



Chief Executive Officer Friendship Bridge Denver, CO or Guatemala

Friendship Bridge seeks a dynamic and passionate Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who can mobilize, motivate, and leverage relationships and networks across Guatemala and the US to advance the organization's mission to empower and enhance the lives of women in Guatemala through the provision of microfinance, education, and health services that effectively create better futures for the women, their families, and their communities.



The Organization

Friendship Bridge is a 501(c)(3) social enterprise with a mission to empower vulnerable women in Guatemala to create a better future for themselves, their families, and their communities through microfinance, education, and health services. With a client base of 100% women, primarily indigenous Maya, living in rural communities with some of the highest poverty levels worldwide, Friendship Bridge empowers women through microfinance and Plus Services of education and health. The organization has been working in Guatemala since 1998 and its supporters, including board members, donors and investors, are global. Karen Larson, Friendship Bridge's current President and CEO, is retiring after 13 years with the organization.

Strategic Goals

The overarching objectives outlined in Friendship Bridge's 2021-2025 strategic plan are to significantly expand its Microcredit Plus programs, which serve women living in poverty looking for access to financial services ("Dreamers"), and to develop, pilot, and fully implement its newest program, Bridge to Success, which supports women looking to expand a business ("Entrepreneurs"). To achieve these objectives, Friendship Bridge aspires for:

- **Responsible Growth:** Strategic targeting to acquire new clients and geographies, improved retention rates, and expanded reach and depth of our programs and services.
- **Innovation and Technology:** Be a nimble, responsive, and learning organization that is quick to respond to client and market needs. New technologies will allow both Friendship Bridge and our clients to prosper.
- **Bridge to Success:** Provide appropriate products and services to Entrepreneur clients to support the expansion of their businesses, increase empowerment, activate business development, and create jobs in rural areas of Guatemala.
- **Social Impact:** Contribute to creating positive generational change and community transformation for clients, their families, and Friendship Bridge employees.

Recent Accomplishments

Highlights from 2021 include that Friendship Bridge:

- Served more than 30,000 clients and disbursed \$20.5 million in new loans, exceeding goals.
- Expanded operations by opening three new branch offices where poverty and migration is the highest (Santo Tomás la Unión, Camojá la Democracia and Chacaco).

- Became a certified “Great Place to Work” in Central America and the Caribbean for 2021-2022, the 3rd year in a row.
- Launched a special COVID-19 campaign to promote the importance of getting the vaccine, resulting in 8,251 clients receiving the vaccine.
- Reached \$100K in sales at Handmade by Friendship Bridge with nearly 4,700 products sold. All products were sourced from our clients who produced 106 employees through this program.

Operations

Friendship Bridge employs over 200 people in Guatemala where the Chief Operations Officer and the Director of People Services are based. Its US headquarters in Denver, CO is the base for an 11-person team that includes the Chief Financial Officer, Chief Strategy Officer, and Chief Development Officer. Friendship Bridge is governed by an international Board of Directors located throughout the US, Guatemala and Mexico. The organization’s budget is \$6.8M, which includes \$5M in revenue from the loan portfolio and \$1.8M in donations, grants, interest from investments, and other sources. The microfinance portfolio is currently \$9M and the annual fundraising targets are \$1.3M, supporting over 30,000 clients annually. For more information, please visit <https://www.friendshipbridge.org/>



The Position

As the leader of the organization the CEO communicates a clear vision for Friendship Bridge, achieved through the efforts of a diverse team of high-performing leaders, staff, and volunteers. The CEO stewards the mission and brand while growing and protecting the strong reputation of the organization and ensuring financial sustainability. The CEO will have six direct reports including the Chief Strategy Officer, Chief Operations Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Development Officer, Director of People Services, and Office Manager.

Key areas of priority for the new executive will include:

- Lead and advance the organization’s 2021-2025 strategic plan in close collaboration with the senior management team, including an expansion to new branches in Northern Guatemala, to further develop and support the success of the organization’s operational, programmatic, and fiscal performance.
- Exceptional people skills, mentor and generatively collaborate with staff members at all levels to foster professional development, advancing a strong succession plan to support organizational growth and natural attrition.
- Experienced in managing competition, uses innovative technology and marketing strategies.
- Possess exceptional bi-lingual communication (English and Spanish) and cultural connection skills to establish a strong and thoughtful presence throughout the organization, both in the US and in Guatemala, engendering a high degree of trust and respect in relationships with the Board of Directors and its committees, the organization’s key external stakeholders, and senior staff members.
- Serve as a strategic partner to the board and its committees throughout, generating recommendations on the impact of long-range growth initiatives and new strategies.
- Cultivate donor and grantor relationships, comfortable seeking major financial gifts.

- Manage and expand banking, investor, and key stakeholder relationships, and work closely with CFO and Treasury Manager to foster and develop strategic financial partnerships.
- Provide input and guidance with regard to the risk management functions throughout the organization, and provide leadership to the internal audit function.
- Ensure the accurate and timely analysis of budgets, reports and financial and operational trends in accessible communications to the Board.

Key Responsibilities

Strategy and Visionary Leadership

- Set the organization's culture with the Board and senior leadership team, implement and drive the strategy and vision of its current strategic plan which advances Friendship Bridge's mission.
- Maintain and expand Friendship Bridge's MFI reputation to give women of Guatemala financial inclusion and empowerment, with a commitment to social performance management and service delivery.
- Study and make recommendations on the impact of long-range growth initiatives and introduce new strategies.
- Create a work environment that encourages feedback, creative thinking and innovation, works with teams to develop solutions that address meaningful issues for clients.

Financial Oversight

- Plan, develop, and oversee the implementation of the organization's operational and fiscal activities and performance.
- Manage and expand, as necessary, banking and investor relationships, to foster and grow strategic financial partnerships.
- Provide input and guidance to the risk management functions throughout the organization, and provide day-to-day leadership to the internal audit function.
- Drive alignment with the finance leadership team and Development team to provide a solid cash flow projection and reporting system, ensuring operational and investment cash needs are optimized and funding opportunities are in place to meet long term strategies.
- Consistently evaluate company's financial, operational, and fundraising structures/processes to plan for continual improvements and the ongoing advancement of operating efficiencies.

Administrative Management

- Communicate effectively with stakeholders and staff throughout the organization, leading the strategic vision and development of solutions to business and social challenges relevant to the organization's mission.
- Provide expert advice on contracts, negotiations, or other business deals with which the organization may consider and engage.
- Oversee and guide direct reports and implement related professional development and internal development policies to foster growth and encourage advancement, building on the exceptional strengths of the senior team already in place.
- Ensure the Board is provided with timely reports and information in support of their fiduciary and governance responsibilities.

Leadership Traits, Skills, and Attributes

Along with a dedication to the shared and measurable goals for the common success of the organization, successful candidates will possess the majority of the following:

- Strong commitment to and association with Friendship Bridge's mission, including a passion for empowering women, particularly those that are disenfranchised, in developing countries.
- Extensive (7-10 years) broad-based senior leadership experience implementing a strategic plan in an organization of comparable size and mission. Experience in human resources, as well as financial and risk management a plus.
- Excellent verbal and written fluency in Spanish and English, and an exceptional overall communicator and public speaker.
- Banking, microfinance, or significant financial sector leadership experience, including social entrepreneurship and social performance management in developing countries.
- Ability to travel to or live in Guatemala, spending significant time in country. Prior experience in Guatemala and/or Central America desirable.
- Solid fundraising experience and a track record in building revenue and increasing philanthropic support. Participates within philanthropic networks.
- Expertise on issues relevant to Friendship Bridge's mission and constituents, including an understanding and appreciation of the culture in Guatemala.
- Ability to develop and motivate executive teams through effective delegation and multicultural awareness.
- Experience in developing partnerships and building high performing teams, and monitoring and tracking performance metrics across multiple departments and in relationship to employee performance goals.
- An overall comfort and familiarity with digital technology platforms.
- A demonstrated track record of promoting diversity and an ability to build collaboration with the wider community including staff, board, and supporters.
- Experience in or across multiple sectors preferred including corporate, nonprofit, and public environments.
- Outstanding problem solving and conflict resolution skills along with a high-energy approach and sense of humor.
- A transparent and empathetic leadership approach to represent and embody the mission of Friendship Bridge.
- BA required. MBA or equivalent experience in the business, social sector, and/or humanitarian field preferred.

Based on current job market value and position considerations, including a significant amount of travel to and from Central America and to the US Headquarters in Colorado as necessary, compensation is in the range of \$155-175K, commensurate with experience.



Application Process

To apply, upload resume and cover letter by [clicking here](#). For other inquiries, contact Suzanne Tan at Suzanne.Tan@marcumllp.com. No other application materials will be reviewed at this time. Resume reviews begin immediately.

Friendship Bridge provides equal employment opportunities without regard to race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, pregnancy or recent childbirth or related medical condition, gender identity and

expression, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, the use of a guide or support animal because of blindness, deafness or physical handicap of any individual, citizenship, veteran or military status, genetic information, marital status, familial status, domestic or sexual violence victim status, possession of a GED instead of a high school diploma, or any other protected characteristic under applicable federal, state or local laws.

About Marcum's Nonprofit & Social Sector Group

On behalf of Friendship Bridge, Marcum's Nonprofit & Social Sector Group is working with the Board of Directors to advance the search. Founded in 1984 and merged with Marcum in 2018, we are, and always have been, a mission-driven professional services firm seeking to do more for nonprofits and socially conscious companies. We exist to do meaningful work for organizations like Friendship Bridge who are making a difference in our communities and our world. Learn more about our work at <http://marcumlp.com/industries/nonprofit-social-sector>.