Director of Business Systems

About the Organization

A nonprofit international educational organization with partners in more than 60 countries, Youth For Understanding (YFU) is one of the world's oldest, largest, and most respected intercultural exchange programs. Since 1951, and with more than 270,000 students worldwide supported by host families, volunteers, schools, and communities, YFU has helped generations of participants become more globally minded, culturally competent, and prepared to thrive in an interconnected world. The YFU global network is united by the belief that full cultural immersion is one of the most powerful ways to build understanding, leadership, and a more peaceful and sustainable future.

About the Position

The Director of Business Systems is the accountable owner of YFU USA's business systems. The role spans YFU USA's use of the YFU network's shared platform (YFU.world), YFU USA's own participant-management and compliance systems, and the contractors and vendors who support them. YFU USA operates a U.S. Department of State-designated J-1 exchange program; its systems carry regulated reporting (SEVIS: Student and Exchange Visitor Information System), background checks, and records on minors, and the Director is accountable for keeping those obligations met as systems change.

YFU USA and the YFU Global Office, which develops YFU.world, have agreed on joint priorities under which YFU USA adopts further parts of the shared platform while continuing to run its own systems for the functions the platform does not yet cover. The Director leads that work as YFU USA's designated counterpart to the Global Office — defining what YFU USA needs, managing rollout and adoption with staff, and accepting what is delivered — and manages the contractors who maintain YFU USA's own systems. This is a product-ownership and delivery role, not a software-development role: the Director specifies, commissions, and quality-controls technical work performed by contractors and partners rather than building systems personally.

This role is ideal for a highly organized, technically fluent, and mission-driven professional who can bridge systems, people, process, and technology while combining leadership with hands-on execution. The position reports directly to the President & CEO, works closely with department leaders, the Global Office, and external contractors, and reports regularly on progress to the Board of Trustees. This is a remote or hybrid position. YFU USA's office is in Saginaw, Michigan.

Responsibilities

- Serve as YFU USA's business and product owner for its participant-management systems, with authority to prioritize requests, direct contractor work, and accept or return work delivered by contractors and partners.
- Develop and lead YFU USA's side of the joint work plan with the YFU Global Office.
- Serve as YFU USA's designated counterpart and change manager toward the Global Office for the shared platform: represent YFU USA's requirements in roadmap and scope discussions, coordinate key users and testing, and report progress at the regular joint review with Global Office leadership.

- Lead business process mapping and redesign with department leaders, translate YFU USA's operational needs into clear requirements and acceptance criteria, and maintain a prioritized backlog.
- Manage the contractors and vendors who maintain and host YFU USA's own systems and ensure continuity of the functions that depend on them, including SEVIS reporting and background checks.
- Define and commission integration work between YFU USA's systems and the shared platform — data flows, interfaces, identity and access management — performed by contractors or the Global Office, and hold that work to YFU USA's requirements and standards.
- Manage rollouts and transitions between systems, including data mapping, migration, validation, user acceptance testing, parallel running, cutover planning, and business continuity.
- Establish and maintain data quality, privacy, security, access, and business continuity standards for YFU USA's sensitive information, including control of credentials, user onboarding and offboarding, security updates, and emergency procedures.
- Maintain an inventory of YFU USA's business applications with owners, vendors, costs, renewal dates, and support procedures, and coordinate support requests and incidents.
- Own essential system documentation (SOPs, user guides, training materials), deliver staff training, and lead change management to promote adoption.
- Monitor system use, gather staff feedback, and build reports and dashboards that support operational decision-making.
- Evaluate and appropriately use AI-assisted, low-code/no-code, and traditional development approaches to accelerate analysis, documentation, prototyping, and delivery while maintaining security, quality, and human accountability.
- Assess the options for functions that remain on YFU USA's own systems, such as travel, SEVIS reporting, and operational reporting, and recommend a path to the President & CEO and the Board.
- Support other systems and process improvement initiatives as assigned.

Professional Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree required; a relevant degree preferred. Equivalent professional experience may be considered.
- Demonstrated experience leading business systems implementation, product ownership, or legacy system modernization, including prioritizing requirements and translating operational needs into practical system solutions.
- Experience managing technical work performed by vendors or contractors, with a working understanding of data migration, integrations, reporting, access management, and testing.
- Working knowledge of AI-assisted and traditional development approaches. Firsthand experience using AI assistants and agents for analysis, documentation, or prototyping is a plus.
- Experience with data privacy, security, and access standards for sensitive information. Familiarity with J-1 exchange, SEVIS, or another regulated compliance environment is an asset.
- Strong project management, change management, and staff training skills. Experience collaborating with an external partner is a plus.
- Strong communication skills, including the ability to explain technical choices and tradeoffs to nontechnical audiences.

- Able to work independently in a remote or hybrid environment, with regular working-hours that partially overlap with Central European time. Some travel will be required.
- Nonprofit, international education, or intercultural experience preferred.

Compensation

The anticipated salary range for this position is $90,000 to $120,000, commensurate with experience and the final scope of responsibility. Additionally, YFU USA offers a comprehensive benefits package. Please visit our benefits page to learn more.

To Apply

Application should include your resume, a cover letter explaining what motivated you to apply for this position, salary requirements and what experience and skills you possess that demonstrate your professional qualifications. Only complete applications will be considered. Email to lolma@yfu.org.

YFU USA encourages any person with the required qualifications to apply, without distinction to race, color, ancestry, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, age, citizenship, marital status, disability, gender identity, or veteran status. YFU USA recognizes different types of experience, including both professional and volunteer experience.