

Chief Operating Officer

Job Description | Last Updated June 2019



Since our founding in 1969, Community Action House (CAH) has been the focal point of community efforts to provide critical support and pathways out of poverty for our neighbors in need. We do so with a client-centric approach that meets people wherever they are at and offers services that enhance ownership and agency. Compassion, excellence, and collaboration are core values.

Budget: \$2M-\$3M total (inclusive of in-kind contributions of approximately \$1M per year)

Position Details

CAH is seeking a mission-focused, strategic, and process-minded leader with experience managing change in high impact organizations, leading a management team, and developing a performance culture committed to continuous improvement in an effort to add the most possible value to all client and stakeholder relationships. The Chief Operating Officer (COO) will be second in command at Community Action House with a focus on internal management, working closely with the Executive Director (ED) to lead the organization in executing and refining its long-term strategy through a time of change, while ensuring that the team and organization is run in an efficient and high-functioning way.

The COO will partner closely with the ED on developing an operating model that leads to effective, efficient operations in full alignment with new strategic goals. A key strategic partner to the ED, the COO will be relied on to spearhead program support and delivery, improving processes and empowering and developing key staff and teams, ensuring that all stakeholders have a welcoming, efficient, and positive experience in any interaction with Action House. This role will play an integral role in determining how CAH should organize our people, processes, and systems to fulfill our mission and will manage a majority of our internal day-to-day operational functions.

The COO will work with the ED to execute annual planning and performance management processes, and take leadership in broad areas of responsibility, from process design to financial modeling and management to human resources management. Candidates should also have demonstrated experience in leading people through organizational change. Moreover, candidates should be comfortable leading in ambiguous, entrepreneurial environments with limited backstopping, able to make quick decisions, clearly set priorities, and pivot easily based on emerging information.

The Chief Operating Officer will report to the ED, and will have line authority over our administrative, finance, logistics, and store staff.

This is a full time, *exempt*, position.

Outcomes

The COO will be responsible for achieving the following outcomes:

1. Strong systems and relationships are in place to allow for the COO to represent the Executive Director at meetings and the team is at least as productive and organized as when the Executive Director is externally engaged
2. The Executive Director has a clear partner in executing long term strategy and operations, and under the leadership of the COO, the team is managing towards their goals effectively, tracking key milestones and challenges
3. The organizational structure, meeting cadences, and performance management systems are in full alignment with the organization's strategic direction
4. Annual plans and budgets are developed in alignment with these priorities
5. Summary performance information is assisting all team leaders as well as organizational leadership and board in assessing organizational performance
6. Financial relationships are well managed, with all grant supported activity delivering and reporting in a way to meet and exceed expectations
7. Outdated and inefficient administrative processes and platforms are adjusted and continually improved for maximum efficiency, and organizational change increases staff buy-in and momentum
8. Organizational communications reflects the organization's strategic direction and value proposition
9. Organizational efficiencies - whether saving staff time or recognizing financial savings - are regularly identified and effectively implemented
10. A culture committed to client feedback is supported by increasing staff skill and organizational processes in efficiently collecting and analyzing such feedback
11. All organizational departments are operating at a high level: priorities and strategic plans are in place, teams are fully staffed, and team leaders have effective and strategic check-ins with the ED
12. Staff support systems (including knowledge management, facilities, etc) are updated and improving in the acquisition and retention of a high-performing staff
13. Team hiring processes are executed smoothly and effectively for all roles
14. The ED is prepared for all internal and external activities and has a perspective on the team's priorities, as a result of the COO's's thought partnership on the management of day-to-day execution against deliverables
15. Regular internal meetings for the ED and the team have agendas sent in advance, are well-facilitated, and next steps are clearly documented and communicated and tracked for completion
16. As a result of the COO's internal leadership, at least 50% of the ED's time is available for investing in external relationships and fundraising activities

Responsibilities

The ultimate aim of the COO is to achieve the outcomes listed above while increasing the organization's efficiency, impact, and reputation for excellence. In order to achieve those outcomes, we envision that the COO will spend their time in the following ways:

- Support the ED in setting vision, direction, and overall priorities for the team, as well as in communication of those priorities to key stakeholders
- Lead the design and facilitation of the leadership team body, including purpose, protocols, culture and process for decision-making and problem-solving
- Lead annual planning and budgeting processes; operationalize plans and progress monitoring of all goals
- Integration of strategy, continuous improvement, and innovation into planning processes, decision making processes and business modeling
- Directly manage general support functions and related teams, including Finance, Human Resources, Grant Administration, Monitoring and Evaluation for Learning and Adaptation, Communications, Facilities, Logistics, Resale Operations, IT, Knowledge Management, Legal and Risk, and General Administration
- Provide support and leadership for the entire staff across all organizational divisions
- Advise the ED and provide department-wide leadership on the management of day-to-day execution against goals and performance metrics
- In close coordination with the ED, oversee continued implementation of the organizational strategy
- Work with all organizational team leaders to ensure that they have priorities and strategic plans set for the year, and to ensure their weekly check-ins with the ED are structured strategically and effectively
- Manage team processes and operations (e.g., meeting cadence, follow ups, planning, preparation for meetings with principals and/or Board)
- Coordinate with all organizational stakeholders to ensure smooth and effective collaboration
- Draft written materials such as memos and presentations
- Work closely with the ED and other organizational leaders to source, select, and onboard high quality talent across the team
- Drive the strengthening of organizational culture to ensure the team has the clarity to deliver on goals and staff members feel empowered to make an impact
- Represent the ED on internal and external meetings or calls as needed, serving as a secondary public voice for the organization, its values, and its mission

Qualifications

- A sense of urgency in relationship to CAH's work and a deep-seated commitment to supporting CAH's mission and living the organization's core values
- Track record of developing strategies to meet goals and results-based management
- Proven ability to stay highly organized and on track with multiple projects, teams, and deadlines
- Superior leadership abilities, with a track record of creating processes to support accountability while managing, motivating and developing high performing, results-oriented teams
- Leadership experience at the executive or senior management level, ideally overseeing the operational functions of an organization and making complex organization-wide decisions

- Proven ability to generate new and innovative approaches to problems
- Experience leading inclusive, collaborative strategic and/or annual planning processes and in producing single and multi-year budgets
- Demonstrates ability to quickly and proficiently understand and absorb new information; can sift between important details and noise; sees the end result and can make quick and thoughtful decisions to get there
- Strong analytical skill; able to structure and process large volumes of qualitative and quantitative data and draw insightful conclusions and recommended next steps
- Exceptional project manager – effectively plans and executes long-term, complex projects, investing, managing, and communicating effectively with others to achieve objectives and meet deadlines
- Proven ability to build effective relationships at all levels of the organization and across teams; builds trust quickly
- Exceptional communication, written and verbal
- Minimum 10 years of experience required, ideally managing a team to results
- Experience negotiating with vendors and partners
- Grant management and delivery experience
- Proficiency in best practice nonprofit finance and accounting practices, including cost allocation and financial reporting frameworks
- High level of self-awareness and reflection with orientation towards continual learning and with comfort in leading with vulnerability
- A creative problem-solver; able to foster and champion innovative ideas and solutions
- Willingness to challenge ideas and to enthusiastically debate, yet accept, embrace, and fully support the chosen path
- Strong organizational awareness and sensitivity with proven listening and influencing skills; ability to build consensus and facilitate collaboration and problem solving
- Advanced degree in a relevant discipline

Nice-to-have, but not required:

- MBA, MPA, or similar professional degree
- Nonprofit financial analyses and modeling in relation to supporting strategic decision-making and managing organizational performance
- Experience developing and executing an earned revenue strategy and creating business plans rooted in market research
- Practical knowledge of advancement and major donor relations strategies

Compensation

Salary is commensurate with experience, and is eligible for a comprehensive benefits package.

Application Process

To apply please submit a cover letter and resume as pdf documents via the link [here](#). Only applications submitted via this link will be guaranteed our review as a part of this process.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled. Due to the volume of applications usually received, we will only be able to contact shortlisted candidates as we begin the interview process.

Equal Opportunity Employer

CAH is committed to creating a diverse work environment and is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability, parental status, veteran status, or any other protected status under applicable laws. We encourage applicants of all backgrounds to apply.

Note: This Job Description is a description of the typical duties of this position, and is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all duties. Job incumbents may be asked to perform other duties as required, doing what it takes to advance our mission.