Strategic Lead - Finance & Operations

Salary: £40,476 per annum (Band F)
Hours: 35 hours per week, full-time
Contract: Permanent
Location: Manchester with flexible and hybrid working arrangements
Reports to: Chief Executive Officer
Direct Reports: Finance Officer, Operations & Administration Coordinator and other staff as required

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About Young Manchester

Young Manchester is a youth-led grant-making and infrastructure organisation committed to improving the lives of children and young people across Manchester.

We support over 200 youth organisations through grant-making, capacity building, partnership development and strategic leadership. Working alongside young people, communities, funders, businesses and public sector partners, we help create the conditions that enable children and young people to thrive.

As we continue to strengthen our organisation and increase our impact across the city, we are seeking a Strategic Lead - Finance & Operations to join our Senior Leadership Team.

Role Purpose

The Strategic Lead - Finance & Operations is Young Manchester's senior internal lead for financial management, financial sustainability and business support functions.

Reporting directly to the Chief Executive Officer, the postholder will provide strategic financial leadership while ensuring the organisation has effective governance arrangements, operational

systems and organisational processes to support high-quality delivery and long-term sustainability.

As a member of the Senior Leadership Team, the Strategic Lead will provide expert advice and insight to the CEO, Board of Trustees and colleagues, supporting informed decision-making, organisational resilience and continuous improvement.

The role combines strategic financial leadership with oversight of key operational functions and organisational infrastructure, helping ensure Young Manchester remains efficient, compliant and well positioned for future growth.

Key Responsibilities

Finance Leadership & Management

- Lead all aspects of the organisation's financial management and reporting.
- Support the CEO and Board to develop annual budgets, forecasts and longer-term financial plans.
- Monitor organisational income, expenditure, reserves and cash flow.
- Produce accurate management accounts and financial reports to support decision-making.
- Support budget holders to manage budgets effectively and responsibly.
- Oversee restricted funds, grants, contracts and designated budgets.
- Ensure robust financial controls, systems and procedures are maintained.
- Coordinate annual audits, statutory accounts and regulatory reporting.
- Manage relationships with auditors, accountants, banks and financial advisers.
- Identify financial risks and opportunities and provide recommendations to senior leaders

Strategic Leadership

- Contribute to organisational strategy, planning and decision-making as a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Provide financial insight, analysis and recommendations to support organisational decision-making.
- Support the CEO and Board in ensuring the organisation remains financially sustainable and resilient.
- Lead strategic projects and organisational improvement initiatives within areas of responsibility.
- Contribute to organisational business planning, performance monitoring and continuous improvement.

Governance, Risk & Compliance

- Lead organisational governance, risk and compliance activities.
- Support the effective operation of the Board of Trustees and relevant committees.
- Maintain organisational policies, procedures and governance frameworks.
- Develop and oversee risk management and business continuity arrangements.
- Ensure compliance with charity law, company law, employment legislation, GDPR and funding requirements.
- Coordinate organisational due diligence, audits and reporting processes.
- Ensure safeguarding, health and safety and information governance requirements are embedded across the organisation.

Operations & Organisational Development

- Lead the development and continuous improvement of organisational systems, processes and infrastructure.
- Ensure operational systems effectively support organisational delivery and growth.
- Oversee organisational administration, facilities and business support functions.
- Manage contracts, procurement processes and supplier relationships.
- Support organisational recruitment, onboarding and workforce administration processes.
- Ensure employment policies, records and people-related systems remain compliant and up to date.
- Support organisation-wide planning, coordination and performance management.
- Drive operational efficiency and identify opportunities to improve ways of working.

Systems, Data & Digital Infrastructure

- Oversee organisational systems including Microsoft 365, Salesforce and finance systems.
- Ensure systems support effective reporting, planning and organisational performance.
- Maintain high standards of data quality, management and compliance.
- Support the development of digital systems and organisational reporting capabilities.
- Promote data-informed decision-making across the organisation.
- Ensure information security and data protection requirements are met

Leadership & Management

- Provide effective line management and support to direct reports.
- Lead and develop a collaborative, high-performing team culture.
- Support staff development through coaching, mentoring and performance management.
- Promote cross-organisational collaboration and effective working relationships.
- Act as a role model for Young Manchester's values, behaviours and culture.

Person Specification

Essential Experience

- Significant experience in a senior finance, business management or finance and operations leadership role.
- Experience of financial planning, budgeting, reporting and forecasting.
- Experience supporting boards, trustees or governance structures.
- Experience leading organisational systems, processes and compliance functions.
- Experience developing and implementing organisational policies and procedures.
- Experience managing contracts, suppliers and operational resources.
- Experience managing and developing staff.

Essential Knowledge & Skills

- Strong understanding of financial management and reporting.
- Strong understanding of governance, risk management and regulatory compliance.
- Excellent analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Strong planning, organisational and project management skills.
- Ability to interpret and communicate complex information clearly to a range of audiences.
- Excellent communication and stakeholder management skills.
- Ability to manage competing priorities and meet deadlines.
- Commitment to safeguarding, equality, diversity and inclusion.

Desirable

- A recognised accountancy qualification (ACA, ACCA, CIMA, CIPFA or equivalent) or significant equivalent experience.
- Experience working within the charity, VCSE or youth sector.
- Knowledge of grant-making and grant-funded programmes.
- Experience using Salesforce, Xero or similar organisational systems.
- Experience supporting organisational growth and development.

What Success Looks Like

Within the first 12 months you will have:

- Strengthened financial planning, monitoring and reporting processes.
- Improved organisational systems and operational efficiency.
- Supported robust governance, compliance and risk management arrangements.
- Enhanced organisational planning and performance reporting.
- Strengthened organisational sustainability and resilience.
- Established yourself as a trusted advisor to the CEO and Board.

- Contributed to a positive and high-performing organisational culture.

What We Offer

- Salary of **£40,476 per annum (Band F)**
- 35-hour working week
- 25 days annual leave plus bank holidays
- Flexible and hybrid working arrangements
- Contributory pension scheme
- Professional development opportunities
- Employee wellbeing support
- A supportive and values-driven culture
- The opportunity to help shape the future of one of Manchester's leading youth organisations

Safeguarding, Equality & Inclusion

Young Manchester is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff are expected to share this commitment and work in accordance with our safeguarding policies and procedures.

We are committed to building a diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve and welcome applications from all backgrounds. We particularly encourage applications from people and groups currently underrepresented within the charity sector and leadership positions.