



CANDIDATE BRIEF FOR
THE POSITION OF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**OUTWARD BOUND
HONG KONG™**

I. Introduction

Outward Bound Hong Kong has been serving Hong Kong for 55 years, providing the highest-quality experiences in the outdoors for its young people. We are now seeking applications to become the 6th Executive Director to lead this established and successful organisation into the next stage of its development.

As Hong Kong evolves after the challenges of the pandemic this is a superb opportunity for the right candidate to build on decades of strong reputation and community support, with considerable opportunity for the organisation to position itself as not only a leader in Hong Kong, but across the region and the OB International network.

The successful candidate will bring a strong track record of leadership and strategic development. With evident interpersonal skills and the ability to engage our stakeholders, this opportunity would suit candidates who are passionate about the values of OBHK and serving Hong Kong's young people.



"Spirit" sailing with participants through Victoria Harbour

2. About Outward Bound Hong Kong

Founded in 1970, Outward Bound Hong Kong is recognised as a leading provider of outdoor experiential education in Hong Kong and the region. Each year 6000 participants, predominantly young people aged 11-24 benefit from the experiences provided by our staff in the seas, hills, coastlines, crags and gorges of western Hong Kong.

Through delivery of our Educational Framework, OBHK works to deliver its **Vision** and **Mission**;

OBHK Vision

*Resilient individuals
Effective communities
A stronger Hong Kong*

Our vision is individuals who are a catalyst for change in our communities because they have identified their strengths and developed their potential, leading to a stronger society.

OBHK Mission

Outward Bound Hong Kong is a non-profit organisation created to help people discover and develop their potential to care for themselves, others and the world around them through challenging experiences in unfamiliar settings.

OBHK operates from 3 physical sites which provide ideal platforms to serve groups from different demographics and access suitable environments to meet groups' needs.

Tai Mong Tsai (TMT) This is our 'main' base where, in addition to delivering the majority of our courses, we also house the operations staff and maintain the offices and operations support functions. TMT was the 'original' site which was acquired in 1970 on a government lease and includes accommodation for approximately 120 participants.

The Tai Mong Tsai base provides unmatched access to our operating areas



Ah Kung Wan (AKW) AKW, a waterfront ‘satellite’ site close to TMT, includes a ropes course and building with training space, kitchen, showers and changing rooms.

Wong Wan Chau (WWC) Recently refurbished as a result of donation from a close funding partner, WWC is a superb location. Located in a Marine Park, there are no major settlements nearby, enabling access to remote islands, bays and beaches by kayak and longboat. As a result, it provides the perfect platform for impactful and memorable courses.

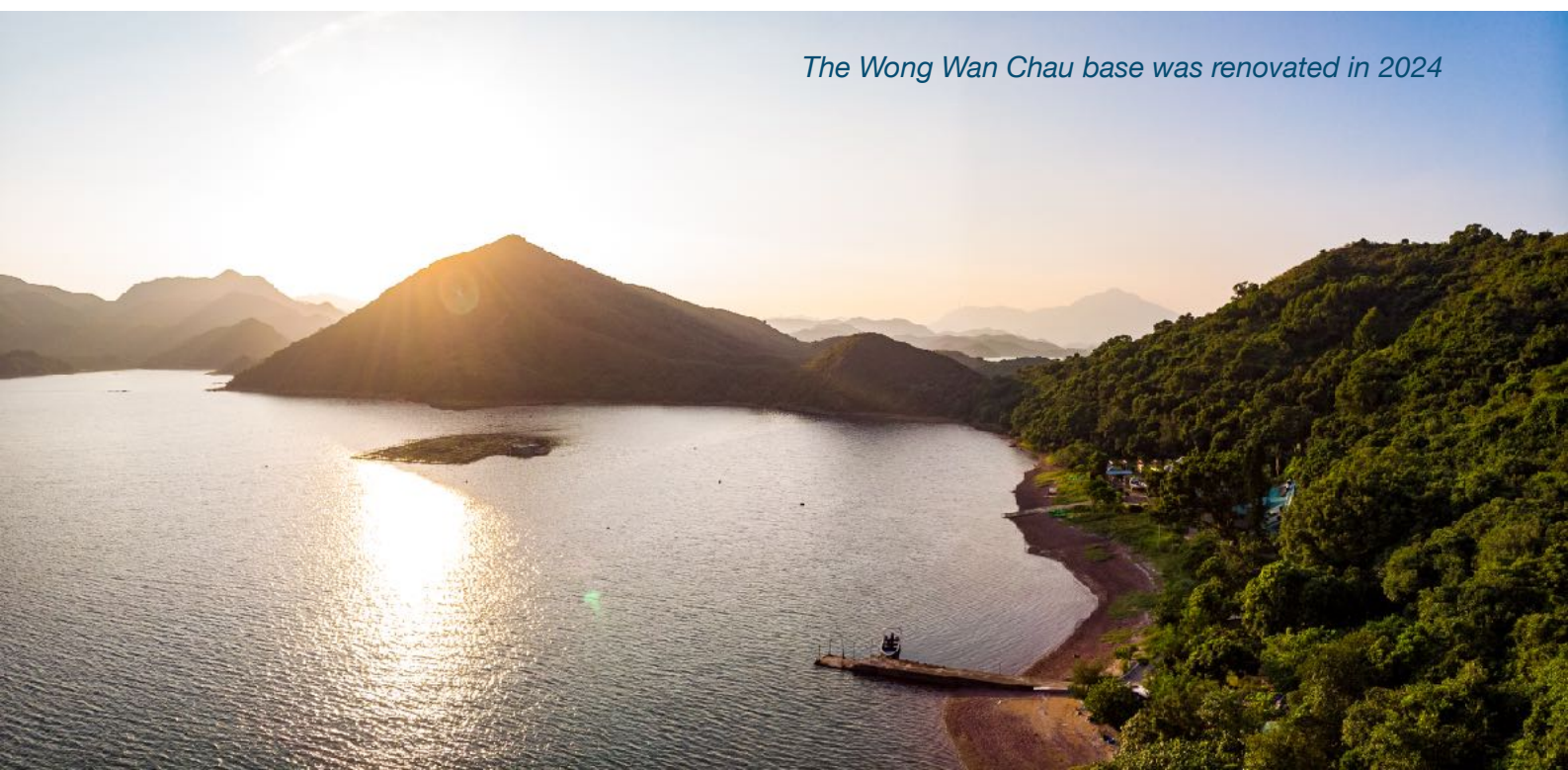
In addition to our 3 physical sites OBHK operates the **Spirit of Outward Bound Hong Kong**. “Spirit” is a 67ft yacht that serves predominantly under-privileged and at-risk youth and serves as a very public reminder of OBHK’s sailing history. Additionally, in 2023 and 2024 she completed offshore voyages with novice crews which further raised the profile of sailing at OBHK.

These resources allow OBHK to deliver transformative experiences to approximately 6500 participants each year across approximately 30,000 participant days. 70% of revenue is derived from School partners, with roughly 10% contributed by each of community courses, open enrolment courses and corporate courses. Total revenue in 2024 is expected to be HKD\$35 million.

OBHK employs 75 full-time staff, of which approximately 65% are operational field staff. Operational staff are all full-time and complete a 3-month training academy before completing their on-the-job experience which takes around 9 months before they are fully operational. 20% of field staff are recruited from overseas.

OBHK has been accredited by the Association of Experiential Education since 2013.

The Wong Wan Chau base was renovated in 2024





Coasteering in the environment immediately surrounding the main base

3. Outward Bound International

Outward Bound Hong Kong is an active and enthusiastic part of the Outward Bound International global network. In the past OBHK has been represented on the OBI Board and Operations Committee and continues to have significant representation. Further, our staff have been energetic contributors to World Conferences and Regional Staff Symposium, as well as working with partner schools to provide technical support and staff development.

Of particular note is the development in 2020 of Outward Bound in Hubei province, China. OBHK has supported the successful licence application and several OBHK Board members serve on the OB Hubei Board. OBH field staff have joined OBHK training academies and our staff continue to travel to Hubei frequently to provide support as they move towards a full license. This relationship is expected to continue and grow, providing mutual benefits to both organisations.



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4. The Person

There is no typical professional background nor 'qualification' that defines the ideal candidate. Suitable candidates are likely to be able to have considerable professional experience in the following attributes;

- **Leadership** - the Executive Director is expected to represent the Trust in a wide range of settings including funders, policy makers, educators, Trustees and supporters. A critical component is leading the staff team to ensure strategy is delivered and the organisation continues to grow and evolve. The Executive Director is the public face of OBHK and will be required to represent the organisation by delivering speeches, presentations and attending formal events. Additionally, the ED must effectively motivate the 75-strong staff team
- **Strategic Planning** - taking a lead from the Executive Committee, Trustees and other relevant stakeholders the Executive Director is expected to inform the development of the strategic priorities that will enable the organisation to serve more participants with high-quality courses in appropriate facilities.
- **Education** - Outward Bound is an education provider and as such an understanding of young people's needs and wellbeing is important. This experience might be from working in outdoor education, a school, a youth

A group looking east from the slopes of Tai Mo Shan at sunrise



organisation, social work or related field. It is vital that the ED can connect with partner organisations, 75% of which are schools.

- **Risk Management** - The ED assumes responsibility for managing risk across the organisation. Experience of working with risk in an outdoor learning setting would be an advantage, but this is only one element of the organisational risk management. Financial, legal and reputational risk also require attention from the ED to ensure OBHK flourishes.

- **Governance** - as the link between the day-to-day operations and the Executive Committee, and also serving as the Secretary of the Trust, the ED plays a key role in ensuring effective engagement and functioning of ExCo, its committees and the wider Trust.



- **Philanthropy** - our relationship with donors and funders is vital and will be a key area for development in coming years. Experience of fundraising, writing proposals, developing relationships with foundations etc. will be key.
- **Multi-cultural outlook** - Hong Kong is a diverse global city and our clients, staff and stakeholders reflect its history and outlook. Our priority is Hong Kong's young people and so it is critical that our next leader is able to engage all elements of our society to achieve that. The ability to communicate in Chinese would be an advantage, although not essential, but experience of working in a multi-cultural environment would be a definite advantage.



The 67ft "Spirit of Outward Bound operates in local waters as well as annual offshore voyages



5. Future Priorities

The strategic priorities for 2025 and beyond will be defined in a new Strategic Plan which will replace the existing plan. However, it is likely that the new Executive Director will lead the following developments;

- **Advancement** - despite being a charity since 1970, OBHK has always strived to support itself through course revenue. The most recent Strategic Plan highlighted the need to develop capacity to raise additional funds, from a range of sources, to support the work that we do and extend the opportunity to more young people.
- **Outward Bound In China** - OBHK was instrumental in supporting the development of our 'sister' school in Hubei which has now developed solid foundations for success. As a result there are a number of opportunities for development and considerable interest from potential new licence applicants. Additionally, as the Greater Bay Area continues its rapid economic development, OBHK must respond to opportunities that arise as a result.

The ED will be required to engage a broad range of stakeholders to guide the most efficient and successful developments in PRC.



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- **Financial Sustainability** - Hong Kong suffered more than most countries during the pandemic, which was especially hard on OBHK as a charity that works with young people who were not in school or permitted to socialise for almost 3 years. As a result OBHK's financial reserve was quickly consumed.

Restoring that reserve will require close attention to operational efficiency, while ensuring that money is available for the essential equipment and facility upgrades that were not prioritised during the COVID years. Additionally, continuing to build Advancement capacity will help to ensure financial sustainability.

- **Facilities Upgrade** - after 55 years of operating as a charity, the facilities at the Tai Mong Tsai base are showing their age, despite some cosmetic upgrades. This was compounded by the hiatus enforced by the pandemic, during which spending was restricted to essential repairs.

Capital investment will need to be planned in the next decade to address immediate and obvious needs to ensure safety and continuity of operations, as well as maintaining competitiveness. The process of funding a replacement for the Spirit has already begun and will remain a significant project over the next 3 years.





Paddling in the rainy season in Double Haven Marine Park

6. Working at OBHK

Hong Kong is a dynamic and thriving global city and an exciting place to live and work. Central is just over an hour's journey from our base which provides all the benefits of a thriving urban area, from arts venues and restaurants and bars to museums and rich cultural heritage.

Less well-known, are the incredible outdoor environments that are on the doorstep of the OBHK base in Sai Kung. From world class hiking and climbing to kayaking, diving and sailing, Hong Kong offers diverse and accessible opportunities for outdoor adventures.

The compensation package for the role includes;

- Competitive salary, including annual performance bonus
- On-site accommodation in a superbly positioned family house looking over the sea and islands
- Generous annual leave allowance
- Medical insurance



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OBHK hosts several fundraising events each year. In 2017 the HK Vertical1000 abseil was a high profile event

The Executive Committee will work with the successful candidate to ensure the package reflects experience and circumstances. This might include education allowance for dependent children should it be necessary.

Given the importance of Outward Bound's development in China and the region, and OBHK's support for OB International events, the position will demand some international travel.



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7. Application Process and Timeline

For more information about the position, and to schedule a confidential conversation if needed, please contact the current post holder Nick Cotton (nick@outwardbound.org.hk).

Please submit a CV (which outlines key experience, achievements and responsibilities) along with a covering letter which outlines suitability for the role to Mr Helmuth Hennig, Chair of the Executive Committee (excochair@outwardbound.org.hk) before midnight (HK time) **Friday 11th October 2024**.

Selected candidates will be interviewed online in the week beginning 21st October 2024. Arrangements will be made with shortlisted candidates to be interviewed in Hong Kong thereafter.

The successful candidates must be eligible for an employment visa in Hong Kong (as required) and submit themselves to necessary safeguarding background checks (which will be dependent upon the location and work history of the successful candidate).

All candidate information will be handled in accordance with OBHK's Data Privacy policy.

Additional Information

1. [OBHK website](#)
2. [2023 Impact Report](#)
3. [OBHK #FutureProofYOUth](#)
4. [What It Means to Be Outward Bound](#)
5. [OBHK Foundations for the Future Plan](#)

