integrity.

**Judgment:** The successful candidate will have demonstrated the ability to make timely and clearly communicated decisions and embrace a mentality for taking appropriate risks to achieve results. Likewise, they will be thoughtful to ensure they are deploying resources in a way that maximizes outcomes aligned with LifeSource's mission and vision. This individual will listen to, and learn from, key stakeholders inside and outside of the organization and as such be an inclusive while also independent thinker, who can manage ambiguity and devise solutions even when a clear path is not evident.

### **Experience & Education**

- Baccalaureate degree required, with master's degree in business administration, health care administration or management, population health or a related field preferred.
- Experience leading a health care related organization with direct oversight of strategic planning, operations, infrastructure, budgeting and finance, and an established reputation for instilling accountability and measurable goals to ensure consistent progress towards desired outcomes.
- History of leading transformative change in a given industry or community around a particular issue area.
- Possess solid financial acumen with budgetary and P&L management experience.

- Proven ability to conceive, test, communicate and implement an effective vision, strategy, objectives and goals over a multi-year timeframe.
- Capacity to successfully navigate in a complex and interdependent environment with a demonstrated talent of working with, and through, others to accomplish objectives outside direct span of control.
- Ability to work effectively and in partnership with a Board of Directors.
- Ability to appreciate and collaborate with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders from diverse cultural, professional, organizational and functional backgrounds.
- Ability to serve as an external face of the organization and communicate complex information to the public, constituents, government leaders and additional partners in a clear, concise and persuasive manner.
- Ability to ensure the organization's compliance with local, state and federal guidelines, laws and regulations.
- A broad knowledge and appreciation of the opportunities and challenges associated with organ, eye, and tissue procurement in America.
- Understanding and appreciation for the nuances of navigating the political landscape and regulatory components of operating an OPO within the Upper Midwest and within the federal government, and as a result can envision how to activate governmental entities to pursue avenues which will increase the availability of donor organs and tissues throughout the designated service area and the country.

**Setting Strategy**

- The ability to create and articulate an inspiring vision for LifeSource, demonstrating expansive inventive thinking in seeking innovative approaches to complex problems.
- An entrepreneurial and creative approach to developing new, innovative ideas that will stretch the organization and push through roadblocks to success.
- Embrace to a strategy of continuous performance improvement to drive results.

**Executing for Results**

- A natural inclination to thrive in environments where established quantitative national metrics and benchmarks define success, and the ability to adapt nimbly and lead others through complex problem-solving.
- A leader who is viewed by others as having a high degree of integrity and forethought in their approach to making decisions; the ability to act in a transparent and consistent manner while always considering what is best for the organization.

**Leading Teams**

- The ability to attract and recruit top talent, motivate the team, delegate effectively, celebrate diversity within the team, and manage performance; widely viewed as a strong developer of others.

- A leader who is self-reflective and aware of their own limitations; leads by example and drives the organization's performance with an attitude of continuous improvement by being open to feedback and self-improvement.

**Relationships and Influence**

- Naturally connects and builds strong relationships with others, demonstrating strong emotional intelligence and an ability to communicate clearly and persuasively.
- An ability to inspire trust and followership in others through compelling influence, powerful charisma, passion in their beliefs, and active drive.
- Creates a sense of purpose and meaning for the team that generates followership beyond their own personality and engages others to the greater purpose of LifeSource as a whole.

LifeSource is committed to creating a diverse, inclusive and welcoming workplace with opportunities for all individuals to thrive. LifeSource is an equal opportunity employer and strongly encourages BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, veterans, persons with disabilities, members of marginalized communities and non-traditional applicants to apply.

**Contact****Danielle Lafhaj**

Russell Reynolds Associates  
1700 New York Avenue, NW Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20006-5208  
Tel: +1-202-654-7800  
Direct: +1-202-654-7841  
Mobile: +1-480-861-6797  
danielle.lafhaj@russellreynolds.com

**Sarah Eames**

Russell Reynolds Associates  
277 Park Avenue, Suite 3800  
New York, NY 10172  
Tel: +1-212-351-2000  
Direct: +1-212-351-2261  
Mobile: +1-917-783-9661  
sara.eames@russellreynolds.com