

April 2, 2015

Attn: Mark Sanderson,
Interim Director of Brand, Girl Hub
CC: All hiring team stakeholders
Re: Brand Manager, Girl Hub Rwanda



ILA ASPLUND
ila@halfsky.org

Dear Mr. Sanderson,

It was 2011, and I'd organized a group of women philanthropists and media experts to visit Rwanda. Our college-aged guide, Celine, was telling me about her dreams for the future. She asked me to share this message with my friends across the world: "Tell them: We are not just about genocide. There is so much more to us—so much more to Rwanda!"

In my decades of work and travel, I've met brilliant girls like Celine, and so many seasoned leaders committed to world-changing ideas. But often they are limited by external circumstance. From Asia to Africa to the US, I've witnessed how, without adequate funding and visibility, without key voices heard, and without a crystal clear strategy for change—even the most innovative heroes struggle to make an impact.

This is why my Big Audacious Goal is to empower all of us to be heard in our own words as equals, and to have access to the technology and resources to do so. It's why I've published voices of women and girls in World Pulse magazine; cultivated a mobile and web-based digital media platform for global champions of gender equality; and why I produce hands-on events for top corporations to examine (and transform) their brand, their values, and their impact on the world.

It's what inspired my vision to forge alliances for women and girls across borders, channeling resources to high-potential entrepreneurs. I currently do this through the business I founded, Half Sky Journeys. It's how my passions became aligned with Girl Hub, and why my suite of skills are custom-fit to serve Girl Hub's success as Brand Manager in Rwanda!

In Rwanda, we traveled on from Kigali to Gisenyi. We saw stunning Lake Kivu, and heard rumors of the rare but deadly bursts of invisible volcanic gases that can suddenly bubble to the surface, suffocating a swimmer in minutes. As I remember it today, I am struck by this: when we dwell in hopelessness, we sink easily. But when we offer girls a space to breathe in possibility, we can trust they will rise to the occasion. I believe Girl Hub Rwanda is nothing short of that oxygen—a lifeline of knowledge from one girl to another. Through *Ni Niyampinga* her voice channels the airwaves, her story is un-silenced on a magazine page, the threads of a support network are woven.

I look forward to the opportunity to serve Girl Hub, collaborating with your team to further this essential work. Together, we will actively witness and strengthen a transformation for Rwandan girls, and show the world what's possible for girls everywhere.

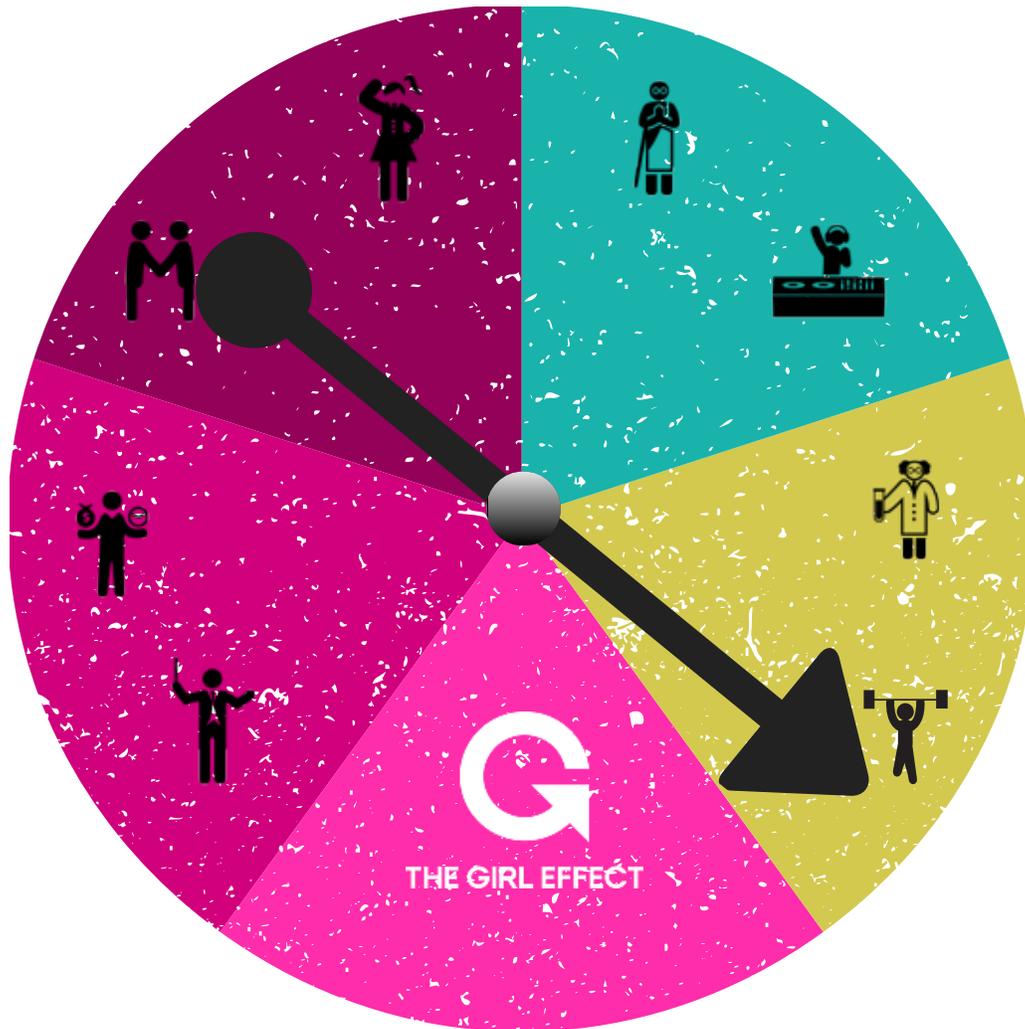
To an inspiring future,

Ila R. Asplund

The Girl Hub Rwanda Brand Manager role describes a person with a swiss-army-knife skillset. Someone who can spin on a dime without getting dizzy, who can access these seven Brand Manager Superpowers—and then some. I have the strength and flexibility to flow from the creative to the practical as needed on any job. Just watch!



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BRAND GURU. Catalyzes a big brand vision, asks the “whys” and plans the “hows.” Wise to all stages of identity development, for nonprofits to startups to fortune 500 companies.



CREATIVE DIRECTOR. Possesses deep experience in providing clear, inspiring briefs for visual designers, artists, photographers. Unites our group in creative vision that tells a story.



CULTURAL AMALGAMATOR. Can apply a global idea locally, or vice versa. Finds the universal beat in a personal song. Knows that how we choose to harmonize as a team = our culture = our brand!



LIFETIME CHAMPION FOR GIRLS.

Knows that girls hold the solutions for improving their own lives. Called to support girls’ wisdom and amplify their voices—not to speak for or over them.



PROJECT MANAGER. Drives all phases of a project using transparent communication, reaching across teams or across oceans. Derives giddy satisfaction from sticking to budgets and deadlines.

ANALYTIC INNOVATOR. Geeks out on data, and loves to translate metrics into tangible strategies. Voracious for fresh technologies that have the potential to boldly affect change.



MENTOR, MENTEE, & MATCH-MAKER. Whether as trainer or learner, radars people’s strengths and motivates diverse groups. Forges connections between like-minded (or unlikely) allies.



PORTFOLIO

For case studies and samples of brand & communications projects, you are invited to visit my portfolio-in-progress online, here:

www.writing.halfsky.org



ACHIEVEMENTS

- Finalist, Acumen Global Fellow 2014 & 2015
- Finalist, Social Entrepreneur Pitch Fest, Portland State University Elevating Impact Summit
- Awarded \$40K for Tides Foundation grant written for global women's media group
- Conference Speaker, Media for Activism, Global Leadership Conference (Indonesia)
- Awarded \$7K fellowship to study Javanese & Balinese textiles, language, culture (Indonesia)
- Awarded writing scholarship for semester abroad (Uganda)



[linkedin.com/in/ilaasplund](https://www.linkedin.com/in/ilaasplund)



facebook.com/pages/Half-Sky-Journeys/



[@HalfSkyJourneys](https://twitter.com/HalfSkyJourneys)

WORK

Founder @ Half Sky Journeys LLC



Brand, Market, Plan & Produce international journeys to elevate impact of girl- and women-empowering organizations. E.g.: Cambodia: Led delegation of women philanthropists, creating relationships with local leaders fighting human trafficking and poverty; Kenya: Led donors and media experts to explore power of microfinance and women in government; Rwanda: Led donors, HIV experts, doctors to learn from women fighting for access to health and basic rights post-genocide; Indonesia: Led outreach strategy for local nonprofit to create sustainable campaigns for engaging audiences with their Borneo health clinic initiative.

Half Sky also serves to:

- Survey client stakeholders (CEO, board, team) for communications needs
- Advise senior leaders on sustainable brand development strategies
- Write proposals, grant applications, investor pitches to clarify client goals
- Translate industry jargon into compelling stories for client brand messaging
- Build/nurture community network of business and philanthropy superstars (including board of advisors, interns, and volunteers)

Brand Manager & Producer (consultant)

@ Future Leader Now (futureleadernow.com)



{Partner clients include: *eBay inc., LinkedIn, Box.com, Everwise, Achievers, Estée Lauder, Donorschoose dot org, Whole Foods*. Participant clients include *Apple, Standard Chartered, OpenLink, Genentech, UPS, Wells Fargo, Dannon, Gruppo Campari*, and more.}

- Produce events for Human Resources/Corporate Engagement executives
- Develop Future Now brand; verbal/visual print & digital collateral design
- Facilitate trainings that cross-pollinate great ideas around workplace culture
- Logistical planning for high-end events from San Francisco to NYC to London

Director of Communications @ World Pulse Media



- Led brand and culture for media nonprofit, uniting leaders across borders
- Managed publication, production, and distribution of print magazine
- Created board and constituent surveys to manage/evolve organization identity
- Coached team & stakeholders to articulate brand with consistency and clarity
- Innovated outreach efforts to triple membership to a digital global network
- Implemented sustainable donor management and team transparency systems
- Wrote/edited PR communications: advertising, media kit, newsletters, grants



EDUCATION

- University of WA Seattle, WA: Bachelor of Arts, English Writing; Graduated Cum Laude with Honors 1998
- Seattle University, WA: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages: TESOL Certificate Received 1999
- Certification: Microsoft Project Management Software Training, 2002
- Adobe Creative Suite Fundamentals, Pacific Northwest College of Art 2008
- User-Centric Design Workshops, San Francisco & New York City, Everwise (geteverwise.com) 2014
- Languages: Very Beginning Level French, Conversational Bahasa Indonesia



VOLUNTEERING

- Rapporteur, blogger, Vital Voices Summit (India)
- Editor, Exec. Women Leadership training (India)
- Contributor, Young Women's Social Entrepreneurs
- Partnership Organizer, Social Venture Society
- Volunteer, Major Hospital Refugee Literacy Program
- Work-study producing educational materials for Prevention of Sexual Violence Community Center
- Design, edit website, and produce e-news for adolescents' writing and self-defense programs



OTHER SKILLS

Traveler. Writer. Observer. Baker. Beauty Seeker. Perpetual Beginner Surfer. Swimmer. Hiker. Yogi. Runner. Vintage Schwinn Rider. Paper Ephemera Collector. Sharpie Lover. Etch-A-Sketch Artist. Mondegreen (Misheard Lyric) Connoisseur. Public Space Ninja. Nickname Giver. Bubbles.



ILA ASPLUND

curriculum vitae

ADDITIONAL RELEVANT WORK:

Creative Director & Editor: Women's Digital Empowerment Training Manual



(A special project funded by a public-private partnership among *USAID, NetHope, Intel Corporation, World Vision, UN Women*, and World Pulse)

- Created multi-media curriculum to help bridge digital divide for women
- (Pilot groups sponsored in rural Democratic Republic of Congo)
- Surveyed for priorities of local women technology trainers in the Congo
- Distilled research on digital access, successes and failures, to outline a digital training program that would be useful across cultures, and iterative for future needs
- Advised on web distribution of materials

Sales and Marketing Director @ One With Heart onewithheart.com (martial arts center)



- Aligned internal mission of empowerment with a successful business strategy
- Designed sales goal tracking tools to motivate team, train, evaluate performance
- Managed brand and marketing strategy, evolved brand perception from an exclusive/elite company to an inclusive/girl-friendly community school
- Shepherded 20-year old small business to become its most profitable to date
- Profit increases enabled business to start a foundation providing self-defense training for teens who could not otherwise afford tuition

Project Manager @ Opolis Design Studio



- Established and maintained client, sponsor, and vendor relationships
- Managed budgets for print advertising, tradeshow, and retail design
- Implemented internal communication systems for designers, vendors, and clients
- Researched materials costs and feasibility for print and 3D graphics projects

Promoter/Marketer & Trainer of Trainers @ Teach & Travel



- Gave public presentations, planned outreach, marketed promotional events
- Wrote curriculum, taught, tested students in effective teaching techniques
- Consulted new teachers in preparation for employment overseas

English Instructor @ EF School (Makassar, Indonesia)



- Instructor of English to Indonesian children, teens, and adults
- Provided academic coordination and new instructor orientations
- Evaluated learners for speaking, reading, and listening skills

Team Leader & Trainer @ Amazon (amazon.com)



- Trained customer representatives to respond in style of "customer-centric" brand
- Empowered team to pass on company's message with every interaction
- Managed team performance in providing consistent, impeccable service