

JOB DESCRIPTION

Title:	Head of Finance
Line Managed by:	Chief Operating Officer
Overall responsibility:	All aspects of financial management and control across the National Centre for Circus Arts and its subsidiary, National Centre for Circus Arts Enterprises.
Line reports:	Finance Management Accountant, Payroll and HR Manager
Hours:	35 hours per week (hybrid working available)
Salary:	£50,000 - £55,000 dependent on experience
Holiday Entitlement:	30 days paid holiday per annum pro rata, inclusive of eight Statutory Bank Holidays, increasing by one day for each year of service from 1st September up to a maximum of 35 days per annum.

About National Centre for Circus Arts

The National Centre for Circus Arts is a registered charity and an independent Higher Education provider registered with the Office for Students, and is one of Europe's leading providers of circus arts training. For the past 30 years, we have provided emerging and professional circus artists, directors, and choreographers with access to vital space and support to train, experiment, and share ideas.

Our diverse range of work includes BA degree-level education in Circus Arts which is supported at either side by a structured training programme for under-18s and professional development opportunities for aspiring and established performers. Adults and young people can enjoy recreational classes and occasional performances. We also run highly regarded workshops, away days and team building events for the corporate community with high-profile corporate events and hires to further increase our revenue. Our national role increasingly sees us supporting and mentoring circus artists and organisations across the country as we seek to develop and mature our remarkable art form.

Experience in a creative, education or charity environment would be advantageous but is not essential.

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

Lead the Finance function within the National Centre, acting as primary contact with the Executive and Management Team, Finance Committee, budget holders and other stakeholders, providing advice and guidance on all financial matters as required. Be accountable and responsible for the budgets and forecasting, accounts system (currently Oracle NetSuite), management accounts and the statutory accounts of the National Centre for Circus Arts, which delivers our charitable and higher education work and our commercial subsidiary National Centre for Circus Arts Enterprises.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- Work with the Executive, Management Team and budget holders to produce the annual budget, medium and long-term budget projections, and reforecasting as necessary through the year.
- Line manage and develop the Finance Team.
- Prepare and present papers to the Board of Trustees and Finance sub-committee, attending meetings with Trustees as required.
- Review and enhance governance and financial controls, driving forward continuous improvements to processes.
- Prepare statutory accounts, including liaising with external auditors.
- Meet all necessary statutory reporting and compliance deadlines, in particular data returns for the Office for Students.
- Oversee the organisation's administrative function in relation to payroll and personnel records and ensure that this runs smoothly and enables staff to do their jobs to the best of their ability.

Budgets and forecasting

- Oversee development of the organisation's operating budget, ensuring robust assumptions, accuracy, and effective engagement with budget holders and the Management Team during annual and in-year forecasting. Oversee and monitor cashflow forecasts for all aspects of the organisation, including revenue and capital projects.
- Formulate appropriate project budgets, e.g. production or capital projects and ensure the proper support to such projects, e.g. regular cash flows and financial reporting from the finance team.
- Provide financial analysis and advice to support strategic decision-making. R
- Proactively offer creative solutions regarding cost reduction. Including contract management and procurement.

Management accounts

- Work collaboratively across departments to embed financial understanding and accountability throughout the organisation.
- Oversee and support the creation of regular management accounts for the Executive and the Board, comparing actual results with budget (figures and accompanying narrative text) in consultation with budget holders, the Management Team and the Finance Committee.
- Oversee and support the preparation and dissemination of revised outturn budgets or forecasts in consultation with budget holders and SMT (figures and accompanying narrative text).
- Provide accurate and timely financial information in a range of different formats to a range of different stakeholders.
- When capital redevelopment projects take place, prepare cumulative capital redevelopment management accounts and reports on other projects as appropriate in consultation with the Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer and other members of the Management Team, giving presentations and participating in discussions where necessary.

Line Management and communication

- Assume responsibility for the management, supervision, appraisal and staff development of staff within the Finance department.

- Be the first contact for the external auditors, internal auditors, bankers and other relevant stakeholders.
- Liaise with the Finance Committee Chair on agenda items and reporting and attend all Finance Committee meetings. Attend the Audit, Remuneration & Nomination Committees, as well as Board meetings, as required.
- Provide advice, support and financial expertise within the organisation.
- Attend Management Team meetings for all financial discussions.
- Attend internal and external meetings as appropriate.
- Oversee the work of the Payroll and HR Manager, who is responsible for managing the employee life cycle from onboarding to offboarding.
- Support the Payroll and HR Manager when working with the COO in their responsibilities for Board Governance administration.

Governance & financial controls

- Provide financial leadership that ensures transparency, compliance, and strategic alignment with the organisation's mission
- Have overall responsibility for the internal financial controls of National Centre for Circus Arts and its subsidiaries, acting as Financial Controller.
- Ensure that the Financial Regulations are up-to-date, regularly reviewed and constantly adhered to.
- With the COO and Management Accountant, continually review the financial policies and procedures and systems of internal control to ensure they are up-to-date and fully compliant with all legislation.
- Oversee the implementation and adherence to an agreed set of accounting principles and ensure that the computerised accounting system (currently Oracle NetSuite) is appropriate and upgraded as required.
- Lead on supporting budget holders to use and benefit from NetSuite, encouraging self-service where appropriate.
- Oversee VAT and taxation compliance.
- Advise on charitable/non-charitable business issues.

Statutory accounts & Audit

- Act as primary liaison with external auditors (currently Buzzacott) and liaise with auditors throughout the audit process to the completion of final accounts and reports.
- Oversee the preparation of annual statutory accounts and supporting schedules for the National Centre for Circus Arts and National Centre for Circus Arts Enterprises
- Review internal procedures in the light of audit experiences and auditors' systems recommendations, leading to the delivery of an approved action plan.
- Keep up-to-date with relevant accounting policies and ensure statutory accounts reflect best practice.

Reporting & data returns

- Ensure that NCCA complies with all legal requirements in relation to financial matters, including bodies such as HMRC, Companies House, Charity Commission and the Office for Students.
- Produce the Annual Financial Return for the Office for Students and contribute financial information to any other statutory data returns as necessary.

Other

Such other duties (commensurate with the role) which may from time to time be reasonably required and:

- Demonstrate a commitment to health & safety and its practical application in all areas of work and encourage a culture of responsibility for H&S throughout the organisation.
- Promote and uphold the National Centre's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), Code of Conduct, and other policies that reflect the organisation's values and mission.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Experience

- Proven experience as a Head of Finance or similar role.
- Experience of managing a team and dealing with a wide range of stakeholders, including trustees or equivalent.
- Experience in producing year-end statutory accounts.
- Ability to quickly understand and adapt to the financial frameworks of higher education, charity or creative organisations.
- Experience ensuring compliance with relevant financial and regulatory frameworks, such as Charity SORP, OfS reporting, and HMRC requirements.

Skills

- Fully qualified and accredited accountant (ACA, ACMA/CIMA, ACCA) with proven post-qualification experience.
- Ability to communicate clearly and concisely, both verbally and in writing, simplifying financial information for non-finance colleagues.
- Proficiency in accounting software.
- Strong IT skills, especially Excel and data visualisation.
- Ability to work effectively and collegiately in a team environment.
- Ability to think and act strategically.
- Proven ability to initiate improvements in processes to improve the effectiveness of the finance function.
- Good understanding of VAT and other tax issues, especially those affecting charities.

Personal attributes

- Excellent relationship building and interpersonal skills.
- Committed to collaborative leadership and developing others' financial confidence across the organisation.
- Flexible to changing priorities.
- Demonstrates inclusive leadership and a commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) across teams and decision-making.
- A desire to understand all aspects of the organisation's work, even when these do not relate directly to Finance.

How to apply

To apply, please complete the online application form, where you will upload a CV and be asked to write a response to these four questions.

[Apply here](#)

Please also complete our [equal opportunities form](#)

Questions for Application

Please note that there is a 1,000-character limit for each question.

1. Leadership, Collaboration, and Communication

Could you tell us about a time you led or supported a team through change or improvement in a finance setting?

How did you ensure collaboration, inclusion, and clear communication across different departments, stakeholders and levels of seniority?

2. Financial Management and Strategic Decision-Making

Describe how you have contributed to the development of organisational budgets, operating plans or long-term financial forecasts that informed strategic decisions.

3. Systems, and Continuous Improvement

Give an example of how you've improved financial controls or systems within an organisation and how that fed into reporting internally or to external bodies.

4. Compliance and Regulatory Reporting

Can you describe your experience ensuring compliance with the regulatory and reporting requirements of charities and/or higher education institutions, for example, SORP, OfS financial reporting, Gift Aid, or other relevant frameworks?