

## **Job Description**

|                        |                                                       |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Job Title:</b>      | Ara Head of Finance                                   |
| <b>Responsible to:</b> | Chief Executive Officer                               |
| <b>Location:</b>       | Bristol                                               |
| <b>Salary:</b>         | £65,000                                               |
| <b>Contract:</b>       | Permanent, Hybrid Working, Part Time (4d) considered. |

## **Role Purpose**

Ara's Head of Finance will provide strategic and operational financial leadership to ensure the charity is financially sustainable, well-governed and compliant. This role is a key member of Ara's Leadership Team playing a vital part in the development and implementation of the organisation's strategy.

Working closely with the Chief Executive and the Board of Trustees to advise on governance, regulatory responsibilities and financial planning for the charity. The role provides the essential financial stability to enable future growth through leadership and management of finance, and ensuring effective governance and regulatory compliance.

The role will serve as the executive lead for Finance, attend and contribute to Board meetings, lead the annual audit process, and act as Company Secretary. The role will initially line manage 3 Finance staff (2FTE) and the Office & Training Manager (1FTE).

## **Specific Duties:**

- Lead all aspects of financial management, reporting, budgeting, and forecasting
- Support strategic planning and organisational development
- Strengthen governance, compliance, and risk management systems
- Provide leadership and support to key managers and teams
- Help develop sustainable income generation and business planning
- Deputise for the Chief Executive when required
- Oversee all financial operations, ensuring compliance with regulatory standards and internal policies.
- Develop and implement financial strategies to support organisational goals.
- Prepare accurate and timely financial reports for senior leadership and stakeholders.

- Manage budgeting, forecasting, and financial planning processes effectively.
- Lead and mentor the finance team, fostering a culture of accountability and excellence.
- Monitor cash flow and ensure effective financial risk management practices.
- Collaborate with other departments to align financial goals with organisational objectives.
- Engage with external auditors and ensure seamless audit processes.

### **Financial Planning and Leadership**

- Lead strategic and operational financial planning with responsibility for achieving and executing financial objectives, budgeting, investment opportunities and oversight of annual budget processes, including leading the annual audit with external auditors.
- Ensure the provision of robust and relevant management information to the SLT and the Board of Trustees.
- Lead the annual budgeting process and cash flow planning, providing financial frameworks and support for pricing and funding decisions.
- Oversee day-to-day financial operations and ensure that financial transactions are processed effectively and accurately.
- Provide financial leadership and oversight to support and influence decision making by the SLT and the Board of Trustees.
- Provide sound, proactive strategic financial advice to the CEO and Board of Trustees to support the long-term financial viability of the charity.
- Act as a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), work collaboratively to provide leadership, strategic oversight and support for the organisation, its employees and the Board of Trustees

### **Financial Management & Reporting**

- Lead all financial planning reporting, including cashflows, budgets and reforecasts (as required) and support the SLT on all aspects of financial planning.
- Ensure the production of clear, timely management accounts and financial reports for the CEO and Trustees.
- Oversee cash flow management and maintain effective financial controls.

- Ensure accurate financial records in line with charity accounting standards and the Charities SORP.
- Support the CEO and Business Development Manager in producing financial information to funders and prospective funders as required.
- Oversee the preparation and payment of monthly payroll and pensions.
- Provide the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team (SMT) with regular detailed analysis of financial performance and monitor key performance indicators to inform key decision making
- Maintain detailed insight into the financial position of the organisation, including monitoring cash flow, assessing the financial impact of proposed projects or policies, identifying opportunities for improvements, making adjustments, and producing monthly management accounts and financial reports.

#### **Governance & Compliance**

- Ensure compliance with Charity Commission, Companies House, HMRC, the Regulator of Social Housing, and other regulatory or funder requirements, including the timely submission of all necessary reports and documentation.
- Lead the preparation of statutory accounts and liaise with external auditors, in line with SORP recommendations and requirements.
- Ensure the preparation of timely management accounts and financial documents.
- Maintain and develop financial policies and procedures and provide guidance and support to colleagues to ensure compliance.
- Provide high-quality financial information to the Board and Finance Committee to support effective strategic oversight.
- Ensure Trustees are kept up to date on financial activity, are aware of any relevant issues or circumstances.

#### **Operations & Systems**

- Oversee accounting systems and processes, ensuring they are fit for purpose.
- Ensure procurement processes are efficient and support best value for the charity.
- Ensure that finance and Operations activities are regularly reviewed, tested, assessed and improved through a programme of audits and analysis.

- Ensure all financial procedures and controls are in place and adhered to.
- Ensure all financial records and systems to a high standard of accuracy (including addressing any discrepancies in reconciliations) in accordance with accounting principles, auditing standards and to meet external legal and tax requirements.
- Maintain the fixed asset register and process depreciation.
- Work with the CEO and SMT to ensure the design and implementation of an appropriate full cost recovery and charge out rate model.
- Carrying out any other duties as required, which are consistent with the duties and responsibilities of the post.

### **Experience Required:**

- A professional qualification in accounting or finance (e.g., ACA, ACCA, or CIMA).
- Experience working for a charity in a senior finance role with fundraised income of £1m or more
- Strong business partnering skills and experience working closely with senior operational leaders.
- Strong financial reporting, controls and systems confidence
- Ability to work both strategically and hands-on
- Familiar with the charity SORP
- Strong people management and leadership skills with the ability to develop and motivate teams
- Excellent accounting, analytical, and communication skills allied with a pragmatic and solution focused approach.
- Willing to be in the Bristol office at least 3 days a week
- Strong understanding of charity accounting and governance, and knowledge of financial regulations and reporting standards.
- Exceptional leadership skills and the ability to inspire a team.

- Excellent analytical and problem-solving capabilities; strong organisational skills and attention to detail
- Proficiency in SAGE financial software and tools.
- Excellent written and verbal communication abilities; confidence working with Trustees and stakeholders