

Job description

Financial Controller *(Maternity leave cover)*

Main purpose

This role is to provide cover during the incumbent post-holder's maternity leave. At the time of writing, the anticipated duration for this post is approximately 15 months, subject to discussion.

The Financial Controller leads Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE)'s finance team, directing and overseeing the finance function in compliance with appropriate accounting standards and practices, company and charity law and associated guidance.

Provides timely and accurate financial and management information to support strategic decision-making and enable effective management of resources and budgetary control by the Senior Leadership Team and Trustees and by project managers and other budget holders.

Works with the Director of Finance and Operations and other members of the Operations Team to provide excellent operational support to underpin successful delivery by the whole organisation of our charitable mission, strategic objectives, and associated programmes and projects.

Specific responsibilities

- Take responsibility for the day-to-day accounting, invoicing, payroll, VAT returns, payments and banking, credit control, cash management and internal financial reporting, including preparation of timely monthly management accounts, working closely with the Finance Manager and Finance Assistant.
- To work alongside the Director of Finance & Operations and Finance Manager as well as other colleagues in providing finance support to Retrofit West CIC; to include provision of financial reporting, statutory obligations where appropriate, payroll, and any other relevant support as required.
- To work alongside the Director of Finance & Operations, Finance Manager, SLT and other colleagues in co-ordinating the annual budget cycle (and mid-year budget refresh process).
- To attend monthly SMT meetings in person or remotely, to share the previous month's financial results with SLT and SMT colleagues, where required, dealing with related queries / discussions.
- Prepare accurate and accessible reports on organisational, team, staff and project financial indicators to enable informed and timely monitoring and decision-making, principally on a set cycle to feed into a routine schedule of meetings and occasionally to meet an ad hoc need.
- Maintain the organisation's electronic and paper financial records in accordance with appropriate accounting standards and practices and prepare documentation and files required for the annual audit and other statutory financial reporting (e.g. charity commission).

- Liaise with CSE's auditors, alongside the Director of Finance & Operations and with assistance from the Finance Manager and Finance Assistant, to enable an effective and timely annual audit and associated financial and statutory reporting.
- Provide project managers with information and support to plan and manage their project budgets accurately and effectively and providing timely financial data to assist in reporting to clients and funders where required.
- Provide expertise on financial costing and monitoring approaches for new project funding proposals, reflecting funder requirements.
- Identify opportunities to improve CSE's financial management and associated performance monitoring and management information reporting systems, informed by a sound understanding of our mission and strategic objectives and our operating context and by keeping up to date with advances in financial management practices and software.
- Maintain up to date knowledge of CSE's accounting software (Sage) and of relevant accounting standards and practices, tax regulations and other relevant statutory changes, particularly those relevant to charities.
- Line manage the Finance Manager and Finance Assistant.

Working relationships and contacts

- The post-holder will be managed by the Director of Finance & Operations.
- The post-holder will line manage the Finance Manager and Finance Assistant and work closely with other colleagues in the Finance & Operations Team.
- The post-holder will be a member of the CSE Senior Management Team (SMT), and will attend face-to-face monthly meetings accordingly, as well as any other ad hoc SMT events.
- The post-holder will work effectively with colleagues across CSE including the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), fellow SMT colleagues and the project managers to enable them to fulfil their own financial management responsibilities.
- The post-holder may occasionally be required to engage with Trustees, typically alongside the Director of Finance & Operations, the Chief Executive and/or SLT in the context of annual budget preparation and monitoring.
- The post-holder will have personal contact with key external stakeholders relevant to the post such as our bank, auditors, HMRC, pension provider, suppliers and clients/funders (in the context of invoicing, grant claims and credit control).

Place of work and other requirements

This role has a minimum required hours of 30 hours per week, up to full-time hours of 37.5 per week.

This role will require a basic DBS check. This role is based at CSE's Bristol office. Hybrid working is available, with a minimum expectation of three days per week onsite.

Person specification

Requirement	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications and professional knowledge	Fully qualified ACA, ACCA or equivalent accountant	
Experience	- Working knowledge of accounting standards and practices, VAT and HMRC regulations in England, including the specific requirements applicable to a UK charity with a trading subsidiary. - Experience of stepping into a similarly fast-paced role, and getting up to speed with minimal delay - At least 7 years of post-qualification work experience, including at least 5 years proven experience in a financial management role - Experience of using timesheet software to track allocation of staff time to different cost centres - Experience of preparing routine financial and other management information reports for senior executives and other staff - Experience of leading the preparation for an annual audit - A commitment to CSE's work and charitable mission.	- Experience of working in a financial management position in a charity - Experience of working in a senior financial management position - Experience of working in a financial management position in an organisation (e.g. consultancy) where staff time allocation is a central feature of financial monitoring and reporting. - Experience of using Sage accounting software on a day-to-day basis - Experience of line managing staff - Active personal engagement in the issues at the heart of CSE's work
Skills and abilities	- Excellent ability to analyze, structure, and sense-check financial data to produce clear, informative reports for use by others. - Excellent attention to detail and commitment to accuracy. - Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with proven management skills.	

	• Self-motivation and initiative, ability to work with limited supervision. • Ability to work effectively both individually and as part of a team. • Good organizational and time management skills, with experience of working under tight deadlines and budgets. • Willingness and ability to respond to additional workloads at short notice and manage conflicting priorities and deadlines. • Understanding the principles of good financial management information reporting for those not expert in financial management.	
Technical skills	• High level competence with Sage accounting software • High level competence with MS Excel and competence with other MS Office programmes, in particular Outlook and Word	• Data analysis to extract patterns and trends in performance. • Familiarity with using Co-Pilot for making, updating and reviewing reports. • Confident using Excel to review and interrogate complex financial workbooks and datasets, including advanced formulas, Power Query and AI-assisted tools such as Copilot; able to sense-check outputs, identify errors or inconsistencies, and provide effective assurance over financial reporting produced by others.
Personal attributes	• Naturally curious and analytical, with a genuine interest in understanding organisational challenges and identifying practical, lasting solutions.	• Interest in sustainability, climate action and social justice.

	• Collaborative and pragmatic, with the ability to adapt approach to different stakeholders and organisational needs. • Highly conscientious and detail-focused, with a strong sense of ownership for the accuracy, integrity and reliability of financial information. • Motivated by organisational impact, continuous improvement, and helping others to develop and thrive. • A genuine commitment to CSE's mission and values, and a desire to help create a workplace where people can thrive and contribute to that mission.	
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Success in this role looks like...

- All financial reporting remains accurate, timely, and insightful.
- The annual budget setting cycle is adhered to, providing insightful, as accurate as possible forecasting for future reporting periods. To include the main budget setting process in February / March as well as the mid-year budget refresh process in August/September.
- All statutory returns and requirements are adhered to, including but not limited to annual financial audit, VAT reporting, HMRC and Charity Commission-related returns.
- Project managers remain supported by the finance function in their varied needs, with systems further developed to assist and enhance their project-related reporting needs.
- SLT, SMT and where appropriate trustees have access to meaningful financial insight and reporting that supports oversight of management decision-making.
- The finance team is high-performing, well-supported, and continuously developing its capability, while delivering both strategic and operational outcomes.
- The finance function retains its status as a trusted, pragmatic and solutions-focused partner that adds value across the organisation, develops organisational capability and supports the delivery of CSE's strategic objectives.