



Director of Operations Recruitment Pack

Welcome

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in becoming our new Director of Operations.

NCT is the UK's largest and best-known charity supporting parents from the start of pregnancy, throughout birth and early parenthood. We are a passionate community of volunteers, practitioners, staff and campaigners. Our vision is a world in which no parent is isolated, and all parents are supported to build a stronger society. We work to achieve this through our UK-wide network of 325 local branches, antenatal and postnatal courses delivered to over 75,000 new parents each year and the information available via our website and free helpline.



This is an exciting moment in NCT's development as we prepare to launch our new 2023-2028 organisational strategy, setting out our ambitions for impact with new parents in a post-pandemic world and extending the reach of our work.

As our new Director of Operations, you will have a central role to play in this as a member of our Senior Leadership Team. Responsible for the leadership of our courses, service operations and innovation, quality, customer services and our NCT practice community, you will ensure we deliver for new and expectant parents with trust and excellence, whilst maintaining and growing course income so that our charity can thrive and achieve more impact for our parents into the future. Ensuring we deliver our services in a streamlined and efficient way and that we are agile and responsive to changing expectations and competition is key.

We are seeking a dynamic and strategic leader with a successful track record in driving profitable, direct-to customer business who can motivate and coordinate large teams. A clear and proactive communicator, you will be confident with complex data and financial analysis and have experience of digital marketing, direct sales, or of working with experts and agencies in these fields. This is a multi-faceted leadership role for someone who can carry out these requirements, alongside setting ambitious and inclusive organisation strategies, promoting the organisation's mission as part of an energetic and high-performing executive leadership team.

At NCT, we are committed to building a diverse workforce and leadership group and are taking positive action to increase diversity throughout our charity, at all levels, and to nurture a culture of inclusion for all our people and the parents and families that we support. We welcome applications from a range of backgrounds and experiences.

This is a key role at a time and of change and opportunity for NCT that calls for a distinct blend of strong people, technical and commercial leadership skills. I hope you'll be inspired to find out more.

Best wishes

Angela McConville
Chief Executive



About us

NCT is the UK's largest charity supporting parents from the start of pregnancy, throughout birth and early parenthood.

Our vision is a world in which no parent is isolated, and all parents are supported to build a stronger society.

Our mission is to support parents through the first 1,000 days to have the best possible experience of pregnancy, birth, and early parenthood. We do this through three interconnected aims:

- Sharing evidence-based information to support parents to make informed decisions
- Creating networks of vital support and life-long friendship
- Campaigning on the issues that matter most through the early experiences of becoming a parent

We do this through our UK-wide network of 325 local branches, antenatal and postnatal courses delivered to over 75,000 new parents each year and the information available via our website and free helpline.

At NCT, we have a long history of campaigning and are proud of the positive changes we have driven over many years through user-led and research-based policy work. This includes early campaigns to enable the presence of a woman's choice of birth companion and end unnecessary non-evidence-based interventions, such as routine episiotomies or use of enemas before birth; through to better birth environments, women's right to breastfeed in public places without discrimination, and securing funding for every new mum in England to have a 6-week postnatal check in primary care. More recently, during the Covid-19 pandemic, we have campaigned for changes in legislation and guidance to protect and support pregnant women and new parents at a time of significant isolation and vulnerability.

For further information on us, please visit [The UK's leading charity for parents | NCT](#)



Role description

Job title: Director of Operations

Reports to: Chief Executive Officer

Direct reports: Head of Course Operations and Customer Service; Head of Service Development; Directorate Analyst (Business Intelligence).

Role purpose:

Director of Operations is a critical senior leadership role at NCT, responsible for the leadership of our courses, service operations and innovation, quality, customer services and our NCT practice community.

NCT is synonymous with gold standard, trusted courses, information and events for new and expectant parents. 95% of parents rate our courses as good or excellent. The Director of Operations is responsible for the delivery of these courses and services to more than 150,000 parents each year. You will champion the safe, inclusive delivery of parent services with an emphasis on quality improvement, excellence and learning.

Pre Covid, NCT's income streams were very stable. When Covid 19 hit the UK, like many organisations, it required us to rapidly move our services online and completely rethink our operating models. We have been through a period of significant change in the past 18 months – restructuring our teams, transitioning to a new CRM system, introducing online booking and introducing a refreshed high quality antenatal course format and framework. All these things have helped us to recover from the Covid 19 shock, with income stabilised close to pre-Covid levels.

However, we need to do more to achieve our vision and return to income growth. The Director of Operations plays a critical role in the next phase of our strategy, delivering on income goals and supporting our operational teams to get the most out of new structures and systems so that we can deliver our services in a streamlined and efficient way and continue to evolve in response to changing expectations and competition.

NCT is a charity committed to social justice and Equity and Diversity, believing inclusion is everyone's responsibility. The Director of Operations will partner with the Board, Chief Executive and Leadership Team to give visible leadership to our commitment to celebrate diversity, challenge inequity and build an inclusive workforce and environment, so all our people can thrive; and so we can best represent and meet the needs of the pregnant women, new parents and families we serve.



Main responsibilities

These fall across five key areas:

People, Culture, and Inclusion

- Lead, set the tone and role model the people and inclusion plan for the directorate, championing our values and driving a culture of inclusion and wellbeing.
- Build a high performing, motivated team - coach and support people development.
- Ensure the NCT practitioner community is engaged, motivated, and supported in their work.
- Ensure a confident supply of future practitioners through partnering with the education team.

Commercial Performance

- Build the commercial strategy for the Courses directorate.
- Deliver the Directorate annual plan – including stretching quality, performance and income targets.
- Lead robust performance reporting, building on and improving performance monitoring and reporting.
- Lead on the pricing strategy.
- Partner with the Marketing Team to engage parent audiences and drive continuous improvements in the customer journey and experience.

Intelligent Planning & Operations

- Lead the intelligent planning group.
- Build the forward business development and growth plan.
- Ensure operational planning is optimised to meet parent demand.
- Ensure Directorate and team plans are reviewed and reprioritised quarterly, acting as the Directorate operational 'glue', ensuring links are made across key development workstreams.

Service Development and Quality

- Lead a culture of continuous improvement and learning; ensuring a high performing quality support function.
- Ensure services are safe and inclusive, meeting the needs and desires of parents.
- Drive service development and innovation, including the future development of digital and hybrid products and services.
- Maintain excellent levels of customer service – safeguarding a parent-centred approach.

Leadership and Governance

- Contribute to NCT's strategy and governance working closely and collaboratively with the Directors Group.
- Support the Chief Executive and Board in managing risks to the charity, including reputational.
- Lead and model a positive and inclusive working culture, ensuring that teams are working together effectively and building good relationships; role model our commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion.

Resources controlled

- Budget responsibility of c. £10m.
- 3 direct reports: Head of Course Operations and Customer Service; Head of Service Development; Directorate Analyst (Business Intelligence).
- Team of ~100 people and c 700 self-employed, licensed NCT practitioners.

Judgement and decision making

- Reporting to the CEO, and a member of the Directors Group and Senior Leadership Team, the Director of Operations will have significant operational and budget autonomy and ability to make independent decisions, within the framework of our organisational planning and budgeting frameworks.
- The role will have good access to the CEO, including dedicated time every 2 weeks, to provide support and to enable decision making.
- The ability to shape and lead strategic decisions alongside making day to day operational decisions is critical.

Liason

- Reporting directly to the CEO, the Director of Operations is a member of our Leadership Team, with full accountability for leading on all aspects related to courses. This includes income and performance targets, product and service development, customer service, service planning, practitioner support and development and quality assurance.
- The Director of Operations plays a leading role in liaising with our community of ~700 self-employed NCT practitioners. This includes leading the relationship with the Practitioner Representative Body – a representative group of practitioners who support development work and feedback views from the wider community of NCT practitioners.
- The Director of Operations will have a leading role to play in reporting to our Board and in particular, to the Board's Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee which leads on financial and performance reporting and risk management from a governance perspective.
- The Director of Operations will Chair the NCT 'Unlock' governance group – a cross-charity operations group which ensures the safe operations of all NCT provision in response to legislative and environmental considerations, including Covid safety protocols.
- You are expected to be visible to staff, volunteers and practitioners and at times act as an ambassador for NCT.

General duties of an NCT employee

- Represent NCT appropriately at all times.
- Lead by example.
- Be accountable and ensure the effective and efficient running of NCT.
- Treat all staff colleagues, practitioners, volunteers, beneficiaries and members of the public with dignity and respect.
- Champion NCT's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Adhere to all NCT's policies and procedures.
- Work additional hours, as required, in order to meet the requirements of the role.

Declaration

This job description is intended to be forward thinking and indicative rather than final and exhaustive. The listed responsibilities and key duties and tasks may develop and evolve over time and NCT reserves the right to update and/or remove certain elements. NCT endeavours to keep substantial changes to a minimum and to promptly update this job description to take account of such developments.

Person specification

Strategy and Leadership

- Significant demonstrable experience of leadership, promoting an organisation's mission and strategy.
- Ability to set ambitious and inclusive organisation strategies.
- Examples of working to and within a strong mission driven / corporate governance framework would be advantageous.
- Demonstrable experience of leading and role-modelling commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.

Managing People

- Experience of coaching and developing managers.
- Experience of leading, motivating and coordinating large teams.
- Approachable and supportive to staff, committed to wellbeing and coaching staff for success.
- A clear and confident communicator who will energise and engage their team.
- Proven experience and insight into how to get the most out of a dispersed, part-time workforce.

Commercial Leadership

- Experience of developing and leading a multi-million pound income strategy, ideally in a socially-motivated context.
- Proven track record in achieving profit and audience engagement targets, ideally in a customer-centric environment.
- Confident with complex data and financial analysis and interrogating data to develop strategy and deliver results.
- Experience of digital marketing, direct sales; or working with experts and agencies in these fields.

Skills and experience to handle complex operations

- Experience of complex operational problem solving, comfortable making rapid decisions.
- Experience of working in an agile way in a fast-moving working environment.
- Ability to prioritise and simplify.
- A proven track record in driving improvements in efficiency, effectiveness and productivity.
- Resilient with the ability to think critically for and through change.

Building relationships and influencing

- Demonstrable track record of building effective senior relationships both internally and with stakeholders and partners.
- Experience of managing relationships between groups with different interests; proven ability to build consensus and cooperation.
- Experience of planning and managing stakeholder engagement to achieve impact.

Terms of appointment

Salary

The salary for this role is c.£75,000 per annum on a full-time permanent basis. Flexible working will be considered.

Location

Home-based or Bristol - with occasional travel to Bristol/London and UK-wide

Employee Benefits

- NCT Membership
- Pension Scheme - The Charity operates a Group Personal Pension Scheme into which staff will be auto-enrolled after 3 months service. NCT will match employees' contribution up to 5%.
- Salary sacrifice for Pension Scheme contributions - This is an easy way to make your money work harder and a great way to boost pension savings without having to dig any deeper into your pocket.
- Holiday entitlement - 30 days per year plus Bank Holidays (pro rata for part-time employees).
- Moving House - The Charity allows one day's paid leave for moving house.
- Family Friendly Policy and Attendance at NCT Antenatal Classes - NCT has a Family Friendly Policy, covering paid maternity, adoption, paternity and shared parental leave. In addition, we will pay for pregnant employees, and those employees whose wife/partner is pregnant, to attend an appropriate NCT antenatal course.
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) - A confidential and impartial service providing advice and support to employees and their families on a range of matters including: health, medical information, bereavement and stress counselling, legal matters and personal relationships including marriage guidance. Up to 5 x 1:1 counselling sessions can be organised via the confidential helpline.
- Life Assurance - NCT has a Life Assurance scheme that protects family and financial dependents in the event of your death. The benefit payable is a lump sum of three times their basic annual salary. In addition to the core benefits of the scheme itself, members are also entitled to free access to a BUPA helpline and discounts on a number of services and products. Certain conditions apply, please refer to the scheme details document for further information.
- Cycle-to-Work scheme - A cycle-to-work scheme enables employee to purchase a bicycle through a monthly 'Salary Sacrifice' scheme similar to the one outlined above relating to pension contributions. Employees will make a monthly sacrifice from their gross salary which enables them to make savings in income tax and national insurance contributions.
- Season Ticket Loan - This is a loan for the cost of a season ticket for bus, train or tube. An interest-free salary advance is repaid monthly by deduction from salary.



How to apply

We hope you will consider making an application. If you have questions about the appointment and would find it helpful to have an informal conversation, please contact Hayley.Woods@starfishsearch.com and we will be happy to arrange a call. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/nct-dir-ops/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A supporting statement (no more than two sides) that sets out why you think this role is the right move for you and how you meet the knowledge and experience criteria.

We would also be grateful if you would also complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Closing date: Friday 23rd December 2022

Preliminary interviews: w/c 9th and 16th January 2023

Final Panel interviews: End of w/c 23rd January 2023 or 30th January 2023

