

Chief Operating Officer

Reports to:	CEO
Hours:	Full Time
Responsible for:	Head of Finance, Head of Operations, Office Manager & Clerk to the Board, out-sourced IT support contract, out-sourced HR-support contract
Salary:	£60,000
Holiday Entitlement:	30 days paid holiday per annum (pro rata), inclusive of 8 Statutory Bank Holidays, increasing by 1 day for each year of service from 1st September up to a maximum of 35 days per annum (pro rata).

About the 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 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. We continue to develop our creation and production capabilities and are striving forward in both initiating, supporting and creating high quality work that can tour regionally and nationally. 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.

PURPOSE OF THE POST

The Chief Operating Officer will support the CEO in the leadership, management and day-to-day operation of the National Centre for Circus Arts, deputising as required and making a significant contribution to strategic planning for the organisation with a strong focus on operational activity.

They will lead on all financial, operational, health and safety, technical, human resources and IT activity, providing direction and motivation across multiple teams, while also maintaining key relationships with external stakeholders.

The COO will also lead in various areas of compliance and act as Company Secretary for the organisation.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- Direct and manage all aspects of financial, operational, health and safety, technical, human resources, and IT activity.
- Lead on compliance and regulatory activity and processes, in particular around Higher Education compliance.
- Manage relationships with key stakeholders and partners including the Office for Students, Hackney Council, the National Centre's legal advisors, insurance brokers and advisors, and various corporate contacts.
- Working closely with the other members of the Senior Management Team, develop organisational strategy and the action plans to deliver the strategy over the short-, mid- and long-term.
- Support and mentor all direct reports encouraging a collaborative approach to working.
- Set, agree and manage annual budgets for all areas of responsibility.

Details of responsibilities

Direct and manage all aspects of operational activity

- Provide strategic leadership for the Finance, Buildings & Facilities and Technical teams, working closely with Heads of Department.
- Manage the contract for 3rd party IT support (currently SpirIT), reviewing the contract regularly to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose.
- Manage the contract for 3rd party employment law support (currently Shoosmith's), acting as conduit for queries from elsewhere in the organisation as necessary.
- Maintain the corporate risk register, ensuring it is updated regularly and shared with the board and sub-Committees.
- Maintain the organisation's insurance cover, ensuring value for money is balanced against our complex needs. Maintain awareness of altering circumstances, both internally and externally, that may change our insurance requirements.
- Maintain an ongoing capital development plan to continue to develop and refurbish the Coronet Street site and any other estates that may be acquired in the future.
- Maintain close oversight of all policies and procedures related to all areas of responsibility.

Manage compliance

- Work with the Head of Academic Administration and Director of Professional Development to ensure that NCCA is fully compliant as a Higher Education provider, including compliance with bodies such as Office of the Independent Adjudicator, Jisc, Competition & Markets Authority and the Office for Students. Maintain a risk register of HE compliance.
- Work with the Head of Academic Administration and (external) Data Manager to ensure all data returns are submitted on time and with a high degree of accuracy.
- Work with the Head of Finance to ensure the Annual Financial Return is completed and submitted on time and with a high degree of accuracy.
- As Company Secretary, ensure compliance with Companies House and the Charity Commission, for example updating records of trustees/directors, submitting returns and financial statements.
- Manage the annual internal audit process, connecting the auditors with staff as appropriate and following up all internal audit actions.

- Manage all aspects of operational legal compliance with a critical focus on health and safety.
- Report to and attend all meetings of the Board of Trustees, preparing papers and packs in advance as necessary.

Manage relationships with key stakeholders and partners

- Maintain NCCA's relationship with London Borough of Hackney, particularly around areas such as rent, health & safety and licensing.
- Act as contact for key HE contacts such as UKVI and Office for Students as required.
- Act as the key contact for our lawyers and other consultants as appropriate.

Develop and deliver organisational strategy

- Work closely with the Senior Management Team and Board of Trustees to develop and deliver organisational strategy, engaging Heads of Department and other staff as necessary and ensuring a collaborative approach to strategic planning is taken.
- Establish, refine and embed working procedures and operational systems to ensure excellence in delivery as well as value for money.

Leadership & people management

- Provide inspiring, clear and visible leadership to all staff in the operational teams.
- Champion the organisation's commitment to personal development, up-skilling and collaborative vision building. Attract and inspire top talent across all relevant disciplines.
- Develop tools to ensure internal communications across the organisation are effective.
- Act as the organisation's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion senior lead, representing the Senior team on the EDI Committee.

Financial management

- Maintain oversight of all budgets that fall within operational areas of responsibility, liaising with budget holders and the Finance team as necessary to track income and expenditure and ensure accurate forecasting through the year.
- Work with the Senior Management Team and Head of Finance to produce annual and longer-term budgets, modelling a variety of scenarios as appropriate, and presenting budgets for approval to the Finance Committee and Board.
- Work closely with the Head of Finance to develop financial reporting templates that are fit for purpose and aid the trustees in their understanding of the organisation.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Experience

Essential

- Proven experience of managing a medium business, or team within a large business, and successfully improving operational processes & procedures in line with strategic objectives of the organisation.
- A track record of leading a diverse team of specialists, ensuring a coherent vision for the whole department whilst allowing freedom of expression through innovation and creative thinking.
- Experience of working as part of a cohesive, multi-disciplinary senior management team focused on continuous improvement and organisational development set against a diverse and challenging stakeholder environment.
- Evidence of continued professional development

Desirable

- Experience of leading on compliance issues.
- Background in the arts and/or education.

Skills

Essential

- Financially numerate with experience of managing and setting budgets.
- Experienced leader and manager with the ability to inspire confidence in the team.
- Good working knowledge of health & safety issues.
- Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to establish trust and respect at all levels internally and externally.
- Excellent IT skills, including effective use of IT platforms for internal comms.

Desirable

- Relevant professional qualification in Health and Safety (e.g. NEBOSH)

Personal attributes

- A personal style, founded on an optimal blend of tenacity and adaptability, that enables the post-holder to get things done, working collaboratively across the organisation.
- A passion for maximising staff engagement, developing a representative workforce and promoting up-skilling and personal development.
- High level of self-motivation and resilience and the ability to meet demanding targets within deadlines.
- A confident and inspirational leader with the ability to influence and support a team.
- Pro-active and flexible approach to seeking solutions to problems.
- A keen interest in and broad knowledge of the arts and education.
- Understanding of and commitment to equal opportunities.