Job Title: Head of Finance

Job Reference No: AD1231

Programme: Directorate

Grade: B

Line Manager: CEO

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The organisation

Based in Cambridge, WCMC is a world leader in knowledge on the natural environment. WCMC works in collaboration with UNEP through the UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC). The Centre works with scientists and policy makers worldwide to place nature at the heart of environment and development decision-making. We work extensively with UN organizations, governments and the private sector as well as other partners such as foundations and international NGOs.

WCMC is constituted as a Charity with a Board of Trustees. The Charity WCMC is run by its CEO who reports directly to the Board of Trustees. The CEO works closely with the UNEP-WCMC Director and Deputy Director for the success and impact of the Centre.

WCMC employs around 170 staff, most of whom are technical experts involved with collating and managing data and knowledge, undertaking analyses, and providing information and advice on matters related to solving the global crises facing nature and climate. The Finance team currently includes 4 full time roles, led by the Finance Manager.

Most of our work is carried out under contract and as such, we need to work with partner organizations around the world to develop innovative, solutions-focused projects before negotiating contracts which, when taken together, provide a reliable year on year surplus for the charity to be reinvested in generating impacts in line with our mission. We also have restricted and unrestricted donations plus subscriptions.

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Main Purpose of the Job

The Head of Finance (HoF) is a senior leadership role within WCMC reporting directly to the CEO.

The main purpose of the role is to hold responsibly and accountability for all aspects of the financial management of WCMC including budget preparation, financial risk management and strategic financial planning, informed by regular analysis and reporting of WCMC’s financial strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
As well as leading the finance and accounting team to ensure they produce accurate and high quality outputs, the HoF works closely with senior managers across the organisation on the preparation of project budgets, contracts, cash flow management and assessment of project margins (single and cumulative). Setting up and running reliable and clear processes around revenue recognition and the timing of surplus recognition are key challenges.

With the Head of Operations, the HoF also has joint oversight responsibility for the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) at an organisational level and specific responsibility for ensuring WCMC’s ERP system is fully integrated and with finance systems, including the monthly management accounts and annual report.

WCMC works internationally and has two subsidiaries (WCMC Europe and WCMC Beijing). Only a small proportion of WCMC’s revenue is pounds sterling therefore currency hedging is an important aspect of the HoF role as is ensuring the timely collection of cash from international organizations and governments and the movement of funds between WCMC and the regional entities.

Key Areas of Responsibility

1. Leading and managing the finance and accounting team, ensuring they have the necessary skills, motivation and clarity on their goals to produce consistently high-quality outputs
2. Providing strategic advice from a financial Perspective through being a member and active contributor to the Senior Management Team and Leadership Coordination Team
3. Preparing annual and multi-year budgets and financial forecasts and the annual report
4. Undertaking financial opportunity and risk analyses and advising the CEO and Board on options to mitigate risk and realise opportunities
5. Working closely with the Head of Operations to ensure the effective operation of WCMC’s ERP system and the integration with finance systems
6. Controlling and reporting on cash-flow and liquidity risks and ensuring funds are available for operational needs whilst investing reserves to maximise returns
7. Reviewing, recommending and regularly reporting on benchmarks and key performance indicators to measure WCMC financial performance
8. Reporting and contextualising financial performance and risk to the Senior Management Team (monthly) and Board of Trustees (quarterly)
9. Ensuring compliance with all legal, tax, statutory reporting and audit requirements
10. Preparing WCMC’s foreign exchange policy and regularly advising the CEO and Board on the management of foreign exchange risk through, for example, forward contracts and structured products
11. Working closely with the Head of Operations to oversee the smooth and efficient running of contracts management processes

Other Duties
Any other reasonable tasks appropriate to the role.