Head Office
Level 16, 70 Franklin Street
Adelaide 5000
South Australia
www.vuca.com.au

CANDIDATE BRIEFING DOCUMENT

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

CARA

AUGUST 2026

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A Message from the CARA Board

Cara has been on a transformational journey to make Cara sustainable and to continue to deliver on our mission to support persons with disability in South Australia.

Cara finished the financial year with a small surplus. This is an important milestone. It means we are building a stronger and more sustainable organisation that can continue supporting people with disability for many years to come. It reflects the countless moments of care, support, problem-solving and teamwork that happen across Cara every day. Cara consistently demonstrates our focus of putting clients at the heart of all we do and creating joy, purpose and belonging for the clients we serve.

The work done around Cara's housing strategy has seen us support many of our clients to transition to appropriate and better accessible housing that will meet their needs for many years to come. Cara is leading the sector in our development and use of technology to help make our support workers lives easier so we can spend more time delivering outstanding client outcomes and less time on administration and paperwork.

Cara has been supporting persons with disability for over 80 years. The Board is very excited about Cara's future. We are committed to continue to build our capabilities, assets and teams to ensure we are around for generations to come.

On Saturday the 15th of August, the Board held a planning session to set Cara's strategic direction for the next 3 to 5 years. At that session the board confirmed the following key objectives for the new CEO and management to work on leveraging our current capabilities and strengths.

These include:

- Supporting more people with disability and helping shape the future of the NDIS.
- Expanding access to quality housing and accommodation options.
- Taking Cara's services to more communities where support is needed.
- Building on our technology and innovation expertise to improve outcomes for clients and the broader sector.

As Cara looks to the future, we do so with confidence because of the people who make this organisation so special. Every day our staff create joy, purpose and belonging for the people we support. They demonstrate that CARA is a possibility provider where disability is different. Together, we will continue building a stronger Cara for the years ahead.

Matthew Nicholls
President

Overview of Cara

About Cara

For more than 80 years, Cara has been recognised as a leading, trusted service provider working alongside people with disabilities and their families across metropolitan Adelaide and regional South Australia.

As a registered NDIS Service Provider, Cara specialises in providing care for severe and multiple disabilities, including autism, cerebral palsy, and intellectual disability. We are the experts at supporting people with complex needs.

We're not a disability service; we're a Possibility service.

Our Purpose, Vision and Values

At Cara, everything we do is guided by a shared purpose, clear vision, and strong values. These principles unite our teams and shape the way we support people living with disability. They're more than words on a page, they're the foundation of our culture and the promise we make to every person, family, and community we work alongside.

Our purpose drives us to create opportunities and remove barriers. Our vision inspires us to imagine what's possible. And our values keep us focused on delivering support that is respectful, inclusive, and empowering. Together, they define who we are and how we make a difference every day.

The Advertised Role

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

- **Key strategic leadership role**
- **Lead and influence with purpose and impact**

For more than 80 years, CARA has been recognised as a leading, trusted service provider working alongside people with disabilities and their families across metropolitan Adelaide and regional South Australia.

As a registered NDIS Service Provider, CARA specialises in providing care for severe and multiple disabilities, including autism, cerebral palsy, and intellectual disability, and are experts at supporting people with complex needs.

CARA is seeking an experienced, values-driven Chief Executive Officer to lead the organisation and work closely with the Board to deliver its strategic direction, high-quality services and positive outcomes for people living with disabilities. The Board is keen to grow the scale of the organisation, and this may involve interstate operations, and mergers and acquisitions.

This is an opportunity to lead an organisation operating within the NDIS environment, with responsibility for strategy, governance, financial sustainability, service quality, compliance, people and culture.

Reporting to the Board President, key responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Leading the implementation of CARA's strategic and operational plans.
- Providing strong, values-based leadership to the Executive team and wider organisation.
- Ensuring high-quality, customer-focused services and NDIS compliance.
- Driving organisational change, continuous improvement and performance.
- Maintaining strong financial, risk and governance practices.
- Building effective relationships with the Board, NDIA, government, regulators and sector stakeholders.
- Advocating for CARA and representing the organisation across government, industry and community forums and strategic partners.
- Strengthening workforce capability, culture and organisational performance.

As the successful candidate, you are an accomplished senior executive with extensive leadership experience in complex organisations, ideally within the NDIS or disability sector. You bring strong strategic, financial, business development and operational capability, a proven track record in leading change and continuous improvement, and highly developed communication and stakeholder engagement skills. A relevant tertiary qualification and NDIS Worker Screening Check are required.

If you are an experienced executive leader motivated by purpose, impact and positive outcomes for people with disabilities, we invite you to apply.

For details of the role visit www.vuca.com.au/caraceo, or for further enquiries contact VUCA Director, Mr Paul Bell on 0412 552 302 for a confidential discussion. Please forward your letter of application and CV in MS Word format to caraceo@vuca.com.au by Sunday 6 September 2026.

Position Description

Position Title	**Chief Executive Officer**
Function	Executive
Location	Head Office, currently Hindmarsh.
Job Code	Executive
Purpose	As the leader of the organisation and the Executive team this position, in conjunction with the Board, shapes the overall strategy and direction of Cara. This position has responsibility for leading, coordinating and monitoring the performance of Cara in regard to the delivery of high-quality services and regulatory compliance, required to make Cara the service provider of choice in the NDIS and deliver on the constitutional aims of the organisation to deliver a higher quality of life, for customers living with disabilities.
Key Performance Indicators	↗ Maintenance of a visible and highly ethical positive leadership profile internally and externally. ↗ High level strategic planning skills and the ability to deliver strategic and business outcomes. ↗ Skills and experience in growth strategies including mergers and acquisitions. ↗ Proven record of stakeholder engagement at senior levels to drive outcomes. ↗ Experience in delivering sustainable change in operations structure, program design and provision of services and products. ↗ Risks identified, mitigated and reported. ↗ Compliance with statutory, legislative and contractual obligations. ↗ Development and management of budgets and long-term financial plans. ↗ Implementation and monitoring of performance management processes. ↗ Effective management of Cara.

Scope of the Position

Reports To	Board President
Direct Reports	The Executive team and Executive Assistant
Indirect Reports	All Cara staff
Internal Relationships	Cara Board members Executive team Senior Leadership team Cara workforce
External Relationships	Customers and their families/nominees Funding Bodies

	Community stakeholders Ministers, Government and non-government agencies NDIA and other Regulators Industry networks and associations Consultants and Legal representatives

Key Responsibilities

Governance	↗ Ensure the provision of an effective, efficient and timely service to the Board and Committees of Cara. ↗ Inform the Board of emerging trends, actions, changes, legislative bills and amendments that affect the disability sector in Australia. ↗ Keep the Board informed about broad governance matters including the need to review the entity structure over time. ↗ Ensure the review and updating of policies and procedures. ↗ Ensure reports required by the NDIA, NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Commission, ACNC, ↗ Consumer Business Services and reports to other statutory bodies, are prepared and lodged within the time requirements.
Leadership	↗ Provision of sound, effective and consistent leadership to Cara. ↗ Development and implementation of effective communication strategies to ensure staff and volunteers make informed, appropriate decisions and act responsively. ↗ Ensure workforce planning and development programs are provided to meet the business and customer's needs. ↗ Ensure the development, implementation and monitoring of KPIs and other performance measures/standards within the Business. ↗ Ensure high levels of engagement with the community, Government and stakeholders to place CARA as a leading organisation in the sector.
Strategy	↗ Support the Board and the strategic planning for Cara. ↗ Ensure the development and completion of projects that satisfy strategic goals and objectives. ↗ Challenge and encourage internal audiences to develop actions from strategy to guide the development of Annual Operating Plans. ↗ Advise the Board of any strategic matters that may be relevant to Cara
Operations	↗ Ensure Cara operates according to its approved strategic implementation plan and annual business plan to meet its financial and community service objectives. ↗ Management of Assets to enable efficient and effective delivery of services. ↗ Trained Staffing levels including volunteers, are in line with the Annual Operating plan. ↗ High-quality service provision occurs with high compliance with NDIS requirements on quality and safeguarding.
Financial Management	↗ Deliver a culture of ongoing financial sustainability and financial competence. ↗ Co-ordination of the preparation and management of Cara's annual budget and long-term financial plan.

	↗ Monitoring and reporting of actual performance against budget and annual objectives. ↗ Ensure the efficient delivery of capital works program. ↗ Development of financial models that support the effective decision making of the organisation. ↗ Deliver an and comprehensive annual business plan to Board and monitor this plan.
Advocacy	↗ Advocate on behalf of Cara with State, Federal and Local Governments and other organisations/forums. ↗ Ensure Cara has well developed relationships with the NDIA. ↗ Ensure Cara influences and leads sector and business development. ↗ Ensure CARA has a high advocacy profile in the communities in which it operates.
Marketing, Communications and Branding	↗ Representation of the organisation in an official capacity and in negotiations with external stakeholders. ↗ Ensure the management and fostering of positive relationships with the media. ↗ Ensure that the strategic marketing, public relations and communication plans are aligned to the Strategic plan.
Customer Satisfaction	↗ Ensure the monitoring of customer, family and stakeholder satisfaction and ensure that Cara's offering meets their needs. ↗ Ensure that where corrective action is needed this is undertaken and monitored to ensure that the action taken has been successful.
General	↗ Ensure that Cara complies with all its statutory and legislative obligations. ↗ Lead the formulation of organisational wide strategic plans. ↗ Maintain a professional approach in the workplace by adhering to Cara's values and goals. ↗ Maintain professional/technical knowledge and competencies by undertaking further studies and attending relevant training workshops or seminars. ↗ Maintain and demonstrate a commitment to customer service by supporting Cara's continuous improvement processes and modelling expected behaviour in a customer service focussed environment. ↗ Maintain customer confidentiality and protect operations by ensuring sensitive information is kept secure. ↗ Maintain a culturally aware and sensitive profile with Cara's customer base by adhering to Cara's values and contributing to staff development, knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity. ↗ Maintain a healthy and safe workplace by: ↗ Taking reasonable care to protect personal safety and that of others whilst at work. ↗ Adhering to WHS policies and procedures. ↗ Using and maintaining equipment provided for health or safety purposes. ↗ Not being affected by consumption of alcohol or a drug in such a way as to endanger own safety or that of others in the workplace. ↗ Actively supporting any colleague who may injure themselves at work.

	↗ Maintain Equal Opportunity principles in the workplace by adhering to Equal Opportunity legislation and relevant Human Resource policies. ↗ Ensure that duties are performed in keeping with the principles outlined in Cara's Vision, Values and the Code of Conduct. ↗ Manage the staff of CARAS with due consideration of the challenges facing them in a complex work environment and ensure as far as possible that the staff are fulfilled in their work and employed within all legal and ethical variables.

Special Requirements	↗ Current NDIS Worker Screening Check (must be maintained). ↗ Out of hours work will be required. ↗ Flexibility and a willingness to travel and work between work locations, including intra/interstate and overseas.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications	↗ Tertiary degree qualification in Business, Operations Management or another related field.
Experience, Knowledge and Skills	↗ Understanding of the not for profit disability sector. ↗ Understanding of the NDIS and potential impacts on Cara's future operations. ↗ Experience in a change management environment or significant change management situation. ↗ Understanding of continuous improvement techniques and processes. ↗ Extensive Senior management experience. ↗ Extensive leadership experience, especially with multi-disciplinary teams. ↗ Experience in staff development and management with the ability to coach and lead a team to success. ↗ Strong financial management experience. ↗ Operations experience in a service related environment (desirable but not essential) ↗ Demonstrated report writing ability and the preparation of robust, multi-disciplined business cases. ↗ Demonstrated problem solving/analytical abilities and use of conflict resolution techniques. ↗ Proven experience in leading projects and achieving deliverables within deadlines. ↗ Excellent written and verbal communication skills. ↗ Experienced negotiator. ↗ Experience in dealing with the media. ↗ Proven ability to relate at all levels including at Board. ↗ Able to work as a team member within the ethos and values of Cara.
Licences	↗ Current Driver's Licence

Living & Working in Adelaide, South Australia

Adelaide is one of the most liveable cities on the planet, in fact it's the third most liveable city in the world. It is well known for its arts, festivals, fine foods and wine, retail and dining experience and spirit of entrepreneurship and innovation. It has an advanced economy, world class universities and a flourishing multicultural heritage. Adelaide is the traditional home of the Kaurna people and has a strong indigenous culture today.

LIFESTYLE

Adelaide is known for its pleasant and moderate weather most of the year. Year-round big blue skies mean average winter temperatures of 16 degrees Celsius (°C) and 28°C in summer. Hot days can be real sizzlers and easily reach 40°C though!

Adelaide is a city that offers the physical and emotional space to breathe. There is a sense of freedom here – of expression, of movement, of thought. With a **diverse and eclectic array of accessible experiences**, it's a city that allows time for immersion, paired with a sense of space and freedom that actively encourages true indulgence.

The Adelaide Hills which are home to many villages, towns, wildlife parks and natural resources to explore, are less than half an hour drive from the city centre. You'll never be far away from some of the most **pristine beaches** and water sanctuaries in the world, with almost 30km of beaches bordering Adelaide. Our beaches are famous for the beautiful waters and wide sandy foreshores. Beachside areas like Glenelg, Brighton and Henley Beach are only 15-minute drives from the city and offer **cosmopolitan hearts with retail and dining opportunities**. Within short drives from the city centre are Port Willunga where you can scuba dive in natural and man-made reefs, Port Adelaide where you can frolic with dolphins and St Kilda where you can wander the mangroves and natural reserves, also home to dolphins and other Australian fauna.

A number of international measures rate metropolitan Adelaide highly for liveability, quality of life and cost of living. The Economic Intelligence Unit undertakes an annual Liveability Ranking and Overview of 140 cities around the world and Adelaide has most recently ranked 3rd in the world. The Property Council of Australia undertakes its own annual survey on liveability of Australia's top 10 biggest cities. In this survey Adelaide is ranked second only to Canberra, our nation's capital, and above all other capital cities.

REGIONAL EXPERIENCE:

The regions surrounding Adelaide offer a unique experience with gourmet food offerings, internationally renowned wine, villages to explore and wildlife and natural attractions.

Adelaide is a city that lives well beyond its conveniently designed square mile epicentre, flowing seamlessly into world-famous wine and food regions such as Barossa, just an hour's drive north, or coastal escapes in the Fleurieu or Yorke Peninsula. You'll be spoilt for choice.

Travel another hour north and you'll reach the Clare Valley, which is famous for its Rieslings. The Adelaide Hills has some stunning whites and there's McLaren Vale and Langhorne Creek on the Fleurieu Peninsula – about an hour's drive south of the city. Drive yourself or join a guided tour of Adelaide and its surrounds - the choice is yours. Take a road trip and discover the reds from the Coonawarra on the Limestone Coast.

Kangaroo Island is an iconic destination, just two hours' drive and a short ferry ride south of Adelaide. It has pristine beaches, unique wildlife, awesome sunsets and fantastic food and wine.

South Australia & Adelaide, Fast Facts

SA POPULATION

1.878m

Adelaide City Resident Population

26,957

$141.52b

SOUTH AUSTRALIA GROSS STATE PRODUCT NIEIR 2024

$900k

MEDIAN HOUSE PRICE

$549k

MEDIAN APARTMENT PRICE

South Australia's Ikara-Flinders Ranges & Outback ranked in Lonely Planet's Best of Travel 2026

ADELAIDE #9 MOST LIVEABLE CITIES IN THE WORLD 2025

(Economist Intelligence Unit)

One of the world's most liveable cities

Adelaide offers a relaxed, easy-going lifestyle, and is rated as the world's 3rd most liveable city in the world (Economist Intelligence Unit). It is located in a beautiful region of South Australia, which is also ranked in the top 5 of the world's regions.

Australia's most affordable mainland capital

Adelaide remains one of the most affordable major Australian capitals in 2025, according to the latest EIU Worldwide cost of living index. Studies show it costs 10% more to live in Melbourne and Sydney than Adelaide. Adelaide is around 4% cheaper than Brisbane and Perth (2025 Economist Intelligence Unit), meaning you will have more money to discover Australia during your weekends and holidays.

Contact Information

For further enquiries, contact VUCA Director, Mr Paul Bell on 0412 552 302 for a confidential discussion during business hours.

Please forward your letter of application and CV in MS Word format to caraceo@vuca.com.au by **Sunday 6 September 2026.**

Important Information

Please note that VUCA Trusted Advisors believes that while the information contained in this document is true to the best of the Company's knowledge at the time of writing, such information may change without notice. Further, the information herein is the property of the Company and must not be published or attributed unless explicitly agreed.