

MILLAR CAMERON



CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
CRUCIBLE

PEOPLE · PASSION · PERSISTENCE

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER *CRUCIBLE*

ABOUT *CRUCIBLE*

Crucible is a dynamic not-for-profit start-up with a bold vision: to catalyze the creation of 100 world-class secondary schools across Sub-Saharan Africa by 2045. They are on a mission to transform African economies by expanding the number of outstanding African leaders who will shape the future.

Unlike other international initiatives for African education, Crucible is laser-focused on the needs of future leaders. With its unique approach Crucible empowers Africa's future leaders to drive economic growth, social change, and long-term prosperity. They achieve this by creating opportunities for talented teenagers across the continent, ensuring access to world-class education regardless of financial means.

Crucible connects the capital, people, curricula, and technologies necessary to create these new schools. Their services include governance and financial control to ensure education quality and financial sustainability, headhunting and training to build a pipeline of brilliant teachers, and coordinating senior mentors to advise alumni in the early decades of their careers. They don't manage schools directly but promote information sharing and champion effective methods and technologies.

Crucible Lusaka, the first academy under the Crucible banner, launched in Zambia on 3rd February 2025. This two-year senior secondary academy has welcomed an exceptional inaugural cohort of 29 students, selected from a competitive pool of over 400 of Zambia's brightest young minds.



MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES:

Crucible is on a mission to redefine education at scale and need a visionary Chief Operating Officer who can turn ambition into action. This is not just another leadership role—it's a rare opportunity to build something extraordinary from the ground up. Crucible are looking for an operational powerhouse who thrives in high-growth, fast-moving environments and has the strategic acumen to transform bold ideas into scalable, cost-effective solutions.

You will shape a robust operational framework that can be replicated across multiple schools, ensuring seamless execution while fostering long-term sustainability. This role demands a leader who can architect and implement systems that drive efficiency, align teams, and support rapid expansion. You must be comfortable operating in the complexity of a startup—balancing structure with adaptability, wearing multiple hats while building a high-performing team.

With a strong foundation in finance and strategy, you will leverage data-driven decision-making to optimize resources, improve performance, and ensure measurable impact. Financial modelling will be second nature to you, allowing you to assess initial costs, track ongoing performance, and inform strategic growth. You will have the commercial instincts to manage budgets effectively, drive profitability, and ensure operations run with precision.

Beyond execution, this role is deeply external facing. You will engage with NGOs, Boards of Directors, and key stakeholders, forging partnerships that strengthen Crucible's ability to bridge the "Youth Dividend" gap and create lasting local impact. You will also be responsible for embedding cutting-edge technology into operations, ensuring that the organization is not just keeping up with trends but setting new standards for efficiency and agility.

The ideal candidate will have a strong financial and strategic background, ideally with consulting experience and a proven track record in scaling businesses. You will be an analytical thinker who can translate complex data into clear, actionable insights. With exceptional leadership skills you will have experience in building and empowering teams, coupled with business acumen to drive results, and the ability to anticipate trends and shape organizational plans. While experience in education is a plus, this role is sector-agnostic and suited to leaders who understand how to scale multi-site operations across diverse geographic regions.

TITLE:

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

LOCATION:

AFRICA – REMOTE

SALARY:

COMPETITIVE

TRAVEL:

EXTENSIVE

START DATE:

AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

DIMENSIONS OF THE ROLE:

1) Lead internal operations

- Working in partnership with the CEO, create the strategic five-year plan and implement new processes and approaches to achieve it
- Perform financial modeling to inform Crucible's planned expansion
- Develop and implement operational, administrative, and financial policies and procedures that ensure the smooth running of the organization
- Build and lead a high-performing team, setting clear goals and expectations, providing regular feedback, and creating a positive and engaging culture aligned with Crucible's values
- Manage and optimize the organisation's resources, including staffing, equipment, and technology, to ensure that they are being used effectively and efficiently
- Support fundraising efforts through the development and implementation of systems for reporting, measurement and supporting local revenue generation
- Ensure that the organisation is in compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements, including data privacy and workplace safety regulations

2) Support Crucible schools to deliver outstanding performance

- Support the leadership team of Crucible Lusaka (and future schools) to ensure operational efficiency and prudent use of resources
- Track schools' financial, operational and performance targets, in collaboration with the local board(s)

- Develop standard operating procedures and identify technology platforms to facilitate the development, launch and operations of future schools
- Promote information sharing across the Crucible network

3) Lead operations for future Crucible schools

- Working with the CEO, develop an analytical framework to assess the suitability of candidate sites for future Crucible schools
- Support the CEO to develop key public and private sector relationships in countries prioritized for future Crucible schools
- When a new site is approved and resourced, oversee the implementation of all activities to develop and launch a new Crucible school:
 - Create a plan to deliver a site and operations
 - Design, construction and procurement
 - Recruitment of academic and non-academic staff
 - Ensure regulatory setup and legal compliance
 - Continually update a manual of "best practice" approaches to be implemented at future schools or projects

Person Specification

The ideal candidate is mission-driven, passionate about innovation, and deeply knowledgeable about African contexts. They have a proven ability to tackle complex challenges, drive growth, and maintain efficiency. A natural leader, they build high-performing teams, foster collaboration, and create accountability. Adaptable and decisive, they balance strategy with execution, making impactful decisions for both immediate and long-term success.

THE TEAM AT *CRUCIBLE*

Crucible's leadership & advisory team brings a wealth of experience in education, social entrepreneurship, and international development. They include:

Founder

George Bevis is a London-based entrepreneur recognized for his contributions to financial services and social entrepreneurship. He founded Tide, a business banking platform, and served as its CEO from February 2015 to July 2018. In January 2020, he founded CanDo, a social ventures incubator focused on addressing social challenges. He established Crucible in January 2022, an initiative aimed at supporting 100 academies for gifted teenagers in Africa with the aim to transform prosperity in the region.

CEO

Dr. Peter Drobac is a social entrepreneur in global health and education. He joined Crucible in 2024, having previously directed the Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship at Oxford University. Previously, Dr. Drobac co-founded and led the University of Global Health Equity in Rwanda, which trains global health leaders and promotes healthcare delivery innovation. He has lived and worked in a variety of roles across Africa, and continues to teach social innovation at Oxford.

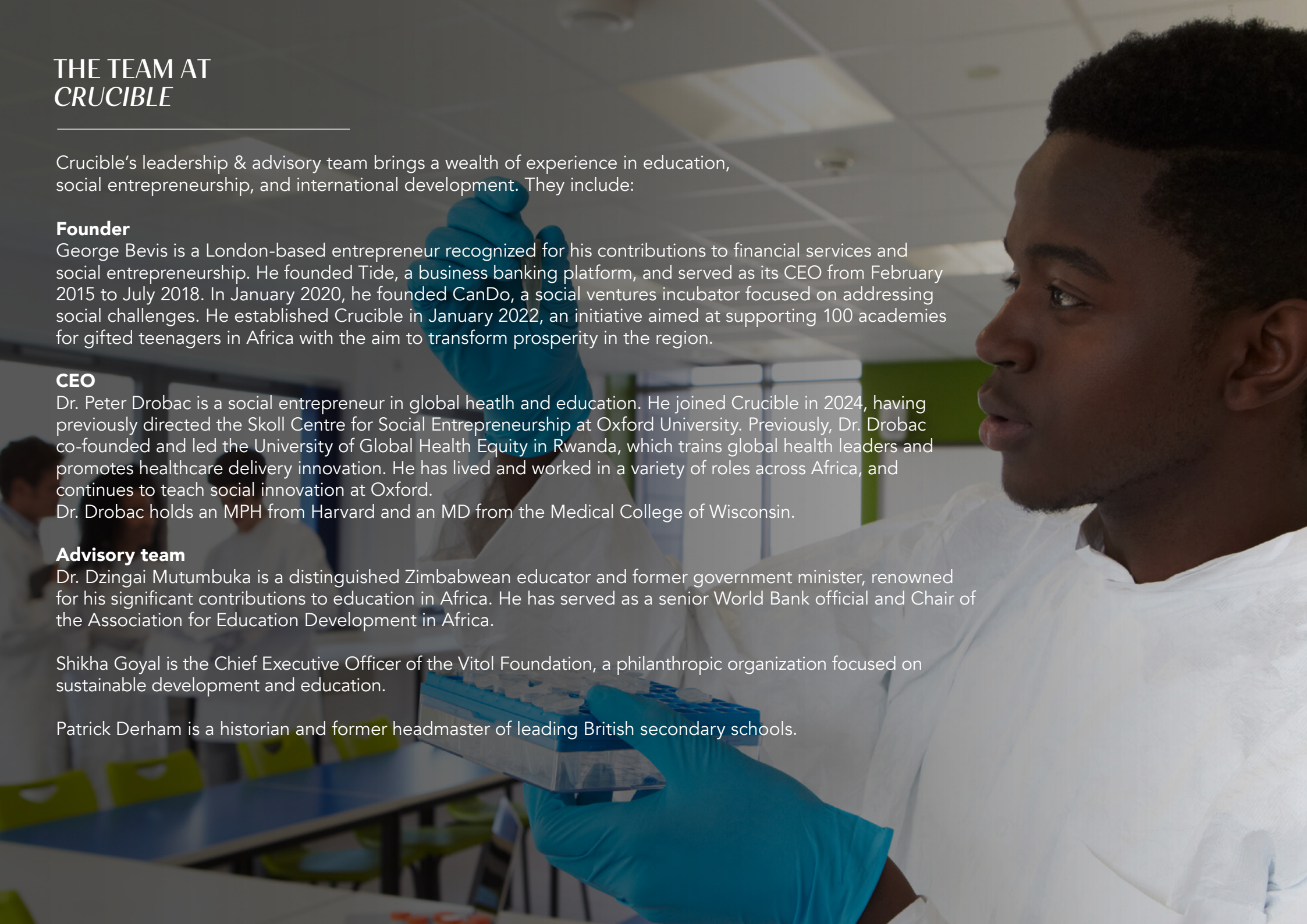
Dr. Drobac holds an MPH from Harvard and an MD from the Medical College of Wisconsin.

Advisory team

Dr. Dzingai Mutumbuka is a distinguished Zimbabwean educator and former government minister, renowned for his significant contributions to education in Africa. He has served as a senior World Bank official and Chair of the Association for Education Development in Africa.

Shikha Goyal is the Chief Executive Officer of the Vitol Foundation, a philanthropic organization focused on sustainable development and education.

Patrick Derham is a historian and former headmaster of leading British secondary schools.



HOW TO APPLY

To apply for this role, please ensure that you have the following skills and experience:

- Bachelor's degree in business or related field, with a preference for an MBA or master's degree
- Financially astute with an understanding of P&L management, budgeting, financial modelling and resource allocation to optimize business performance
- Experienced in leading multi-site expansions, scaling operations across diverse geographies, and ensuring sustainable growth while ensuring operational efficiency and consistency
- Proven ability to exceed goals with sound judgment and data-driven decision-making
- Including solid analytical expertise with a proven ability to translate data into actionable insights
- Strong business acumen, with a comprehensive understanding of finance including P&L management, resourceful problem-solving, and efficient project execution
- Operational excellence champion with a proven track record of capturing operational learnings to develop sharp guidelines and SOPs
- A strategic thinker with the agility to anticipate trends and shape organizational plans
- Skilled in capacity building, developing and fostering a high-performing workforce, and ensuring seamless operations with the ability to build and nurture a culture of agility and innovation
- Conversant with cutting-edge technologies and trends, with a focus on future-proof and integrated solutions

Please send your CV and contact details to Conor or Nicki who will contact you to discuss your application in more detail.



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Contact: Nicki Hallé

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WHO ARE MILLAR CAMERON

FINDING THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

A SEAMLESS JOURNEY

Founded in 2007, Millar Cameron is an executive and professional search consultancy that focuses on Africa and other emerging markets.

Our goal is to provide client-centric, tailored executive search, recruitment and strategic advisory. Our international reach paired with local market knowledge enables us to provide our clients outstanding leaders who deliver consistent results, irrespective of geography.

We employ a rigorous research driven search process to identify the best fit for our clients, taking into account both hard and soft skill sets.

Our extensive experience yields a robust approach to market intelligence and a longstanding network of global relationships.

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