



Position Description

Chief Operating Officer

The Forum for Youth Investment

FULL TITLE: Chief Operating Officer

SUPERVISOR: President & CEO

PURPOSE: To act in partnership with the CEO as a key leader and strategic advisor with responsibility for 1) providing oversight of the organization's core operational and administrative functions, including budget & finance, human talent & equity, IT & business systems, resource development, and administration 2) leading or co-leading strategic projects and initiatives, and 3) assisting the CEO in ensuring the Forum's internal effectiveness through planning, performance management, resource allocation, and the development and execution of best-in-class operational systems, policies, and standard procedures. The incumbent also serves as a member of the Forum's Executive Team with shared leadership responsibility for guiding the organization toward the achievement of its strategic goals, as well as ensuring aligned decision-making, strong communication, and effective collaboration across teams. The person taking on this position will be a keen strategist and skilled operations leader with a deep commitment to racial and social equity and the expertise and relationship skills to be a trusted advisor to the leadership team, including the CEO and Board.

Organization & Background

Founded in 1998, the **Forum for Youth Investment** is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan "action tank" committed to changing the odds that all children and youth are ready for college, work, and life. The Forum connects leaders to ideas, services and networks that can help them make more intentional decisions that are good for young people, even in the face of limited resources. It helps leaders who are trying to improve & align policies, plan & partner for impact, and/or strengthen programs & adult practice across all the systems and settings where young people spend time. The Forum is currently

working to more clearly define and live into our commitment to be an anti-racist organization and focus on dismantling structural racism in youth-serving systems.

The Forum is a thriving organization with a budget of \$11 million, a staff of 50, and headquarters in Washington, DC. The Forum overall is funded by a mix of foundations, corporations, and a fee-for-service contract base. For more information on the Forum, please visit www.forumfyi.org.

Position Responsibilities

First, advance organizational strategy by establishing implementation infrastructure, cascading strategic goals and metrics into a performance management system. Second, lead the development and implementation of initiatives that provide an effective, efficient, and continuously improving operational infrastructure with systems, policies, and procedures that enable executives, team members, and the organization to execute on the mission and achieve its strategic goals. Third, advise CEO on issues related to organizational excellence and positive organizational culture, including developing and implementing change management initiatives.

Specific responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

Budget and Finance

- Lead enterprise-wide budget development and management, including providing training and support to executives and other budget-holders.
- Oversee accounting functions, including cash receipts, cash disbursements, client invoicing, and monthly closing.
- Conduct financial analysis, forecasting, and reporting to inform governance and management decision-making.
- Ensure efficient and user-friendly systems for time tracking, expense reimbursement, purchase authorization, etc.
- Document, communicate, and enforce policies and standard operating procedures.

Talent and Equity

- Develop and implement best-in-class talent management processes and systems for recruitment, hiring, onboarding, performance management, and professional development.
- Oversee organization's compensation and benefits philosophy and policies and manage outsourced HR vendor that handles payroll and benefits administration.
- Manage employee relations, organizational culture, and other elements that contribute to employee retention.
- Provide infrastructure to advance our internal diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) priorities.
- Document, communicate, and enforce policies and standard operating procedures.

Resource Development

- Facilitate process for developing an enterprise-wide revenue generation strategy.
- Provide systems and supports for client and funder development and stewardship.
- Deliver full range of supports for grant life cycle, from project and proposal development to grants compliance to regular reporting.
- Conduct business analytics and revenue forecasting.
- Document, communicate, and enforce policies and standard operating procedures.

Administration

- Manage contract with property management firm that services headquarters office in Washington, DC.
- Manage outsourced relationship with legal counsel for support across operations and administrative functions, including risk management-related issues.
- Develop, review, and/or manage contracts and agreements that span all business units.
- Oversee procurement of supplies and equipment and management of vendors and business partners.
- Document, communicate, and enforce policies and standard operating procedures.

Information Technology (IT)

- With support from outside consultants, as needed, lead enterprise-wide technology and business system needs assessments & planning.
- Manage contract with managed service provider (MSP) charged with hardware and software provision and servicing.
- Source, configure, and deploy technology solutions.
- Provide change management supports to ensure best practices in use of IT & business systems.
- Document, communicate, and enforce policies and standard operating procedures.

Department Leadership

- Manage the internal services & administration unit, including but not limited to, its budgets, forecasts, staffing, culture & climate, compensation, and performance management to ensure organizational targets are met.

Performance/Character Requirements

We are looking for a leader with experience building exceptional staff teams that drive growth. In this role you will create a unit roadmap in partnership with the executive team and other unit leaders. Then it's time to get results through exceptional implementation of the plan with the help of the team you lead. Characteristics of successful candidates include:

- **Manages Self** – You ask for feedback on impact of your behavior on others. You identify and follows through on actions in response to constructive feedback. You honestly assess your own strengths and know what weaknesses need support.

- **Leads Courageously** – You act courageously to make changes that will improve the organization. You consistently drive to successful outcomes and stay composed and positive in challenging situations.
- **Communicates Effectively** – You communicate (both in writing and verbally) clearly, succinctly, and in a timely manner. You provide information people need to know to do their jobs, make accurate decisions, and to feel part of a team. You are able to engage an audience and achieve the desired effect in a variety of formal presentation settings.
- **Builds High-Performing Teams/Develops Others** – You form and lead teams capable of getting results. You create a learning environment of creativity and engagement. You can effectively raise and resolve conflict with the team. You provide frequent and timely developmental feedback to others and construct compelling developmental plans. You take personal responsibility for mentoring high-potential employees.
- **Makes Quality Decisions** – You clearly state where you stand on issues, even if it is unpopular. You seek input from appropriate parties before making decisions, and still make timely decisions.
- **Demonstrates Strategic Agility** – You anticipate future consequences and trends accurately. You're able to align your goals to the overall organizational strategy. You can create breakthrough strategies and plans.
- **Demonstrates Business Acumen** – You understand and create opportunities to cultivate and support exceptional partnerships. You are able to make the case for decisions and initiatives. You adapt strategies and tactics to create a success defined by metrics.
- **Influences and Negotiates** – You influence others by building coalitions or alliances among diverse groups. You effectively adapt influence strategies depending upon the situation. You're skillful at removing barriers that get in the way of effective collaboration among groups.
- **Manages Vision and Purpose** – You inspire commitment to a compelling vision and shared values. You create a climate in which people want to do their best. You're able to champion change and lead the organization through a transition.
- **Thinks Strategically, Executes Skillfully** – You can see the forest through the trees and know how to craft strategic short and long-term programs that are aligned with organizational goals. At the same time, you can't wait to roll-up your sleeves and get the work done.
- **Is Goal Oriented** – We want someone who is a doer, with doggedness, a determination and commitment to reach a goal, and a strong bias toward action. You always find a way to make it happen.
- **Demonstrates Creativity** – While there are tried-and-true tactics in your toolbox, you explore new ways of thinking and continually strive to create best-in-class programs that move your organization and field forward.
- **Handles Ambiguity** – You can effectively cope with change and lead others through it.
- **Communicates Assertively** – As a senior-level communicator, you express opinions directly, confidently, and accurately. You can also be very persuasive and influence the way others think, feel, or behave.
- **Collaborates & Values Relationships** – You can quickly gain the respect and trust of your direct reports, peers, and leadership team. You understand the importance of listening, asking probing questions, and allowing others to be heard.
- **Takes Risk** – The entrepreneurial spirit shines through in your willingness to experiment with new approaches and act even though the outcome is uncertain.
- **Models Diplomacy** – You have worked in diverse settings and understand the cultural sensitivities of doing business with partners and clients around the country. You are tactful in dealing with diverse people or situations.
- **Exhibits Professional Acumen** – You demonstrate confidence, experience, and poise under pressure.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in related field, such as business, public administration, management, or finance; advanced degree is a plus.
- 15+ years' experience overseeing operational, financial, strategic planning, and Board (or equivalent) relationships as well as supervision of seasoned management staff.
- 10+ years progressive leadership experience; at least five of which were in executive management roles, preferably in mission-driven non-profits or similar organizations with staff in multiple states.
- Demonstrated experience leading, participating in, and executing against strategic and operational planning with the ability to ensure clarity around performance expectations, both at the organizational and individual levels; alignment with the organization's vision; and integration of relevant customer and stakeholder information.
- Advanced business acumen, as well as demonstrated in-depth knowledge of and experience in the development and execution of operational and management processes (e.g., financial management, budgeting, planning, project management, etc.) and policies as well as related process improvement, business development, and change management strategies.
- Excellent organizational, project management, facilitation, negotiation, and analytical skills, as well as a demonstrated propensity to be creative, proactive, and self-motivated in the execution and completion of required accountabilities.
- A high level of confidence, integrity, cultural sensitivity, and exceptional interpersonal skills, as well as a professional executive presence, for effectively engaging and interacting with and influencing others, including key stakeholders and decision-makers internal and external to the Forum.
- Proven experience providing strategic counsel and guidance to executive leadership team members.
- Solid judgment / temperament in dealing with confidential and sensitive information and issues.
- Willingness to travel, as needed.

Working Environment

Flexibility is required to adapt to the dynamic work environment of a non-profit "action tank" that has national clients and exposure. The climate is informal but mission-driven. Excellence is valued in every position. The Chief Operating Officer will be based in the Forum's Washington, DC office.

Position & Compensation

The salary range, duties and responsibilities of this position meet the requirements of Section 13 (a) (1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act and therefore qualifies as an "exempt" position. The starting salary for this executive-level leadership position is targeted between \$150K and \$170K, dependent upon experience and qualifications, with a comprehensive benefits package. Please send resume and cover letter with salary requirements to: jobs@forumfyi.org. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. If your application is selected for an interview, you will be contacted directly. No telephone calls or inquiry emails, please.

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The Forum for Youth Investment is committed to creating a diverse work environment and is proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer and drug-free workplace, and to comply with ADA regulations as applicable. All applicants are considered for all positions without regard to race, religion, color, sex, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, national origin, ancestry, physical/mental disability, severe/morbid obesity, medical condition, military/veteran status, genetic information, marital status, ethnicity, alienage or any other protected classification, in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws. We encourage individuals of all backgrounds to apply. If you are a qualified candidate with a disability, please email us at jobs@forumfyi.org if you require a reasonable accommodation to complete your application.