

Head of Finance & Operations

Job Description and Person Specification
November 2023



Job title: Head of Finance & Operations
Type: Full-time (or at least 80% FTE)
Salary: c. £75,000 (or pro rata)
Location: London, WC2A (2 days office-based and remote working)
Reports to: Chief Executive

Organisation Overview and background to the role

The Human Dignity Trust (the Trust) is a legal charity based in London, UK that supports local lawyers and human rights defenders to uphold human rights and constitutional law in countries where private, consensual sexual conduct between adults of the same sex is criminalised. At present, 65 jurisdictions worldwide maintain these criminal laws, a figure that is gradually decreasing due to a combination of litigation and legislative reform.

Legal provisions that criminalise lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people put them beyond the protection of the law, fostering a climate of fear, stigma and violence. These provisions violate constitutional and international human rights law, including a person's right to dignity, equality, non-discrimination and privacy.

The Trust provides pro bono technical legal assistance at the request of, and in collaboration with, local human rights defenders, their lawyers and other partners who wish to use the courts to challenge these discriminatory laws. We also provide technical legal assistance on request to governments seeking to proactively reform their sexual offence laws and to enact protective legislation, impacting not only LGBT people but also women, children and persons with disabilities. Since our inception in 2011, we have supported strategic litigation or law reform with local partners in over 25 countries in all regions of the world. The vast majority of our work is in common law jurisdictions, though we work globally including within other legal traditions. We have helped secure multiple court victories in domestic, regional, and international courts and tribunals on issues ranging from decriminalisation to freedom of association and have drafted human rights compliant Bills for several governments on sexual offences, hate crimes and equal opportunities. Our work has won prestigious awards and is highly respected globally.

We have a small office in Chancery Lane in central London and a growing staff of around 20 people, and we work with pro bono lawyers who assist in all of our legal work. We work in all regions of the world. We have no staff presence outside of London but are embarking on a new initiative to have long-term consultants based in the regions in which we work in order to help manage and deepen our work with local partners.

The Trust's success and growth across our outward-facing areas of delivery in recent years means that we now need to grow and significantly strengthen our internal Operations functions. After a detailed internal review, the Chief Executive has established a refreshed purpose for a new Finance & Operations service, structure, and roles.

Head of Finance & Operations

In this newly created role, the job holder will be responsible for recruiting, leading, and developing a new Finance & Operations team. The Head of Finance & Operations will be an experienced, qualified accountant, will operate as a member of our senior management team, and will have accountability for the development and delivery of the full range of internal Finance & Operations functions as follows:

Finance, HR, IT, systems and data management, facilities, Board governance, commercial contracts, and central organisational administration systems.

The role will be the lead Finance professional within the Trust, working closely with the Chief Executive and our Board Treasurer.

The refreshed, two-fold overall purpose for a new Finance & Operations service and team is:

- To provide expert advice and support in its areas of technical expertise.
- To become a centre of excellence for a systematic and streamlined approach to the systems that enable the Trust and its staff to work to their standards of excellence.

Delivering against these objectives will ensure that the internal infrastructure is managed in line with the business objectives and needs of the Trust. Clarity on roles and responsibilities alongside more efficient processes and systems will free everybody to concentrate on what they do best and focus on those activities that drive the greatest impact for the Trust. This will include centralising and/or automating processes wherever this makes most sense, such as travel.

Key responsibilities

Leadership and Management

- As the lead Finance expert, provide expert support to the Chief Executive, Treasurer and Board
- As a member of the senior management team, contribute to the strategic development of the Trust, including business planning and performance monitoring
- Recruit, manage and develop the Finance & Operations team across all of its areas of responsibility
- Manage and develop external third-party relationships in areas of responsibility, e.g., IT and travel providers
- Manage and develop internal systems in areas of responsibility, e.g., HR and accounting software packages
- Manage the internal budgeting and financial planning processes
- Work in collaboration with colleagues to ensure that internal service needs are understood and met

Finance

- Lead on all financial reporting internally and externally
- Represent the Trust with external financial bodies, e.g., auditors
- Provide financial data and act as the Trust's financial lead with third parties, e.g., HMRC
- Develop a culture of sustainable, responsible financial management across the Trust
- Ensure compliance with all relevant tax, corporate, charities and financial legislation

- Develop and lead the annual budget process and regular reforecasting
- Develop and implement a clear financial management framework and associated systems
- Manage the Trust's corporate bank accounts and payment systems
- Deliver the monthly payroll and pension contributions

Other areas of responsibility

- Develop and oversee an operational risk register, reporting to the Board as required
- Develop a framework for all third party procurement to deliver value for money
- Ensure that the Finance & Operations service meets the needs of the Trust
- Ensure that the Finance & Operations service is legally compliant in all respects
- Establish and manage clear service standards for all third party contracts in areas of responsibility
- Ensure appropriate governance processes are in place to support the operation of the Board
- Identify opportunities and propose solutions to streamline the Trust's administration systems

Skills, Experience and Qualifications

Essential

- Experienced accountant with professional finance qualification
- Experience in implementing and managing complex financial accounting processes and systems in the charity sector
- Experience of operating and influencing at Board level
- Experience overseeing a broad range of operations functions in a small organisation (IT, HR, data management, facilities, etc.)
- Understanding of how the Operations service contributes to successful organisational performance
- Experience of developing, implementing and reviewing internal service standards to drive performance
- Experience in recruitment and development of high performing teams
- Understanding of and alignment with the Trust's core purpose

Desired

- Knowledge and/or experience of the Trust's core purpose and the global LGBT human rights movement and developments
- A coaching management style
- A collaborative, inclusive approach to service delivery
- A flexible approach to work where priorities can change at short notice