



## **Head of Commercial & Sponsorship**

*Reporting to Global Director, Growth & Communications*

Location: Budapest Headquarters

Responsible for: Developing and delivering the ICF's commercial strategy, global sponsorship programme, and licensing operations

Contract: Full-time

### **Position Overview:**

The International Canoe Federation (ICF) is the global governing body for paddle sports, recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and responsible for overseeing 10 disciplines. With 171 national federations and millions of paddlers around the world, the ICF is committed to promoting a lifelong passion for paddlesport at all levels – from grassroots to elite.

The Head of Commercial & Sponsorship is a key strategic leadership role responsible for significantly increasing ICF's commercial revenue. In this role, you will lead the development and execution of a global strategy to unlock new income streams through sponsorships, partnerships, licensing, merchandising, and event-driven commercial opportunities.

You will play a central role in reducing the federation's financial dependence on IOC revenue distribution, with a clear goal to grow ICF's annual income to €10 million by 2028 – with no more than 50% of that income derived from IOC sources. You will also be responsible for launching and managing a global licensing programme that promotes the Paddle Worldwide brand and generates sustainable long-term value.

### **Key Responsibilities:**

- Lead the creation and implementation of a results-driven commercial strategy focused on sponsorship, licensing, merchandising, and value-added partnerships.
- Build a robust global sponsorship programme aligned with ICF's brand values and the storytelling potential of its athletes, events, and environmental mission.
- Launch and manage a global licensing programme across multiple product categories, in collaboration with legal and marketing teams.
- Drive diversification of ICF revenue by developing new income streams and increasing commercial income year-on-year.
- Identify, negotiate, and secure long-term, mutually beneficial partnerships that enhance ICF's global impact and brand value.
- Develop bespoke commercial propositions for partners and licensees linked to ICF events, media rights, digital platforms, and sustainability campaigns.
- Oversee commercial partner servicing and activation, ensuring strong return on investment and measurable impact.
- Work closely with the Events, TV/Broadcast, Marketing, and Sport teams to align assets and campaigns for optimal visibility and engagement.
- Monitor commercial performance through KPIs, reporting regularly to the Global Director, Growth & Communications and ICF leadership.

- Represent the ICF in commercial forums, trade fairs, and international meetings to promote paddlesport and secure new opportunities.
- Organise annual ICF Manufacturer/Partner Forum meetings to discuss any changes, promotion of sport and technology.
- Undertake special projects or tasks as assigned by the Line Manager or the Secretary General.

#### **Key Attributes and Skills:**

- Strategic thinker with a proven ability to scale commercial operations and increase diversified revenue in the sports or entertainment sectors.
- Deep understanding of the global sponsorship landscape and brand partnership development.
- Track record of launching successful licensing and merchandising initiatives.
- Strong communication, negotiation, and influencing skills across multiple cultural contexts.
- Commercially creative, entrepreneurial, and data-driven.
- Excellent relationship-building and stakeholder management abilities.
- Passion for paddle sport and the values of adventure, nature, and wellbeing.

#### **Requirements:**

- Minimum 8 years' experience in commercial or sponsorship leadership, preferably within an international sports organisation or rights-holder.
- Proven success in developing and closing high-value sponsorship and licensing deals.
- Familiarity with Olympic sport governance and marketing ecosystem.
- Bachelor's degree in Business, Sport Management, Marketing, or related discipline (Master's preferred).
- Fluent in English; additional languages are an asset.
- High level of digital and financial literacy, including CRM, media valuation tools, and reporting systems.
- Willingness to travel internationally and work in a fast-paced, evolving environment.