

Global Category Manager



Central portfolio focus – NPD/Innovation – Strategic impact
Zierikzee, The Netherlands




Royal Zeelandia Group

Royal Zeelandia Group is a global, family-owned leader in bakery ingredients with a strong heritage in pastry and bread. Founded in 1900 and headquartered in the Netherlands, the company operates in over 30 countries and serves customers in nearly 100 markets. With 3,200 employees worldwide, Zeelandia combines deep technical expertise with a strong entrepreneurial spirit. Zeelandia lives their values: Inventive, Courageous, Ambitious, Involved and Responsible.

The organisation is currently undergoing a strategic shift from a historically decentralised structure towards a more unified, data-driven and centrally steered marketing, portfolio and NPD model. This transition is essential to strengthen competitiveness, accelerate innovation and build a more mature, scalable commercial organisation across Europe and beyond.

The pastry category plays a central role in this transformation. With significant variation in local tastes, different levels of product management maturity across countries, and increasing competitive pressure, Zeelandia aims to bring stronger strategic direction, clearer portfolio choices and more consistent execution across markets.

The company culture is result oriented, focussed on cocreation across the Zeelandia group and very much open for change and development. This environment offers autonomy and speed, but also requires a leader who can bring the Zeelandia values alive, influence and inspire stakeholders across the group, and drive behavioural change while respecting local realities and cultural differences.





Global Category Manager

This Global Category Manager holds end-to-end responsibility for the strategic direction, performance and development of the pastry category across Europe, with a growing outlook towards Asia. Reporting to the Group Marketing/R&D Director and working closely with the Global Management Team (GMT), R&D/NPD and local Operating Companies, the role is crucial in shaping Zeelandia's future pastry portfolio.

The core of the assignment is to define clear strategic choices for pastry product groups. You will lead central portfolio management, ensure alignment across countries and drive the transition towards a more standardised, data-driven and value-focused way of working.

The role involves managing and developing 3 Global Product Leads, strengthening NPD governance (including stage-gate processes), and ensuring that innovation themes and product decisions are aligned with both market needs and technical feasibility. You will also play a key role in the pricing governance, value selling and performance management.

The Global Category Manager builds bridges between central functions and local markets, accelerates change in countries with varying levels of maturity, and ensures buy-in from Managing Directors of the operating companies, commercial teams and R&D. The role requires strong influencing skills and the ability to balance entrepreneurial freedom with central steering.



Floris Verbeek
Executive Chef

Rodolf Maana
Pastry Chef



Who are we looking for?

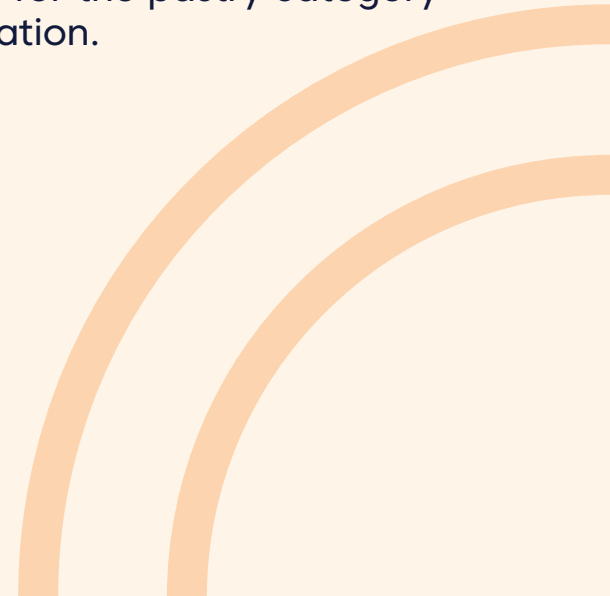
For this position we seek a senior B2B marketing and portfolio leader with approximately 10–15 years of experience in category management, product management or strategic marketing. A background in food ingredients or bakery is preferred but not strictly required, experience in international matrix environments is essential.

The ideal candidate combines strong strategic portfolio and category management capabilities with the ability to generate data-driven market insights. Experience in leading product management teams and guiding new product development through stage-gate processes is required, while also making pricing, value-selling, and P&L-focused decisions.

We look for a seasoned professional with strong influencing and communication skills. Someone who can build trust amongst various stakeholders and communicate complex decisions through compelling storytelling combined with facts and figures. A diplomatic, consistent and result oriented mindset and approach are key.

This position is based in Zierikzee (The Netherlands), and you must be entitled to work in The Netherlands and EU. You are fluent in English, comfortable travelling across Europe (approx. 25%), and able to operate effectively in a dynamic, entrepreneurial, result oriented and agile environment with a lot of space for development and professionalisation.

You bring intrinsic motivation and energy to help develop a central function that is still evolving. You are the driving force during transition, accelerate strategic clarity and contribute to long-term value creation for the pastry category and the broader organisation.





Our client offers

An exciting opportunity to play a central role in the strategic transformation of a leading global bakery ingredients company. The role offers significant visibility at GMT level, international scope and the chance to shape the future of a core global category.

You will work closely with a diverse, committed team and contribute directly to building a more mature, data-driven and innovation-focused organisation — with future opportunities to expand your impact beyond Europe.

Zeelandia provides attractive primary and secondary employment benefits, as well as a hybrid work arrangement, offering a balance between working at the office in Zierikzee and from a home office.



If you are interested in this position, we kindly ask you to contact one of our consultants for more information.

Jakob Jan Verbraak or Hans Hilbrands

info@vandegroep.nl
T: 0346 870020

Van de Groep & Olsthoorn

