

Job Description: Operations Director

Contract: Permanent, full time.

Hours of work: 9.30am – 5.30pm and/or some evenings.

Occasional weekend work will be required and repaid with TOIL.

Salary: £34,000 - £38,000 per annum, depending on experience.

Reports to: Board of Trustees.

Employer: Open School East, Margate.

About Open School East

Established in 2013 and located in Margate, Open School East (OSE) is a free, independent art school and community space that focuses on collective learning through the arts. We support cultural practitioners at an early stage of their career to develop and sustain their practice, and enable young people and adults alike to learn new and transferable skills, develop their confidence and shape their creative voice by becoming active learners and co-producers of OSE's programmes.

Open School East is a registered charity and National Portfolio Organisation, supported by Arts Council England. Core and project funding come from a range of sources including trusts and foundations, and individual donors.

For more information, please visit: www.openschooleast.org

Job Outline

The Operations Director post is a co-director position, working closely with the Artistic Director to help realise and develop the vision and mission for Open School East. It is a collaborative and supportive role, and as part of the Executive and wider staff team helps to envision, map out and deliver the school's ambitions.

The Operations Director is responsible for the organisation's overall budget and overseeing all project budgets; contract management; reporting to funders; human resources; building operations and ensuring that the building/ artists studios are appropriately maintained and adhere to health and safety regulations. The Operations Director will work jointly with the Artistic Director to develop fundraising work, taking a lead on Trust and Foundations grant strategies and applications.

The Operations Director will have significant strategic financial and business planning experience, preferably with experience of working within an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (ACE NPO) and with a proven track record of managing financial systems, operations and budgets. This role will contribute substantially to the delivery of our activities and have a real impact on artists and young people's lives.

Key Tasks and Responsibilities

Business Planning and Financial Management

- Lead organisational business planning activity, including ACE NPO processes;
- Work jointly with the Artistic Director to deliver the business objectives of Open School East's existing business plan and the targets within it, keeping trustees and stakeholders updated as necessary;
- Work jointly with the Artistic Director to lead the annual review and business planning process;
- Lead and prepare, manage and monitor Open School East's overall annual budget and individual project budgets with staff, in dialogue with the Artistic Director;
- Oversee Open School East's financial systems, ensuring they are operating effectively and that all records are maintained in a systematic, timely and accurate manner;
- Set financial policy and procedure and monitoring compliance;
- Liaise with Open School East's external accountant in the production of monthly management accounts and annual accounts;
- Responsibility for all banking and book-keeping processes, ensuring that payments are made promptly, that invoicing systems are appropriate and managed in line with purchase orders.
- Work with the accountant to ensure that monthly payroll arrangements runs smoothly and that all tax, National Insurance and pension payments are made and statutory employer responsibilities are met;
- Work jointly with the Board to ensure necessary financial and information returns and reports are submitted to the Charities Commission and funding partners on a timely basis.

Governance

- Provide, clearly and confidently the relevant information to support effective Governance and financial management through the appropriate and timely provision of information;
- Lead on all aspects of the coordination of Subcommittee and Board meetings throughout the year including; schedule of dates for the year ahead for all trustees and OSE staff, setting up and sending out all calendar and zoom invites; coordination of in person meetings and oversee arrangements including travel and location coordination and sending out all relevant papers and agendas ahead of subcommittee and board meetings;
- Engage Trustees' guidance and strategic support on areas relevant to their particular skill sets, as well as enthusing the Board with the programme and ensuring their support across advocacy, fundraising, organisational and staff development;
- Work jointly with the Artistic Director, to liaise regularly with Trustees to ensure that they are fully aware of the School's activities;
- Work closely with the Fundraising & Communications and the Finance & Risk Subcommittees;
- Oversee the organisation's risk management with a particular focus on funding pipelines, health & safety, safeguarding, financial, human resources and reputational risks, with effective reporting to Trustees to enable them to effectively fulfil their governance duties;
- Ensure good governance in all aspects of the organisation's activity and introduce management best practice and continuous improvement to processes;
- Support the Board in the implementation of its governance improvement plan.

Fundraising and Relationships' Management

- Working jointly with the Artistic Director to develop and deliver Open School East's fundraising strategy, and with support from the Fundraising Subcommittee, ensure that income targets are agreed and achieved in line with the OSE business plan;
- To manage and maintain funding agreements with core funders, ACE NPO reporting, including reporting on audience data and impact evaluation, reporting progress and updates to the Artistic Director;
- Promote and maintain productive relations with strategic and operational partnerships, working alongside the Artistic Director and reporting to the Board of Trustees;

Operations and Compliance

- Establish and lead the organisation's Strategic Risk Register (with sign off and approval from the Board);
- Manage OSE's Human Resources function (with external support provided by BrightHR), ensuring compliance with best practice guidelines;
- Manage personnel processes including employment contracts, appraisals, annual leave, TOIL and sickness;
- Ensure that OSE's policies and procedures are in place and that all staff and users are aware of their responsibilities;
- Support the Artistic Director and programme leaders in devising risk assessments for programme activities;
- Act as OSE's Safeguarding Lead;
- Oversee general upkeep and maintenance for building, including management of contractors for electrical, building and maintenance work, ensuring studios are kept clean and tidy and in compliance with health and safety regulations as set out in the lease, ensuring electrical and lighting is in order and checked regularly;
- Liaise with the appropriate and necessary health and safety consultants to book in annual inspections for the building.
- Ensure that OSE delivers work in accordance with current lease arrangements and continues to maintain an excellent working relationship with our landlord.
- Oversee all licensing arrangements with studio holders, including supporting the provision of new licensees as and when necessary.
- Ensure that the office infrastructure supports all aspects of activity, including IT equipment, storage, insurance and maintenance, and that OSE systems are compliant with current Data Protection regulations (UK GDPR);
- Ensure key policies and processes are in place including good practice in the areas of equality, inclusivity and diversity, professional development and environmental sustainability;
- Ensure all insurances are up-to-date (public liability, contents and employers);

Communication and General Management

- Act as OSE's advocate and representative in partnership with the wider team and represent the organisation locally, regionally and nationally.
- The role will require management responsibilities of the external accountant, suppliers, freelancers and some members of the team.

Person specification

Essential

- Significant financial experience, including setting, monitoring and controlling budgets, producing management accounting reports and cash flow forecasts;
- Understanding of day to day business banking processes and use of online software accounting packages (preferably Xero);
- Experience of business planning and strategic management;
- A proven track record of fundraising across Trusts and Foundations and other public sector funding streams;
- Experience of coordination of Governance and HR;
- Experience of managing and maintaining funding agreements with core funders and leading on contract management and reporting processes, including reporting on audience data and impact evaluation;
- Experience of developing and implementing policies and procedures;
- Experience of managing staff, with a strong ability to build team-spirit in the workplace;
- Excellent administrative and communications skills, both written and verbal;
- Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to relate to, and confidently engage with colleagues, funders, trustees, artists/practitioners, students, young people, partner organisations and other stakeholders;
- A strong awareness of issues of equality, cultural diversity and safeguarding, with a commitment to Equal Opportunities;
- Engagement with the organisation's values;

Desirable

- Strong appreciation of Arts Council England strategies for UK cultural development and funding thereof;
- Previous experience/ understanding of reporting requirements for ACE National Portfolio Organisations, particularly in terms of audience survey data and environmental sustainability;
- Knowledge and understanding of the cultural sector in the East Kent and South East area;
- Understanding of social issues in the Thanet area;

Application

To apply for the position of OSE Operations Director, please send a CV, cover letter (2 pages max) outlining how you found out about the role, your relevant experience and your current notice period (if any). Please state 'Operations Director' in the title of your email and send it to: recruitment@openschooleast.org. If you have any questions with regards to the role, please contact recruitment@openschooleast.org.

Open School East is committed to diversity and inclusion and we are proud to be an equal opportunity workplace that seeks to recruit, develop and retain the most talented people from a variety of backgrounds, skills and perspectives. We encourage applications from all races, genders, gender identities, sexual orientations, ages, national origins, religions as well as parents/carers, people living with disabilities and people from lower socio-economic backgrounds and any other groups that could bring diverse experience and perspectives to our organisation.

It would be appreciated if you could complete and return the OSE Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form which you can find here: <https://forms.gle/PosUUdKAn51sRugp6>. This document will be stored safely and separately from your application and all information will be aggregated and anonymised. The information collected will help us identify any community groups that we are not reaching and will help us to develop new strategies to engage and reach new community members.

Deadline for applications: 10.00am Tuesday 29th August 2023

1st Interviews to be held: Wednesday 6th and Thursday 7th September 2023

2nd Interviews: Dates to be confirmed but likely to be week commencing Monday 11 September 2023