



# Position brief for the position of Chief Executive Officer United States Youth Soccer

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# Opportunity Overview

## Chief Executive Officer

US Youth Soccer (USYS) seeks to be a high performing organization that is nimble and responsive to the needs of the membership within a constantly evolving youth soccer landscape. To support their continued growth, US Youth Soccer is seeking a strong leader to become its next Chief Executive Officer (CEO), someone who will oversee the successful administration of the organization's operations, finances, human resources, legal, marketing and IT functions in support of the mission. The ideal candidate will possess strong credentials as an executive leader within either the sports, non-profit, and/or corporate sectors. They will bring a passion for youth sports, and will ideally bring strong experience managing a large and complex national organization.

The CEO will report directly to the Chair of the Board, but is accountable to the full Board of Directors. The CEO will keep the Board fully informed at all times and provide regular updates to the Chair. The CEO is responsible for leading all staff including 5 direct reports and approximately 50 PTE/FTE's nationwide.

These are the CEO's key relationships: Board of Directors, Member State Associations, US Soccer Federation, Affiliate Members, youth soccer clubs, leagues, professional soccer leagues (e.g. MLS, USL, NWSL), sponsors and commercial partners, board committees and taskforces, tournament hosts, sports tourism officials and other external constituencies.

The CEO will be a strategic, visionary and results-oriented leader with unquestioned integrity, credibility and character, who will serve as the public face of US Youth Soccer. They will need to maintain a balance between professional business organization and management and the passionate heart-felt enthusiasm of the organization's members, volunteers and employees. The successful candidate will have had experience in business leadership, including

growing revenue, managing a staff of professionals and earning the respect of the Board of Directors, staff and a diverse membership base. They will be a passionate, responsive, diplomatic and collaborative leader whose peers and teammates across the organization at all levels would refer them wholeheartedly. The CEO will be responsible for the acceleration and realization of the USYS vision and strategic plan, as determined by the Board of Directors, and someone who will drive consensus and decision-making throughout the organization based upon that strategic plan.



It is important that the candidate is either someone who has a history with youth soccer and/or possesses a true passion for soccer (e.g. a soccer fan or enthusiast who leads their organization in their professional life, but who may be a licensed coach volunteering for their children's soccer club or local league). They must have a working knowledge of how the sport of soccer is organized in the US. These skills will be necessary to meet the evolving goals of elevating the US Youth Soccer brand and growing the game.



# About United States Youth Soccer

Why does US Youth Soccer exist? To transform the lives of America's youth through the game of soccer.

## US Youth Soccer Mission

US Youth Soccer is a non-profit and educational organization whose mission is to make soccer the preeminent youth sport in the United States.

## US Youth Soccer Vision

To be the future of soccer and provide a path for every player.

## Core Values

**Respect** - On and off the field (respect for the game, diversity, players, opponents, officials and supporters/fans).

**Integrity** - Strive for equity, consistency and fairness and deliver events and competitions under the laws of the game in an honest and transparent manner and be accountable to US Youth Soccer's members.

**Teamwork** - US Youth Soccer's success requires a commitment to teamwork at all levels (Board, staff, membership). By working together and sharing knowledge, USYS can achieve greater results than by working as individuals.

**Excellence** - USYS strives to achieve excellence in all its interactions and decision-making.

## The Environment

From its humble beginnings in 1974 with just more than 100,000 registered players to its current registration of more than 3,000,000 players between the ages of five and nineteen, US Youth Soccer has always been recognized as a leader in youth sports organizations. US Youth Soccer is the largest member of the United States Soccer Federation, the

governing body for soccer in the United States, and is comprised of over 600,000 volunteers and administrators, and over 300,000 dedicated coaches, most of whom also are volunteers.

US Youth Soccer provides a healthy activity through its recreational and small-sided game programs. These programs emphasize fun and de-emphasize winning at all costs. Every child is guaranteed playing time, and the game is taught in a fun and enjoyable atmosphere.

## A Path For Every Player

US Youth Soccer provides a fun, safe and healthy game for all kids. This includes big kids, little kids, tall kids, short kids, young kids, older kids, kids who want to play for one season, kids who want to play for twenty seasons, kids who play strictly for fun and kids who want to compete at the highest level possible. Kids are different, and because they are different, their physical, social and psychological needs are different. US Youth Soccer recognizes this, and its programs are aimed at meeting the different needs of all kids.



## Joining the Game

US Youth Soccer membership is divided into four regions: East, Midwest, South and West. 55 member State Associations make up US Youth Soccer with one in each state, and two in California, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas. Boys and girls then register to play with one of the 10,000+ clubs or leagues within the jurisdiction of the various Member State Associations.

At a larger glance, each of the 55 State Associations across America are members of US Youth Soccer and US Soccer. US Soccer, along with over 197 other national soccer organizations, are members of FIFA, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association. FIFA serves as the international governing body for soccer and US Soccer has been a member since 1913. Together, local, national and international organizations form a family of support for the young soccer players of America.



## Administrative Structure

Through a democratic structure, the membership of US Youth Soccer is able to provide uniform rules and guidelines. These guidelines facilitate intra-state, inter-state and international play. US Youth Soccer is also able to provide a structured appeals process, and its marketing and licensing programs help US Youth Soccer hold down player costs while providing revenue for increased services.

Please visit <https://www.usyouthsoccer.org/> for more information on the programs offered by US Youth Soccer.



# The Position

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of US Youth Soccer (USYS) will be a strategic and outcomes driven leader, possessing a strong track record and diverse skill set to build and lead a momentous strategy. The CEO will bring vision, gravitas, passion and high energy to generate new ideas to support USYS's mission.

## Duties & Responsibilities

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### Leadership

- Encourage, promote and advocate for an organization-wide cultural climate that inspires and supports innovative thinking and problem-solving by staff, membership and volunteers that supports US Youth Soccer's mission and promotes synergy and collaboration across the organization.
- Establish, enhance and strengthen partnerships with US Youth Soccer's 55 Member State Associations, listening and responding to their evolving needs, to help grow the game.
- Work effectively with the Chair, Board Members and management team to strengthen an open, collaborative, learning and entrepreneurial organizational culture while decisively navigating the team in a clear direction.
- Direct staffing, training and performance metrics to ensure that employees and volunteers in the organization meet or exceed goals and expectations.

### Board of Directors

- Cultivate a strong and transparent working relationship with the Board to ensure open communication about the measurement of financial, programmatic and impact performance against stated milestones and goals.
- Attend Board meetings, follow the bylaws and carry out the policies established by the US Youth Soccer Board of Directors.

- Keep the Board informed in a timely and consistent manner of the progress of the organization on the achievement of the strategic goals.

### Financial/Legal/Regulatory

- In conjunction with the Chief Financial Officer, ensure the accuracy and integrity of US Youth Soccer's financial information, reporting and disclosure requirements, internal controls, adherence to financial policies, code of conduct and other compliance requirements.
- Strong understanding of the drivers of the P&L and how to create and execute a revenue plan that supports US Youth Soccer through a mix of revenue sources that includes, but is not limited to, grants, sponsorships, philanthropic pursuits.
- Ensure legal and regulatory compliance and appropriate risk mitigation through the timely review and approval of all of US Youth Soccer's contracts and agreements.
- Ability to anticipate financial risks and take action to course correct as required.
- The individual will demonstrate the highest of ethical behavior within the organization.

### Strategy

- Formulate, develop, evolve and implement, with the Board's input, a clear and effective strategic plan to successfully achieve US Youth Soccer's mission.
- Provide direction and guidance to senior leaders and managers of US Youth Soccer as they implement the strategic plan and address any challenges.



### Marketing/Partnerships and Commercial

- Build and maintain diverse, multi-faceted relationships with partners across the public, private and nonprofit sectors, to increase US Youth Soccer's standing and credibility among thought-leaders and commercial partners.
- In conjunction with the Chief Marketing Officer (CMO), oversee the successful execution of US Youth Soccer's brand marketing strategy, ensuring that the USYS brand is omnipresent and that USYS successfully activates and aligns with partner brands.
- Create and lead a commercial strategy resulting in revenue maximization and strong financial return for US Youth Soccer.
- Work with the CMO to identify, develop and secure commercial partnerships, including those with sponsors and professional soccer organizations that maximizes revenue and aligns with US Youth Soccer core values.

- Serve as a partner to USYS's national governing body, the US Soccer Federation, to ensure alignment and work together to make soccer the preeminent sport in the United States.

### Communication

- Outstanding communication ability with specific experience inspiring members, colleagues and stakeholders.
- Represent US Youth Soccer in an ambassadorial capacity at key national events.
- Exceptional presentation, communication and listening skills, including the ability to drive consensus on complex issues and the ability to work collaboratively with key stakeholders.
- Strong and transparent communicator who will enhance the profile, visibility, and influence of US Youth Soccer, and establish unity and cohesion among and within the Board and staff.



# The Candidate

The successful candidate will have a proven track record of the following or similar:

- Previous career experience as a Chief Executive Officer or C-Suite executive within a sports/ Olympic-affiliated NGB, amateur sports organization or a sports-related nonprofit.
  - Proven financial acumen and experience with diversified revenue sources, and success in maintaining fiscal stability.
  - Understanding of risk management within a membership environment that makes youth athlete protection its highest priority.
  - A successful record of developing and implementing strategic plans and/or programmatic initiatives.
  - A mission-driven individual with a belief in and commitment to the mission of US Youth Soccer and the diverse membership that they serve.
  - A grounded visionary and life-long-learner; a careful builder with a measured approach to growing US Youth Soccer's organizational capacity, programs and influence within the youth soccer landscape. A passion for youth sports generally, and the game of youth soccer specifically, will be critical to building authentic relationships with stakeholders.
  - A team builder, confident and competent, with strong skills in management and leadership; one who understands the subtleties of recruiting, motivating, directing and retaining a diverse group of personalities with different work styles.
  - Strong professional ethics, integrity, transparency and accountability in all actions.
  - A "doer" with a willingness to work hands-on developing and executing a variety of activities ranging from the internal day-to-day operations, to the highly creative and visible.
  - A customer or member-service mentality and track record (or the skills and acumen to ensure success); charisma and an ability to collaborate and lead through influence and facilitation, respecting the unique knowledge of others while driving solutions that best serve the organization.
  - Ability to think strategically across multiple levels of the organization and membership, propose new directions and challenges previously held assumptions.
  - Measurement experience and the ability to leverage analysis and data to drive results.
  - Ability to clearly, effectively and persuasively communicate, both orally and in writing.
  - Experience with, and commitment to identifying opportunities to integrate diversity, equity and inclusion principles into an organization's work.
- Additional Experience:**
- Graduate of an accredited university with a bachelor's degree in business administration, sports management, sport leadership or similar field is required. An MBA is strongly preferred.
  - Minimum of 10 years of progressive executive experience, preferably in a sports setting with increasing responsibility, and demonstrated accomplishments is required.

**Location:** Frisco, Texas



# How to Apply

In order to apply, please submit a comprehensive CV along with a cover letter which sets out your interest in the role and encapsulates the aspects of your experience relevant to the required criteria. Please include the names and addresses of three references. References will not be approached until the final stages and not without prior permission from candidates.

**The preferred method of application is by email at:**

[usysceo@odgersberndtson.com](mailto:usysceo@odgersberndtson.com)

## Contact Details

For a conversation in confidence, please contact:

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# About Odgers Berndtson



Odgers Berndtson Executive Search is a leading global executive search firm, assisting private and public sector organizations find the highest caliber people for senior management appointments across North America and internationally.

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Our reputation at the top of the executive search profession is over 50 years old. With offices in over 60 cities worldwide, our experienced executive search specialists operate with absolute discretion, integrity and care, and are expert in finding exceptional individuals for challenging roles.

## WE ARE GLOBAL

We have the support of an excellent international network of offices on the ground.

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