

## JOB OPPORTUNITY: Chief Operating Officer (COO)

**Responsible for:** Operations, Finance, Commercial, Legal, Human Resources

**Salary:** £43,000-46,000, dependent upon experience

**Location:** Manchester, UK

**Hours of work:** 5 days per week (37.5 hours)

**Reports to:** Director

**Application deadline:** 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023, midday

**Main purpose of the role:** esea contemporary is currently seeking a highly motivated and driven Chief Operating Officer (COO) to work closely with the Director in the strategic management and operations of the organisation. The COO will play a key role in delivering effective procedures for operations management, finance, commercial affairs, legal matters, and human resources for the organisation. The COO will embody and lead a work method that is strategic, collaborative, inclusive, and will build positive relationships with colleagues, artists, audiences, and a diverse range of regional, national, and international stakeholders.

The COO will work closely with and report to the Director in the management of operational, financial, commercial, legal and HR-related procedures for esea contemporary. The role will be aligned with the organisation's sustainability goals, which involves coordinating operational and financial planning, overseeing maintenance, and compliance, and leading the Finance Manager and Operations teams to maintain a high standard of operational efficiency. The COO will collaborate with the Programme team for effective financial and business management, including personnel administration, policy maintenance, and financial administration oversight. The COO will also support the Director in robust business development, including strategic planning, fundraising, trading activity, and nurturing sponsorships.

### **Key areas of responsibilities:**

#### Governance and Strategic Planning:

- Acting as Senior Manager of the organisation and accessing risks and liabilities
- Maintaining control of facilities, IT systems, procurement, and health and safety compliance
- Prioritising sustainability and overseeing business development projects
- Working closely with the Director and Board of Trustees to plan and deliver financial and operational aspects
- Maximising income generation and raising the organisation's profile to reach key performance indicator targets
- Ensuring diversity, equity, and inclusion are prioritised throughout the organisation

#### Operations and Administration:

- Serving as primary contact with building management (realty) as required representing esea contemporary as leaseholder of premises
- Serving as primary key holder for the building and the main contact for out of hours emergencies
- Managing building maintenance, infrastructure, and equipment
- Undertaking routine inspections of the building for defects and hazards
- Procuring contracts and suppliers within budget guidelines
- Ensuring network and IT infrastructure is maintained and appropriately supported, and that adequate controls are in place to ensure the security of data stored and transmitted across the organisation in line with data protection regulations and business continuity guidance

#### Financial Management and Budgets:

- Leading all aspects of financial management and administration
- Ensuring overall robust and timely financial management, accounting, and reporting
- Working with the Finance Manager to deliver annual accounts and liaise with our auditors to ensure a successful year end process
- Working with the Director and the Board of Trustees to develop annual budgets and ensure they are actively managed
- Reporting to the Board of Trustees on financial matters
- Overseeing preparation of accurate and timely quarterly and monthly management accounts including commentary on variances
- Working with the budget holders to ensure working budgets are actively managed and controlled
- Working with the Finance Manager to manage payroll, including pension contributions and any deductions, and timely reporting to HMRC, reporting monthly to Director
- Taking responsibility for daily financial transactions and cash handling procedures including monitoring petty cash
- Working with the Director and Finance Manager to ensure appropriate financial systems provide effective internal control of, and proper audit trail of financial resources.
- Keeping abreast of current legislation and best practice, and advise trustees and management team accordingly

#### Health, Safety and Compliance:

- Ensuring all esea contemporary's activities meet the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act and comply with all relevant legislation, ensuring statutory building checks are carried out, records maintained and staff briefed accordingly
- Overseeing the organisation's health and safety procedures and disseminating relevant information to staff including organising training in Health and Safety, First Aid and Fire Safety as required
- Overseeing the Technical Coordinator to ensure the effective and safe operation of all equipment, arranging staff training and induction where required

- Working with the Director and Associate Curator to ensure all exhibition builds are undertaken strictly in accordance with current CDM Regulation
- Supporting the Director in assessing risks and liabilities to the organisation and subsequently ensuring adequate insurance policies are in place

#### Sustainability:

- Championing sustainability across the organisation, developing and implementing the esea contemporary Environmental Policy and Action plan ensuring the organisation embraces innovation and follows best practice, setting targets for continuous improvement
- Representing the organisation on the Manchester Arts Sustainability Team (MAST), attending regular meetings
- Ensuring systems are in place to monitor the efficiency of the building and complete annual reporting as required by Arts Council funding conditions

#### Human Resources:

- Managing the administration of all personnel procedures as supervised by the Director and in consultation with external legal advisors, including issuing and maintaining up-to-date staff contracts, employee and volunteer handbooks, induction procedures and other HR documents in line with legislative requirements
- Maintaining up-to-date records of annual and sick leave for all staff and preparing calculations for annual leave entitlements for new starters
- Managing an online HR management and employee assistance software package
- Working with the Finance Manager to ensure payroll and reporting to HMRC is timely and accurate
- Overseeing staff, volunteer, student placement, and intern recruitment processes and ensuring recruitment policies and agreements comply with legal requirements

#### Business Development and Fundraising:

- Collaborating with the Programme team to support funding applications and reports
- Building relationships with local, regional, national, and international funders and decision-makers
- Promoting the organisation's profile among relevant stakeholders.
- Oversee all trading activity across the gallery including venue hire, the shop and other retail activity, esea Showcase, and limited editions

#### General Duties:

- Supporting the development of a flexible and empowered organisation in which the contribution of staff and volunteers is maximised
- Championing a high-quality visitor experience, working with the Front of House Assistant and volunteers to ensure front of house duties are carried out
- Being aware of the role and responsibilities of the Charity and Trustees, reporting on operational and policy issues as required

- Undertaking other duties as required and as commensurate with the level of responsibility

**Person Specification:**

**Essential**

- The right to work in the UK
- Strong financial and business acumen
- HR and Management process experience, with knowledge of best practices
- Experience in the charity and cultural sectors
- Entrepreneurial flair for resilient and sustainable business development
- Staff management proficiency
- Knowledge of financial systems, including accounting systems and budgetary control
- IT systems and management expertise
- Strong planning and prioritisation skills
- Commitment to Equity, Diversity, anti-racism, Inclusion, and environmental sustainability.
- Reasonable flexibility in working hours
- Understanding of UK employment legislation
- Good team working skills, including working with staff to establish good financial management for budget holders

**Desirable**

- Lived experience of East and Southeast Asian cultural backgrounds
- A passion for contemporary art and transcultural creative practices
- Liaising with a range of external agencies on financial matters
- Knowledge of arts policies and the cultural network of Manchester.
- Formal accounting and/or bookkeeping qualifications

**Experience of:**

- Working in the arts or charitable sectors
- Preparation of management accounts, cash flow forecasts and budget management
- International money transfers
- Payroll and pension scheme administration
- VAT legislation and reporting
- Sage Accounts software
- Proficient in Charity Law
- Preparing annual accounts and liaising with auditors
- Reporting to Board and managing governance

**How to apply:**

To apply for this position, please submit:

- a CV, no more than 2 sides of A4

- a cover letter, no more than 2 sides of A4, to specify why you are suitable for this role, how you meet the person specification, and your earliest start date.
- a completed Equality Monitoring Form (downloadable from our website)

Please submit all documents, subject '**Job Opportunity: Chief Operating Officer**' to [hr@eseacontemporary.org](mailto:hr@eseacontemporary.org) by midday on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

Due to the anticipated volume of applications, unfortunately we are unable to respond to every application. If you do not receive an invitation to interview in 10 days after the deadline, please assume your application was unsuccessful.

## **About us**

esea contemporary is the UK's only non-profit art centre specialising in presenting and platforming artists and art practices that identify with and are informed by East and Southeast Asian (ESEA) cultural backgrounds. esea contemporary is situated in an award-winning building in the heart of Manchester, home to one of the largest East Asian populations in the UK. Since its inauguration as a community-oriented visual arts festival in 1986, esea contemporary has continuously evolved to establish itself as a dynamic and engaging space for cross-cultural exchanges in the British art scene, as well as in a global context.

Find out more about us: [eseacontemporary.org](http://eseacontemporary.org)