

Chief Executive Officer

Wait Mate | Position Description

Position details

Title: Chief Executive Officer

Reports to: Board

Direct reports: SA Director, Marketing and Communications Director,, and future national roles

Employment type: Part-time (0.5 FTE) with potential to increase as the organisation grows

Location: National role with flexible location

Remuneration: \$130,000 to \$150,000 plus 12% superannuation on a full-time-equivalent basis.

Start date: By negotiation

About Wait Mate

Wait Mate is a not-for-profit movement of people who believe childhood should be shaped by experiences and real-world connection before smartphones. By connecting parents and building safe, supportive communities, Wait Mate empowers parents and caregivers to wait as long as possible before giving their kids a smartphone. In doing so, we help lift the pressure that so often sits with one parent or one child, making waiting feel possible, supported and shared, and helping change what's considered normal.

How Wait Mate came to be

Wait Mate started with a group of parents who saw the impact smartphones were having on kids and decided they wanted a different future for their own children. The more the founders spoke to other families, the more they realised they weren't alone in the way they felt, parents everywhere having the same conversations, asking the same questions and feeling the same pressure. Our goal is simple: to give children back a childhood that is not dominated by an addictive device, and to let kids be kids for longer.

This is a pivotal moment for the movement. A nationwide minimum age for social media is now in force, and public concern about what screens are doing to children has never been higher. In South Australia, the State Government has committed \$3.6 million to bring Wait Mate to every public and private school parent in the state, in partnership with the Department for Education, reaching parents through primary schools first and then high schools. A founding team of five volunteer parents has carried Wait Mate to this point. The organisation now needs its first Chief Executive to turn that energy into a lasting national movement, and to help shape how a whole country gives childhood back to its kids.

The opportunity

As Wait Mate's first Chief Executive, you will lead the movement nationally at a defining moment, launching our first major rollout in South Australia while building the foundations for a lasting national organisation. Working with a passionate, skilled Board and a capable team in South Australia, you will set strategic direction, build the organisation's systems and capability, and position Wait Mate for sustainable impact and growth. This is a chance to lead the journey from start-up to scale, with substantial autonomy, Board support, and the opportunity to help change childhood for Australian families.

Key goals for 2026/27

- Establish strong governance, operational processes, and organisational culture that provide an effective foundation for Wait Mate's success and growth.

- Serve as an effective conduit between the South Australian team and the Board.
- Support the South Australian rollout to effectively reach primary school parents, followed by high school parents, across the state.
- Establish the financial future and security of the organisation beyond the SA grant.

Key responsibilities

Strategic leadership and vision

- Set overall organisational strategy and vision in partnership with the Board.
- Anticipate challenges and leverage opportunities as they arise.
- Nurture a growth-minded culture that values clarity, courage and a focus on the mission.

Board management and governance

- Serve as the primary point of accountability to the Board.
- Prepare Board papers, reports and strategic recommendations.
- Implement Board decisions and directives.
- Establish appropriate governance frameworks, policies and processes, and ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

Team leadership and collaboration

- Support and grow a flexible, collaborative and values-driven team.
- Manage the complexity of a distributed, growing organisation.

Operational excellence and organisational development

- Ensure robust operational systems, processes and infrastructure are established.
- Ensure Wait Mate operates efficiently and effectively.
- Identify and manage organisational risks.

Financial discipline and sustainability

- Ensure financial sustainability and responsible resource management.
- Establish and oversee existing budgets, financial reporting and grant compliance.

Fundraising

- Work with the Philanthropy Committee to establish a fundraising strategy that supports a national rollout.
- Lead fundraising across national foundations and national partners.
- Communicate impact to funders

Partnerships, impact and communications

- Oversee the development of an evidence base that proves Wait Mate's value.
- Communicate impact to partners and the public. Build and maintain strategic national partnerships.
- Represent Wait Mate with national stakeholders and decision-makers.

Expanding Wait Mate's reach

- Lead planning for expansion to additional states beyond South Australia.
- Make decisions about organisational expansion, including new states and new programs.

Government advocacy and engagement

- Engage with relevant government ministers and local MPs to raise awareness of the Wait Mate movement and leverage their reach and advocacy to advance the goals of the movement.

- Using the South Australian case study, formulate the Wait Mate pitch and proposal for presentation to other state governments.

About you

Essential

- Demonstrated senior leadership experience building and/or scaling organisations or initiatives and a track record of getting things done.
- Not-for-profit leadership experience, and a track record of building high-performing teams.
- Financial acumen and budget management experience.
- Strategic thinking.
- Ability to build systems, processes and organisational infrastructure.
- Strong relationship-building and stakeholder management skills.
- An evidence-based approach and a commitment to measuring impact.
- Excellent communication skills across diverse audiences.
- Alignment with Wait Mate's mission.

Highly valued

- Experience in the government, education, youth, health or social change sectors.
- Fundraising experience.
- Research or evaluation experience.
- Policy or advocacy experience.
- Personal experience navigating parenting decisions about smartphones.

What we offer

- Competitive not-for-profit CEO-level salary, pro-rata for 0.5 FTE initially, with potential to increase hours in line with securing additional funding.
- Maximum flexibility in how and when you work.
- The opportunity to build and lead a national movement from an early stage.
- Support from a skilled, passionate Board and founding team.
- Autonomy and trust to lead strategically.
- Meaningful work that could change childhood for Australian families.
- Professional growth as the organisation scales.

Child safety and our commitment to children

Wait Mate exists to protect and support children, and child safety sits at the heart of everything we do. We are committed to being a child-safe organisation, to listening to children and families, and to creating an environment where every child is respected and safe. We expect everyone who works with us to share and uphold that commitment.

This role is subject to pre-employment screening. The successful candidate will be required to hold or obtain a valid Working With Children Check, undergo a national police check, and provide professional referees. Appointment and ongoing employment are conditional on the satisfactory completion and maintenance of these checks.

How to apply

To apply, please submit your CV along with a short cover letter (no more than two pages) telling us why this mission matters to you and how your experience meets the essential criteria to careers@waitmate.org.au.

Wait Mate is committed to building a diverse and inclusive team, and we warmly welcome applications from people of all backgrounds. If you need any adjustments to take part in the recruitment process, please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate them.