Finance Director

**Job Description**

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| Reports to: | Chief Executive |
| Responsible for: | Finance Team |
| Salary:  | c. £70k depending on experience |
| Contract: | Permanent, Full Time |

Job Purpose

The Director of Finance will have a key strategic role in the management of NET Academies Trust (NETAT), working as part of the leadership team to:

* Ensure that all aspects of financial management are efficient and effective throughout the Trust,
* Provide professional leadership, guidance and challenge to senior post-holders,
* The overall performance of the finance function, including line management as identified
* Ensure Trust compliance with legal requirements and statutory guidance,
* Promote the highest standards of business ethos and efficiency across the Trust, ensuring the most effective use of resources in support of the Trust’s objectives.
* The strategic leadership and direction of the finance service, ensuring a customer led approach, support for academy based teams and the training of new academies joining NETAT.

The Finance Director will work in close co-operation with the Chief Executive to ensure that an appropriate financial policy framework is in place to guide the Trust’s financial decision making.

**Special Features**

The post holder shall be required to travel to any of the schools/academies within the NET Academies Trust family of schools as directed by the Chief Executive.

Key Responsibilities

1. **Financial Strategy, Planning and Management Reporting**
* Contribute to the development and implementation of a 3 year strategy, setting financial objectives and monitoring performance.
* Coordinate the preparation of annual budgets at local and consolidated levels.
* Develop and review financial reporting framework and accounting systems.
* Review and delivery of local and consolidated management accounts monthly (internal) and annual (external), forecasts and reports, informing CEO of financial position of the Trust.
* Provide timely and accurate financial reports to the NETAT Board to facilitate effective decision making.
* Provide leadership to the Board on finance and accounting strategy to optimise the Trust’s financial performance and strategic position.
* Management of the budget process from planning through consolidation to final approval by the Board.
* Play a key role in due diligence assessments of possible additions to the MAT’s schools in respect of financial management, development, improvement and maintenance.
* Oversee all other financial issues as instructed by the NETAT Board to ensure robust financial management of the academies and the Trust.
* Contribute fully to the developments to the Trust’s strategy across all areas of the business, assumptions and decision making as appropriate and providing financial analysis and guidance on all activities, plans and targets.
* Cash/Treasury management – both day to day and strategic deposits - including movement/deposit of funds to ensure maximum returns for the trust.
1. **Financial Control and Statutory Reporting**
* Develop and maintain the Trust’s Financial Procedures Manual in accordance with the requirements of the Education Funding Agency’s (EFA) Academies Financial Handbook.
* Monitor and control processes to ensure adherence to Trust policies and procedures and safeguard Trust assets. Including maintenance of group procurement policies and procedures.
* Develop and oversee the quality of management information, budgeting and forecasting processes.
* Develop a risk framework strategy to effectively identify and manage risk across the Trust.
* Advise on external and internal audit requirements of financial regulations and funding bodies.
* Liaise with auditors and facilitate all audit arrangements.
* Make necessary arrangements for insurance cover for the Academies and its governors.
* Ensure that tax obligations are discharged correctly and effectively (VAT, Corporation Tax, PAYE/NI).
* Complete and submit financial returns as required by Department for Education and Charities Commission in accordance with reporting deadlines.
1. **Administration and Trust Services**
* Act as Administrator for the Trust’s finance system; managing user access, training, security permissions, nominal code management and centrally managed processes.
* Support the effective delivery of payroll in all Academies.
* Work with senior leadership and finance teams to maximise income generation, financial growth and profile services. Including leading on the development and submission of bids for grants and other income streams.
* Manage financial and statutory considerations of the sponsor framework, National Education Trust.
* Ensuring the Trust and SLT have regular and accurate information to manage delegated budget. Provide professional advice and assistance as required.
* Ensuring the continued evolution of sound information systems to enable the board to make measured strategic and operational decisions.
* Establish a high level of credibility and manage strong working relationships with external parties including the EFA, HMRC, the DfE and external auditors.
* Leadership, mentoring and provision of managed/continuous development of Finance staff across the group.
* Change management – developing/leading development of Finance organization through significant period of growth driven by change – adapting shape/structure/team abilities to meet evolving organizational requirements.
* Management of payroll teams including keeping abreast of all developments and legislation surrounding payroll, pensions and benefits. Ensuring all legislation is implemented and adhered to by the Trust.
* Provision of on-boarding support to new academies.

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| Any other duties commensurate with the post as deemed by the Chief Executive. **Finance Director** **Person Specification**The successful candidate will meet the following person specification. The Trust will be seeking evidence in the selection process which will include the application, interview and references.

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| **Category** | **Essential** | **Desired** |
| **QUALIFICATIONS and EXPERIENCE** |  |  |
| Relevant qualification in accountancy/finance (CCAB) | \* |  |
| In depth understanding of academy finance |  | \* |
| Experience of Multi Academy Trust (MAT) finance |  | \* |
| Up to date knowledge of charity finance (SORP) |  | \* |
| Experience of building and managing large complex budgets | \* |  |
| Adept at producing and presenting complex management accounts | \* |  |
| Proficient in consolidated accounts preparation | \* |  |
| Proven track record of working at Senior Finance level within Education | \* |  |
| Experience of negotiating contractual agreements | \* |  |
| Knowledge of legislation affecting payment of salaries, pensions and provision of benefits | \* |  |
| **SKILLS** |  |  |
| Excellent financial management and financial planning skills | \* |  |
| High level analytical, strategic planning and organisational skills | \* |  |
| Ability to demonstrate a business focus and commercially minded approach to managing a public sector finance function | \* |  |
| A proven ability to successfully manage all the resources effectively | \* |  |
| Outstanding communication skills – orally and in writing | \* |  |
| High level of computer literacy including advanced Excel | \* |  |
| Experience of academy software | \* |  |
| CIVICA Resource Financial software |  | \* |
| HCSS Budgeting software |  | \* |
| Ability to direct and co-ordinate the work of others | \* |  |
| Think creatively to solve problems and identify opportunities | \* |  |
| An innovative leader with a clear understanding of how Finance can support the desired outcomes of the organisation | \* |  |
| **BEHAVIOUR AND OTHER RELATED CHARACTERISTICS** |  |  |
| The requirement is for a commercially astute, articulate, technically strong, dynamic, insightful and influential leader with the ability to operate at both strategic and operational levels | \* |  |
| A team player with excellent communication skills and a robust focussed approach to the delivery of key strategic imperatives | \* |  |
| High integrity and openness combined with a commitment to good governance | \* |  |
| Prioritise and manage own time effectively  | \* |  |
| Work under pressure and to deadlines  | \* |  |
| Achieve challenging professional goals  | \* |  |
| Energy, vigour and perseverance  | \* |  |
| Commitment the welfare and development of children | \* |  |
| The ability to drive forward change in challenging circumstances | \* |  |
| An enthusiastic and motivational leader with strong morale building skills | \* |  |
| Someone who is resilient and determined but can also provide support, demonstrate empathy and deal with staff and situations in a sensitive and considerate manner | \* |  |

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