

Director of Operations

Candidate Brief

The Legal Education Foundation (TLEF) is inviting applications for the newly created senior post of Director of Operations. The postholder will play a key role in supporting delivery of our vision, mission and strategic objectives.

This note sets out:

- Background to TLEF
- Background to the role of Director of Operations
- Job description
- Person specification
- Recruitment process

Background to TLEF

The Legal Education Foundation is an independent grantmaking foundation distributing around £6million a year through our own grants and programmes, and over £15million in the next ten years through funding partnerships.

The principal source of funds for the Foundation are the returns on an endowment which currently stands at around £270million. In addition, the Foundation receives and distributes restricted grants from other organisations and has a charitable subsidiary whose principal source of funds is restricted grants from other charitable foundations and organisations.

Vision

Our vision is of a society that fosters the principles of justice and fairness, where people understand and use law to bring about positive change and to prevent harm and where public systems and structures uphold the rule of law.

Context

The UK justice system is undergoing a period of challenge and rapid change which has far-reaching consequences for people's ability to understand and use the law. There has been chronic under-resourcing of legal organisations at the same time as legal needs have risen. Sustainable

employment, career development and access to the profession have all come under pressure. Meanwhile, legal and constitutional changes brought about by the UK's exit from the EU, along with the increasing adoption of digital technology and automated data processing by government, are producing fundamental changes to UK institutions and the exercise of public power.

This matters particularly for the significant numbers of people who cannot obtain justice in relation to their fundamental rights. We know that these unmet needs trigger or exacerbate clusters of problems that have significant impacts on individuals, communities and wider public policy goals.

Organisations tackling these challenges have experienced significant constraints that have affected their ability to deliver services at the scale needed, to invest in their infrastructure, to develop related fields of policy, research and communications and to attract and retain skilled staff. This has intensified dramatically because of Covid-19. The Foundation's resources put us in a position to support organisations to address this challenge.

We support work in all four nations of the UK, recognising the need to reflect local needs and differences, including the different legal jurisdictions and devolved powers. The focus of our work is in the UK, but we also look to learn from and to inform international practice and experience.

Strategic objectives

Our work to 2025 is divided into three programmes:

- **Stronger Sector:** supporting education, training and development aimed at addressing systemic gaps in skills in the social justice legal sector and to strengthen the capacity of individuals and organisations in the social justice field to deliver their important work effectively and sustainably.
- **Fairer Systems:** supporting work to increase people's capacity to understand the way laws are made and implemented, and rights protected.
- **Smarter Justice:** strengthening the commitment to collecting and using robust evidence in the design and operation of the UK justice system.

The Foundation operates a combination of open and proactive grant programmes, awarding since inception, over £35million through 514 grants to 200 organisations. We have also developed and now run ourselves a set of initiatives tackling particular strategic challenges in the sector.

Justice First Fellowship – a scheme to support the next generation of social justice lawyers. We have funded over 100 Fellowships so far. Over 90% of graduating Fellows have secured jobs as lawyers working for the public benefit, and our work with them continues as we help them forge their careers as social justice lawyers.

Justice Lab – a new initiative to bring about a cultural shift in the way in which research and evidence regarding the operation of the justice system is produced and used by policymakers, legal professionals and organisations working the field. This work has involved extensive collaboration and influencing here and internationally where the Foundation is recognised as playing a leading role in developing this field.

Justice Collaborations – our subsidiary arm formed to host the **Justice Together Initiative**, a £10million collaboration involving over ten funders focused on supporting people navigating the immigration system. A first round of grants has been awarded supporting frontline immigration advice and policy work aimed at influencing the wider system.

We also participate in other funding partnerships, most significant of which recently is the **Community Justice Fund** set up in 2020 to help specialist social welfare legal advice organisations respond to the immediate impacts of Covid-19. This fund distributed £11.6million in wave one to 179 organisations helping those organisations to adapt and continue to provide essential support and services to their communities. We have recently launched wave 2 with a view to this programme becoming a longer-term collaboration.

As well as awarding grants, we support the organisations we fund in a variety of other ways including providing access to training, consultancy and networking to promote exchange, learning and collaboration.

Our sharp focus on justice and fairness plays out in our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion:

- We recognise that diversity in its many forms is critical to us achieving our vision and mission.
- We challenge discrimination and bias, including our own, and recognise the extra steps that are necessary to make systems and structures equitable.
- We work to ensure our own systems and structures, and those that we engage with in the wider justice system, respect people, treat them fairly and provide equal access to opportunities, resources and rights.
- We recognise that different structures, attitudes and practices act against these statements, often operating together and reinforcing barriers to progress. Working against this needs to grapple with the local, complex, dynamic and inter-connected nature of these issues.

We have developed a corresponding DEI action plan looking across all areas of our strategy, programmes and operations to uphold this commitment.

Our history and recent development

Although we were established as a Foundation in 2012, our origins as an organisation lie in The College of Law, a Royal Charter charity with the purpose “to promote the advancement of legal education and the study of the law in all its branches.” In 2012, the Governors of the College decided to sell the education and training business and to use the funds generated by the sale to endow the organisation and to pursue our charitable purpose as a grantmaking foundation, including a name change to The Legal Education Foundation. In April 2021 we received permission from the Privy Council to widen our charitable objects which now read “to promote the advancement of legal education and the study of the law in all its branches, *and the sound development and administration of law.*”

In 2019, the Foundation created a subsidiary, Justice Collaborations, a registered charity. This enabled the Foundation to take on the hosting the £10million Justice Together Initiative collaborative grants programme.

The Board of Governors of the Foundation has undergone significant change since the transition from College of Law to Foundation and the three final Governors from the time of the College of Law will step down this year. Chair elect, Paddy Sloan, will become chair in November 2021.

The board of Governors meets four times a year. Three of the meetings focus on strategy development and oversight, with the fourth reviewing the annual accounts. Meanwhile, increasing responsibility and decision making has been delegated to the five committees of the Foundation

namely: Grants, Programmes & Learning; Audit; Investment; Nominations; and Finance & General Purposes.

We operate across two sites. Colleagues leading administration, finance and IT are based in Shalford, just outside Guildford and grants staff are predominantly based in London. The CEO and the Director of Grants spend time in both offices. Since the end of lockdown, Surrey colleagues are returning to the office. We chose not to renew the lease of our London office in March 2021, with that office no longer meeting our needs, and although London-based staff are currently continuing to work remotely, we are looking to re-establish a physical base in London. Thanks to our existing cloud-based IT systems, the organisation managed the transition to remote working very smoothly and whilst we are committed to retaining physical locations for our work, we envisage maintaining the flexibility and efficiency of remote working.

Background to the role of Director of Operations

This is an especially exciting time to join the Foundation as we build on our existing programmes and initiatives as well as harness the opportunities of our widened charitable purpose, our extensive collaboration, and our growing networks of influence.

In line with our new strategic plan, the organisation has grown from eight staff in 2013, to 20. This brings with it the need to invest in our processes, systems and structures, to ensure these meet the changing needs of the Foundation.

We have benefited from investing in our IT systems, with a Salesforce database and fully cloud-based system operating through Office 365. We outsource IT support to a company called Cloud Business.

The Director of Operations is a new role, created to support our development and growth. The post-holder will be responsible to the Chief Executive and a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT). The post is the result of a planned move with the previous post of Deputy Chief Executive and Finance Director being re-structured. An existing and experienced member of staff will take on the role of Head of Finance. The previous DCE, who is highly experienced in investments and pensions, will remain available to provide support on these areas of the Foundation's operations.

The Director of Operations will be responsible for leading operations overall and the post currently includes two direct reports: Head of Finance and Head of Administration. As an early priority, the Director of Operations will review our IT support function and decide the best structure for this going into the future. The post of Digital Manager is currently an interim role.

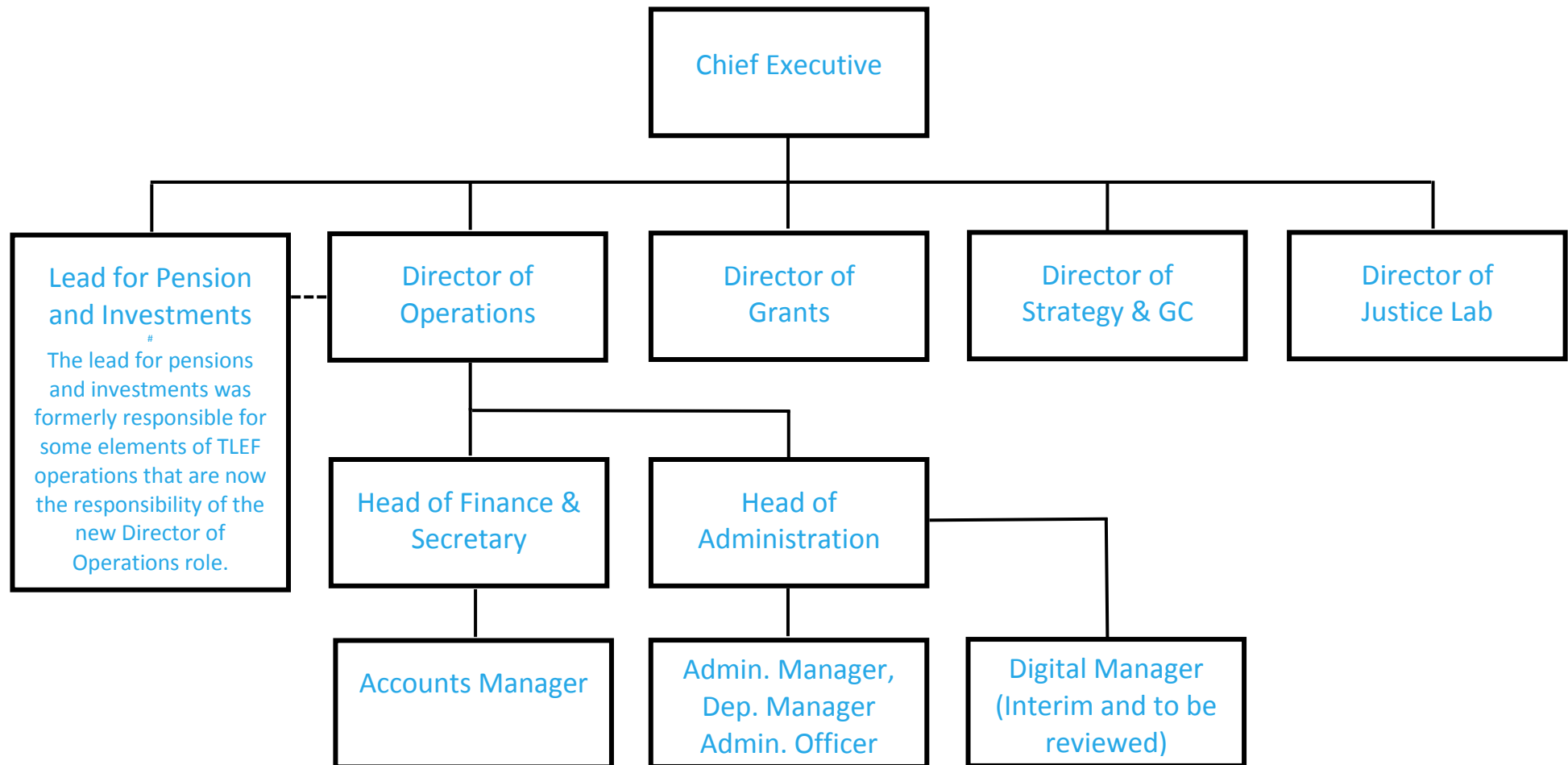
While a recognised finance qualification is not essential for the role, a high level of financial literacy will be required.

Although the Foundation has significant resources, we are a relatively small organisation, so the post will suit someone able to work well across our small and exceptionally able team.

The Director of Operations is a permanent appointment. We are seeking a full-time role but would be happy to consider part-time and other flexible arrangements such as job-share.

The post would involve a combination of being based in London, some travel (subject to current restrictions) to our office in Shalford, Surrey, and working from home.

Operations organisational chart (October 2021)



Job Description

Title:	Director of Operations
Salary:	£85,000 - £90,000
Contract:	Full-time, permanent (flexibility considered)
Hours:	35 per week
Location:	Guildford, London and remote
Reports to:	Chief executive
Responsible for:	Head of Finance, Head of Administration

Functions of the role

The overall purpose of the role is to work with colleagues across the organisation to develop and oversee effective and efficient administrative, IT, finance and operational policies, systems and services to support delivery of the Foundation's strategy, and to ensure that these policies, systems and support services uphold the Foundation's culture and values.

Strategic Management

- To lead the team responsible for the delivery of HR, finance, IT, administration, facilities, and infrastructure.
- To be an active member of the SMT and support the development of strategy that delivers the vision, mission and values of the Foundation.
- To oversee provision of information relating the Foundation's operations to SMT and Board, as required.
- To track trends and developments to ensure the Foundation's operational, infrastructure and governance arrangements are relevant, current and effective.
- To build and sustain relationships with a network of relevant key internal and external stakeholders.
- To support development of wider initiatives taken forward by the Foundation including work done under Justice Collaborations, TLEF's subsidiary.

Human Resources

- To review and manage the delivery of policies, systems and processes required to ensure that the human resources run effectively and efficiently to facilitate the work of the Foundation and to ensure people feel supported and can achieve their best.
- To provide strategic human resources support to the Senior Management Team.
- To ensure the Foundation's human resources policies, systems and processes reflect our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.
- To oversee all Foundation conditions of employment, including employment contracts.

IT, Administration, Facilities and Infrastructure

- To review and manage the policies, systems and processes required to ensure that IT, administration, facilities and infrastructure run effectively and efficiently to facilitate the work of the Foundation.
- To manage the Head of Administration.
- To ensure we have the necessary IT support (in-house and outsourced) to meet the needs of the Foundation. To work with our outsourced IT provider to ensure IT systems are supported and secure.
- To ensure effective working locations for all staff, including those who work flexibly and remotely, and to manage existing and ongoing property leases, and ensure compliance with legal, health and safety and other requirements.
- To oversee all contracts for supplies and services and related legal matters including insurances.
- To ensure the Foundation complies with its responsibilities under GDPR.
- To ensure the Foundation's risk register is actively maintained and used, and the leadership team are aware of all material risks and their associated mitigations.

Finance

- To manage the Head of Finance and oversee the Foundation's financial processes and systems, including financial control and compliance, long-term financial planning, budget management, operational and grant expenditure, to ensure that the Foundation can deliver its strategy.
- To oversee and support the Head of Finance to develop financial processes and systems to ensure that the Foundation continues to be supported by an effective, efficient and appropriate finance framework.
- To oversee and monitor all investment matters including liaising with our investment manager.
- To oversee the Foundation's pension scheme and other staff benefits.

Governance

- To work with the Foundation Secretary and the Chief Executive to ensure the Foundation's governance structure and arrangements are proportionate and effective.
- To report to and attend Board and relevant Committee meetings.

Person specification

Essential

- Commitment to the vision, mission and values of the Foundation.
- Senior, proven experience of leading support functions specifically HR, IT, infrastructure and contracts.
- Able to engage authoritatively with the board and committees of trustees.
- Excellent organisational and project management abilities.

- Experience of managing a staff team including excellent interpersonal skills and a strong collaborative style.
- Understanding, awareness of, and commitment to, the principles and practice of equal opportunities and diversity, and experience of building diverse teams and inclusive cultures.
- Aptitude in analytical and critical thinking and financial literacy.
- Strong communication, influencing and negotiation skills.
- Excellent written and spoken English.
- The right to work in the UK.

Desirable

- Senior, proven experience of the foundation or wider voluntary sector, and the ability to demonstrate understanding of the particular needs of voluntary organisations.

Applying for this role and timetable

For an informal and confidential discussion about the role, please contact our recruitment partner:

Simon Lloyd, Director, NFP Consulting T: 07961 988 523 E: simon.lloyd@nfpconsulting.co.uk

Apply online at www.nfpconsulting.co.uk/tlef

Your application should comprise a CV along with a supporting statement of around two sides of A4 indicating how you meet the person specifications of the role and your motivations for applying.

Closing date: Monday 28th June 2021

Following pre-qualification by NFP Consulting, there is a two-stage process for shortlisted candidates designed to both provide the opportunity for candidates to get to know TLEF as an organisation, to meet the colleagues they would be working with and to enable the organisation to make an informed and objective appointment decision.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to complete an online occupational personality questionnaire in advance of the two-stage process conducted by TLEF outlined below.

First stage: Thursday 8th July 2021

An informal meet and two-way discussion with the Chief Executive and members of the Senior Management Team with topics for discussion on the scope of the responsibilities of the role, what this will mean in practice and what candidates will be bringing to it.

Second stage: Thursday 15th July 2021

A formal panel interview with a pre-prepared presentation task conducted by the Chair-elect of Governors, the Chief Executive, and an external adviser from a partner organisation to TLEF.

The format of the interviews will be determined by the COVID-19 guidelines and restrictions that apply at the time.

Accessibility

Please let us know if you have any special requirements which we might need to consider in relation to the selection process. Any requests will not be taken into account in the selection process.