Head of Finance – job description

Terms	
HOURS	2 days/week (0.4 FTE)
SALARY	£50k-£60k pro rata
HOLIDAYS	28 days pro-rata including bank holidays
LOCATION	Hybrid/flexible but with occasional office and concert attendance
REPORTING TO	Chief Executive
RESPONSIBLE FOR	All financial matters, including strategy, reporting and governance

Introducing the Academy of Ancient Music

The Academy of Ancient Music is an orchestra with a worldwide reputation for excellence in baroque and classical music. Using historically informed techniques, period-specific instruments and original sources, we bring music vividly to life in committed, vibrant performances.

Established in 1973 to make the first British recordings of orchestral works using original instruments, AAM has released more than 300 albums to date, collecting countless accolades including Classic BRIT, Gramophone and Edison awards. We now record on our own-label AAM Records and are proud to be the most listened-to period-instrument orchestra online, with over one million monthly listeners on streaming platforms.

Beyond the concert hall, AAM is committed to nurturing the audiences, artists and arts managers of the future through our innovative education initiative, AAMplify. Working in collaboration with tertiary institutions across the UK, we engage the next generation of period-instrumentalists with side-by-side sessions, masterclasses and other opportunities designed to bridge the gap from the conservatoire to the profession, safeguarding the future of historical performance.

AAM is Associate Ensemble at the Barbican Centre, London and the Teatro San Cassiano, Venice, Orchestra-in-Residence at the University of Cambridge, and tours extensively in the UK and internationally.

About the role

The Head of Finance is responsible for the effective financial management and governance of the Academy of Ancient Music, providing strategic financial advice and support to the Chief Executive, Board and SMT.

Working closely with the Chief Executive, the Head of Finance will lead financial planning, budgeting, forecasting and management reporting, providing clear analysis and insight to inform organisational strategy and decision-making. They will contribute to the assessment of new projects and opportunities, ensuring that financial implications, risks and opportunities are properly understood.

The Head of Finance will have overall responsibility for the integrity of AAM's financial systems, records and controls, overseeing outsourced providers responsible for bookkeeping, payroll and other transactional activity. The role therefore requires both strategic financial capability and a strong understanding of the underlying accounting function, with the ability to ensure that detailed financial processes are accurate, timely and robust.

Specific responsibilities

- Act as strategic financial partner and adviser to the Chief Executive, providing insight, analysis and challenge on business planning, new ventures and growth opportunities (touring, recordings, AAMplify education initiative etc), serving as first port of call for the Chief Executive on financial matters so they can focus on artistic and organisational leadership.
- Provide financial modelling and scenario planning to support the Chief Executive and Board in evaluating strategic options and major decisions.
- Own overall responsibility for the charity's financial health: budgeting, forecasting, cash flow management and management accounts, for an organisation with annual income of c.£1–2M.
- Supervise and quality-control the outsourced bookkeeping function, ensuring transactions, reconciliations and payment runs are accurate, timely and properly controlled, without doing the transactional work yourself but having full responsibility for the ledger and Xero platform.
- Lead preparation of statutory accounts and manage the annual audit process, ensuring compliance with Charity SORP and relevant charity/company law.
- Ensure VAT compliance, including management of partial exemption and the cultural exemption as applicable to the orchestra's activities.
- Manage the charity's claims for Orchestra Tax Relief, ensuring eligible production costs are correctly identified and claimed.
- Oversee Gift Aid compliance and claims on eligible donations.
- Act as key finance liaison to the Board of Trustees and Finance Committee, preparing clear papers and reports and attending meetings as required.
- Oversee financial governance and risk management, including internal controls, reserves policy and compliance with Charity Commission requirements.
- Manage restricted and unrestricted funds, supporting the Head of Development with grant applications and reporting, ensuring restricted funds are carefully monitored and used for the correct purpose.
- Oversee payroll, pensions and HR-related financial administration, working with external providers where relevant.

- Manage relationships with auditors, bank, HMRC, insurers and other external financial and professional advisers.
- Attend specialist managers' meetings of the ABO and other relevant industry bodies, to stay informed and have a forum for issues affecting the orchestra and charity sectors.
- Ensure appropriate financial systems, policies and procedures are in place and kept up to date as the organisation evolves.

Person specification

- Qualified finance professional (ACA, ACCA, CIMA). Part-qualified, or qualified by experience, may also be considered.
- Experience of managing an outsourced bookkeeping function or similar.
- Knowledge and experience of using Xero or similar accounting system. Excellent Excel skills.
- Some experience in grant management and reporting would be helpful.
- Some experience of working with restricted & unrestricted funds and a good understanding of the challenges this can pose.
- UK charity experience, including understanding and application of the charity SORP.
- Some experience of developing and implementing accounting and financial management systems, policies and processes.
- Ability to present complex financial information to non-finance stakeholders in a clear and concise manner.
- Ability to build rapport with others.
- Excellent written and spoken English, and ability to write concise reports for a variety of stakeholders and audiences.
- Resilience, flexibility and ability to thrive in a fast-paced environment.
- Ability to work in a standalone capacity managing the finance function.
- An interest in and appreciation of classical music (specific historical-performance knowledge is not required but is desirable).

How to apply

Applicants are invited to send a CV and covering letter addressed to John McMunn, Chief Executive to recruitment@aam.co.uk. Best practice is for CVs not to exceed two sides of A4.

If you would like an informal conversation about this role before applying, please contact John directly on 07811 263054 or e-mail recruitment@aam.co.uk.

Applications will be considered on a rolling basis and until such time as the role is filled with interviews being arranged on a similarly rolling basis. Unfortunately, we are unable to cover travel or any other expenses for interviews.

The Academy of Ancient Music strives to be an equal opportunities employer.