

SAMS Role Deconstruct
Senior Leader – Climate Research, Partnerships, & Growth,
Leading Think Tank, New Delhi
(What this leadership role truly involves — and how to assess your fit)

Why This Role Deconstruct

A SAMS Role Deconstruct helps candidates understand the real operating expectations of a role beyond the formal job description.

It clarifies the leadership mandate, scope, and performance expectations, enabling applicants to make a clear, informed assessment of their fit.

For a role of this seniority and complexity, this clarity is essential.

What This Role Is Really About

This is not a conventional senior research role.

Nor is it simply a programme management or proposal-writing position.

This is a senior climate growth and portfolio leadership role responsible for building and expanding the organisation's funded work across climate change, sustainability, environment, resilience, and sustainable development.

The Senior Leader is expected to operate at the intersection of:

- **Business development and resource mobilisation**
- **Strategic partnerships and senior stakeholder engagement**
- **Climate research credibility and fundable programme design**
- **Portfolio development and organisational growth**
- **Programme oversight and multidisciplinary team leadership**

The core challenge is to convert technical insight, institutional credibility, and senior relationships into funded programmes, advisory assignments, strategic collaborations, and sector impact.

The Role's Strategic Priorities

The role is expected to deliver impact across five interlinked priorities:

1. Business Development & Resource Mobilisation

Lead business development, identify fundable opportunities, and build a strong pipeline of grants, commissioned research, advisory assignments, bids, and partnerships.

2. Strategic Partnerships & Opportunity Conversion

Build senior relationships with donors, funders, government, corporates/CSR, industry, multilaterals, bilaterals, foundations, and other institutional stakeholders; move opportunities from concept to closure.

3. Portfolio Development & Growth

Shape a financially sustainable climate and sustainability portfolio by translating sector priorities and technical expertise into compelling programmes, research initiatives, and advisory offerings.

4. Research Credibility & Thought Leadership

Guide research, advisory, and knowledge initiatives so they remain relevant to policy, practice, funding opportunities, and partnership possibilities.

5. Programme Oversight & Team Leadership

Oversee funded projects, delivery quality, partner satisfaction, contractual compliance, and outcomes, while guiding multidisciplinary teams.

Your Scope of Responsibility

Reporting into senior organisational leadership, the role includes:

Business Development & Resource Mobilisation

- Identify funding opportunities across grants, advisory assignments, commissioned research, bids, and partnerships
- Lead concept notes, proposals, EOIs, grant applications, pitches, and negotiations

Partnerships & External Engagement

- Build relationships with donors, foundations, government, multilaterals, CSR, industry, academia, and research institutions
- Represent the organisation in donor meetings, partnership discussions, conferences, and external forums

Portfolio, Research & Programme Leadership

- Shape a sustainable climate and sustainability portfolio
- Guide credible research, advisory, and knowledge outputs relevant to policy and practice
- Oversee funded projects, compliance, learning, dissemination, and team performance

What Success Looks Like (12–18 Months)

Success in this role would typically be reflected through:

- **A stronger and more diversified pipeline of funded climate and sustainability opportunities**
- **Conversion of priority opportunities into grants, advisory assignments, bids, or collaborations**
- **A clearly articulated and financially sustainable portfolio**
- **Strengthened relationships with donors, funders, government, corporates/CSR, industry, and development partners**
- **High-quality research and advisory outputs aligned with policy, funding, and partnership priorities**

Who Will Thrive in This Role

This role is best suited to senior professionals who bring:

- **15+ years of relevant experience** across climate, sustainability, environment, energy, development studies, public policy, or related sectors
- **Significant responsibility for business development, fundraising/resource mobilisation, partnerships, or portfolio growth**
- **A demonstrated track record of securing institutional funding** through grants, donor-funded programmes, advisory assignments, bids, and/or partnerships

- **Strong experience in originating opportunities and developing successful proposals and bids**
- **Established networks across donors, foundations, multilaterals/bilaterals, government, philanthropy, CSR, and/or industry**
- **Credible climate and sustainability expertise** with the ability to develop fundable propositions and grow portfolios

Profiles combining climate credibility, business development capability, strategic networks, and institutional growth orientation are particularly well aligned.

This Role May Not Be Ideal If

This role may not suit you if:

- **Your experience is primarily research-focused without significant exposure to business development, funding, or partnerships**
- **You have limited experience in originating opportunities, guiding proposals, or converting funding prospects**
- **You are uncomfortable engaging senior donors, funders, government, corporate, industry, or institutional stakeholders**
- **You prefer defined technical assignments over opportunity-creation and portfolio-growth environments**

Operating Context

- **Location:** New Delhi
- **Function:** Climate Research, Partnerships, & Growth
- **Reporting:** Senior organisational leadership
- **Team Leadership:** Multidisciplinary programme and research teams
- **Compensation:** Competitive; aligned with senior sector benchmarks

The role operates in a fast-evolving climate and sustainability landscape that requires strategic thinking, commercial orientation, relationship depth, and execution discipline.

Before You Apply — A SAMS Reality Check

You are likely a strong fit if you can confidently say:

- **I have built or grown funded portfolios, partnerships, or institutional programmes.**
- **I have converted opportunities into grants, bids, advisory work, or collaborations.**
- **I am comfortable engaging donors, funders, government, corporates/CSR, industry, and senior stakeholders.**
- **I can connect climate and sustainability expertise with fundable propositions and market demand.**
- **I can combine research credibility with business development, partnerships, and organisational growth.**

Conclusion

This is a leadership opportunity to operate at the intersection of climate research, partnerships, funded portfolio development, and organisational growth. It demands credibility, maturity, networks, strategic judgement, and strong conversion capability.

Prepared by Strategic Alliance Management Services Pvt. Ltd. (SAMS) as a role-clarity and candidate self-assessment tool.