

CANDIDATE PACK FOR CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER



the
CHURCHILL
fellowship



WELCOME

The Churchill Fellowship is a unique community of changemakers, united by a mission to learn from the world and transform lives across the UK. Our Fellows are exceptional individuals who bring their own lived or learned experience to some of society's most pressing challenges. Each year we award around 100 Churchill Fellowships to individuals, helping them to discover new solutions, exchange ideas, and create impact that reaches across communities, sectors and generations.

As our reach and influence continue to grow, it is vital that our own organisation is as strong, resilient and forward-looking as the people we support. The Chief Operating Officer will be central to this: ensuring our governance, finance, operations, digital infrastructure and compliance frameworks are robust, effective and future-focused, enabling us to deliver our mission with confidence and ambition.

We are seeking a proven leader who can bring both strategic vision and operational excellence and help support us through a period of growth and change. The successful candidate will combine strong financial acumen with expertise across governance, risk and compliance, while also driving digital and operational innovation. Equally important will be your ability to foster a collaborative, inclusive and values-driven culture, working closely with me, our Leadership Team and our Trustees.

It's an exciting time to join us as we celebrate our 60th anniversary and all that has been achieved over six decades. We are looking ahead to the next chapter of the Fellowship with an appeal to raise funds for a new grant programme, The Activate Fund. This Fund will support Fellows to translate their global learning into UK impact.

If you share our belief in the power and potential of individuals to transform society and are excited by the challenge of equipping our organisation to enable that transformation, we would be delighted to hear from you.



Julia Weston
Chief Executive



ABOUT US

The Churchill Fellowship is a community of changemakers whose mission is to learn from the world and transform lives across the UK and this role is pivotal to our work.

We support outstanding individuals pursuing their own vision for change in an issue where they have first-hand experience. They are driven by a personal commitment to tackle today's key issues, to develop new solutions for their communities and sectors, and to exchange ideas throughout the UK and beyond. They work across all of today's most pressing challenges, from protecting the environment to preventing domestic abuse, from increasing youth employment to enriching urban spaces and much more. Collectively, they create change that reaches across the country.

Every year we select over 100 new Fellows and fund them to spend up to two months discovering new approaches around the world for practical issues they care passionately about. Fellowships cover every aspect of UK life because our approach is universal, responsive and inclusive. We respond to emerging trends and challenges and our Fellowships are open to all UK adults regardless of qualifications, background or age. Fellows propose their own projects for research and action and bring their lived or learned experience of their chosen subject. We believe in the power and potential of individuals and prioritise people and topics that would not be funded elsewhere.

This inclusive approach gives the Fellowship a unique range and authority and has created a powerful model for change, based on real needs, frontline insight and personal dedication. It offers dynamic individuals the recognition, funding and support to pursue what is often their mission of a lifetime.

The Fellowship was created by public donation in 1965 as the living legacy of Sir Winston Churchill. Since then, we have made over 6000 grants to inspiring individuals who possess the passion and commitment to make a real difference. Many Fellows become knowledge leaders and influencers for the long term and continue to feel the beneficial effects of the Fellowship decades after being awarded.

OUR ORGANISATIONAL VALUES

We live by our organisational values which we use to guide decision making and behaviours across the organisation. These are:

Inclusivity

We welcome everyone who is working to benefit society into our community. We know there is strength in diversity and are committed to equity across all of our activities. We celebrate individuality and are proud to support people on their own terms.

Investment in people

We aim to empower everyone in our community. Our investment supports people to believe in their ability and achieve their potential. We believe the possibilities for development are unlimited and we invest in people who are dedicated to building a better society.

Appreciation

We recognise the importance of people and their potential. We place trust in the members of our community and their ability to utilise their expertise and knowledge. We value the opinions of others and create a positive environment for people to share.

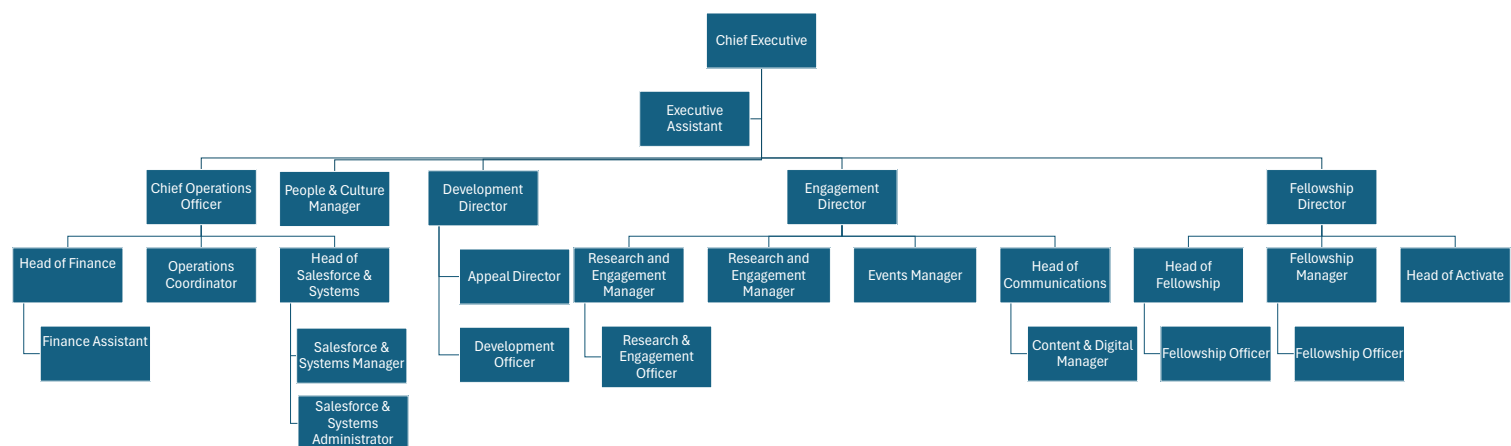
Collaboration

We thrive on collaboration and supportive relationships. We continue to build our community and promote long-term partnerships and connections. We appreciate the importance of our networks and how these can contribute to change.

Creativity

Our approach is to listen, learn and improve. We adapt to change and build on what we discover. We have a responsibility to learn from the world in order to improve society.

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE



To view the chart in a larger format please [click here](#).



JOB DESCRIPTION

Title of Role:	Chief Operating Officer (COO)
Location:	Westminster / Hybrid
Contract:	Fulltime, 36.5 hours per week, Permanent
Salary:	£85,000 per annum
Reporting to:	Chief Executive
Direct Reports:	Head of Finance, Head of Salesforce & Systems, Operations Co-ordinator
Key relationships:	CEO, Senior Leadership Team, Chair of Board, Chair of Audit, Risk and Governance Subcommittee, Chair of Investment Subcommittee.

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE:

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) is a senior strategic and operational leadership role, responsible for ensuring that the organisation has the robust internal operations, systems, and governance frameworks it needs to thrive. The COO has responsibility for finance, governance, compliance, risk, facilities, digital infrastructure, and data management.

Working closely with the Chief Executive and wider Senior Leadership Team, the COO will drive operational excellence, champion continuous improvement, and ensure the organisation meets all regulatory and statutory obligations, enabling teams to deliver the charity's purpose effectively.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

Strategic Leadership & Operational Planning

- Serve as a core member of the Senior Leadership Team:
 - Play an active role in the leadership of the charity.
 - Promote and role-model The Churchill Fellowship's (TCF's) organisational values.
 - Foster an open, respectful and collaborative working culture.
- Actively contribute to the development and promotion of TCF's strategic direction. Work in close partnership with the Chief Executive, SLT and Trustees to implement the organisation's strategy.
- Lead the organisation's business planning and forecasting processes, ensuring they are robust, and aligned to long-term goals.
- Drive the organisation's environmental sustainability agenda by translating our commitment into practical systems, policies, and operational processes.

Finance & Accounting

- Working closely with the Head of Finance provide executive level stewardship of the organisation's financial position
- Responsible for the charity's financial strategies, forecasts, and reports, ensuring alignment with organisational objectives and long-term planning.
- Support the preparation and effective presentation of quarterly management accounts and board level financial insights.
- Working closely with the Head of Finance, oversee the external audit process and the production of annual reports, ensuring compliance with all statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Maintain relationships with the organisation's investment managers, banking partners and external auditors
- Ensure internal financial controls, policies, and risk management frameworks are in place and operating effectively, including due diligence policies, processes and documentation for grant awards.

Governance, Risk & Compliance

- Serve as Secretary to the Board of Trustees, the Investment Subcommittee, and the Audit, Risk and Governance Subcommittee.
- Ensure full compliance with the law where it is relevant to TCF, and Charity Commission regulations, actively monitoring legislative developments and advising the Chief Executive and Trustees promptly on their operational impact.
- Responsible for reviewing all contracts and financial agreements with third parties, ensuring adherence to legal and organisational standards.
- Lead the ongoing development and dynamic management of TCF's risk register in partnership with the Chief Executive and Leadership Team, enabling informed decision-making and effective risk mitigation by Trustees and Executive leadership.
- Responsible for ensuring TCF is appropriately insured in line with legislation, best practice and the charity's risk profiles.
- Responsible for maintaining rigorous internal control frameworks to underpin operational integrity and compliance excellence.
- Cultivate and embed a culture of proactive governance, risk awareness, and accountability at every level of the organisation.

Data, GDPR & Digital Infrastructure

- Working closely with the Head of Salesforce and Systems, ensure TCF leverages current and emerging technologies to drive continuous operational improvement and organisational effectiveness.
- Provide directional management for all aspects of data management, including data quality, integrity, and governance frameworks, to support informed decision-making and regulatory compliance.
- Serve as TCF's Data Protection Officer, ensuring full GDPR compliance and embedding data privacy best practices throughout the organisation.
- Responsible for ensuring robust cybersecurity policies and controls, safeguarding TCF's digital assets and information systems against evolving threats.
- Responsible for ensuring TCF has effective business continuity and disaster recovery plans, in place to maintain organisational resilience in the face of operational disruptions.

Facilities, IT & Operational Infrastructure

- Ensure the organisation's facilities remain fit for purpose, secure, and compliant with lease terms, working closely with landlords and facilities providers to address any issues promptly.
- Lead the management of relationships with external facilities providers, including proactive day-to-day engagement with our landlord's facilities team to ensure service quality and responsiveness.
- Responsible for ensuring procurement, supplier contracts, and service-level agreements related to both facilities and IT services, deliver value for money, compliance, and alignment with organisational needs.
- Ensure health and safety compliance is rigorously maintained, proactively managing operational risks and fostering a safe and secure working environment for all staff.
- Manage the relationships with external IT support providers, regularly reviewing service performance and ensuring reliable IT infrastructure is in place to support TCF's operations.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

QUALIFICATIONS

- Degree level or equivalent experience (essential)
- Finance/accounting qualification (desirable)

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

- Financial acumen: ability to oversee budgets, interpret financial data, and communicate financial matters to SLT and Trustees
- In-depth knowledge of governance frameworks, regulatory compliance, and risk management
- Experience with company secretarial duties and supporting Board governance
- Knowledge of charity law, company law, GDPR, and related legislation
- Expertise in organisational risk management frameworks and internal controls
- Experience managing supplier and service provider relationships, including IT and facilities management
- Leadership in digital strategy, data governance, GDPR compliance, and cybersecurity
- Business continuity planning and operational resilience knowledge
- Understanding of environmental sustainability and operational implementation

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Strategic and analytical thinking with sound judgment
- Ability to translate strategy into effective plans, systems, and operational processes
- Strong leadership, influencing, and communication skills at all organisational levels
- Skilled in project and change management methodologies
- Procurement, contract negotiation, and vendor management skills (desirable)

STYLES AND BEHAVIOURS

- A great team player with a pro-active, confident, and positive approach and the ability to contribute to a culture of collaborative working
- Demonstrates a coaching approach to line management to support team development
- Demonstrates tact, diplomacy, and emotional intelligence, maintaining professionalism and good humour in all interactions
- Unwavering commitment to confidentiality, data integrity, and ethical standards
- Alignment with TCF's values, mission, purpose and dedication to equity and inclusion
- Passionate about personal excellence, with a growth mindset focused on continuous learning, development, and driving organisational improvement.

WORKING FOR THE CHURCHILL FELLOWSHIP

Detailed package, benefits and wellbeing package:

- Salary c.£85,000
- Hybrid working policy (2-3 days a week in the office for Senior Leadership)
- 5 weeks holiday a year, with additional paid leave if the office closes over the Christmas Break
- Paid leave for volunteering
- Enhanced pension scheme, with 10% employer contribution
- Enhanced maternity, paternity and adoption leave and pay after 2 years of service
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Life Assurance
- Bike purchase salary sacrifice scheme (Cycle2Work)

Standard working hours are 36.5 hours a week 9.30am until 5.00pm, Monday to Thursday and from 9.30am until 4.00pm on Friday, including a paid lunch break of one hour.

We have embraced the benefits of working from home and at the same time, we value the contribution of face-to-face contact in building teamwork, collaborating with your colleagues, exchanging ideas and know-how, and for work efficiency. We therefore operate a hybrid working arrangement, where staff can work from home if they wish, however everyone is required to work in the office a minimum of 1-2 days a week with Tuesdays as the core day for regular whole team meetings.

Senior Leadership is expected to be in the office at least 2 days a week, this may occasionally be more depending on meetings and activities. The current regular office days for Senior Leadership are Tuesdays and Thursdays, we do however reserve the right to amend this from time to time to reflect the needs of the Organisation.

Note: unfortunately, we are not currently in a position to offer sponsorship for visas and all applicants will need to have, and be able to prove, the right to work in the UK.

Equity, diversity and inclusion are core to the values and ethos of the charity's work across all activities. The Churchill Fellowship is committed to being an inclusive employer with a diverse workforce. We encourage applications from people from the widest possible diversity of backgrounds, cultures and experiences. Our office accommodation is accessible.



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 Chris Milo at chris.milo@starfishsearch.com and we will be happy to arrange a call. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/churchill-fellowship-coo/> 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 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 10th October 2025

Preliminary interviews: Monday 27th October 2025

Final Panel interviews: Monday 17th and Tuesday 18th November 2025

