



Environmental Defenders Office

Chief Financial Officer / Chief Operating Officer | Position Description

Job Title:	Chief Financial Officer / Chief Operating Officer
Reporting to:	Chief Executive Officer
Direct Reports:	Financial Controller, Senior IT Manager, Head of Accreditation & Compliance

EDO is entering a period of strategic repositioning that will shape its next five years — sharpening where and how it delivers impact, growing and diversifying revenue, and modernising its systems and operating model. This role is central to that agenda, ensuring financial strategy, sustainability, and efficiency.

Position Overview & Purpose

The CFO/COO (The Director) is a critical member of the executive leadership team, providing strategic leadership across financial governance and strategy, and IT performance and opportunities. Reporting to the CEO and working in close partnership with the Board, the Director will shape and execute financial strategies that underpin sustainable growth, strengthen organisational resilience, and maximise EDO's capacity to deliver lasting social impact.

The role has enterprise-wide responsibility for financial governance, compliance, financial strategy and donor grant acquittals, enterprise risk, company secretarial and statutory compliance, and the organisation's digital finance transformation. The successful executive will ensure robust financial controls and governance while building contemporary financial systems, processes, and reporting capabilities that provide real-time insights to support strategic decision-making.

A key mandate is to enhance financial sustainability and operational effectiveness by improving financial visibility, mitigating organisational and financial risk, and identifying opportunities for innovation and growth. The Director will also lead the evaluation of new revenue opportunities, drive continuous improvement across finance and business systems, and provide trusted strategic counsel to the CEO and Board to ensure the organisation remains financially strong, compliant, and well positioned to achieve its strategic goals.

The Director will also oversee EDO's approach to IT, and particularly the development of a strategy in relation to the use of AI. The Director will have organisational accountability for Workplace Health & Safety and the EDO Volunteer Program.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Financial Leadership

- Develop and execute the organisation's financial strategy to support the mission, strategic priorities, and long-term sustainability.
- Serve as a trusted strategic adviser to the CEO, Executive Leadership Team and Board, providing high-quality financial insight to inform strategic and operational decision-making.



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- Lead enterprise-wide financial planning, including annual budgets, rolling forecasts, long-term financial modelling, and scenario analysis.
- Drive financial performance through robust business partnering, investment analysis, return on investment (ROI) assessments, and performance reporting.
- Evaluate, appraise and structure new and alternative sources of funding — including impact investment, litigation funding, social enterprise, commercial partnerships and commercial ventures — applying disciplined business-case and gate-review governance.
- Strengthen organisational financial resilience through effective treasury management, liquidity planning, cash flow optimisation and investment oversight.
- Oversee diversified funding streams, including government grants, corporate partnerships and philanthropic income, ensuring financial sustainability and compliance.
- Deliver timely, accurate and insightful financial reporting, including management accounts, statutory reporting, Board papers and external reporting requirements.
- Foster a culture of financial accountability, commercial thinking and continuous improvement across the organisation.

Financial Operations, Systems & Innovation

- Lead the delivery of efficient, effective, and scalable finance operations that support organisational growth and operational excellence.
- Modernise finance systems, including ERP platforms, forecasting tools, and grant management solutions.
- Leverage data analytics, automation, and digital technologies to improve financial insights, operational efficiency, and organisational decision-making.
- Ensure financial systems, processes and controls deliver accuracy, transparency and timely reporting while reducing organisational risk.
- Champion continuous improvement initiatives that simplify processes and enhance organisational capability.

Governance, Risk & Compliance

- Ensure compliance with all statutory, regulatory and donor requirements, including Australian accounting standards, taxation obligations, and funding agreements.
- Lead fund accounting and grant management including donor acquittals
- Maintain a strong financial governance framework supported by effective internal controls, policies, delegated authorities, and risk management practices.
- Lead the organisation's external audit process and oversee relationships with auditors, banking partners, and other key financial stakeholders.
- Own the enterprise risk management framework — identifying and mitigating financial, fraud and operational risks, implementing mitigation strategies and embedding sound governance practices.
- Provide expert financial advice to the Board and relevant Board Committees, including Risk and Finance Committees, and contribute to broader organisational governance.
- Oversee fraud and anti-corruption controls and the organisation's insurance program.



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Operations

- Oversee EDO's volunteer program, including program strategy, governance, recruitment, onboarding, supervision frameworks, engagement initiatives and ongoing program and performance evaluation to ensure alignment with organisational objectives and operational requirements.
- Oversee EDO's work health and safety framework, ensuring effective WHS governance, risk management, compliance and continuous improvement to support a safe and healthy workplace.

People Leadership & Organisational Partnership

- Lead, mentor and develop high-performing Finance, Operations, and IT teams, fostering collaboration, accountability, innovation and continuous professional development.
- Communicating effectively to Board and Management.
- Build financial capability across the organisation through effective business partnering, coaching and support to leaders and country-office finance teams across our Asia-Pacific operations.
- Collaborate across functions to ensure financial management supports strategic priorities, operational delivery, and organisational impact.
- Influence and enable organisational change by promoting data-driven decision-making and effective financial stewardship.
- Foster strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders to strengthen organisational performance, accountability, and sustainable growth.

Selection Criteria

The right person may come from a commercial, corporate or professional-services background as readily as a not-for-profit one; what matters most is financial leadership, sound judgement and genuine alignment with our mission for environmental justice.

Essential

- Tertiary qualifications in Accounting, Commerce, Finance or related discipline.
- Membership of a recognised professional accounting body (CA ANZ or CPA Australia) with current accreditation.
- Demonstrated experience in a senior financial leadership role, providing strategic financial direction within a complex organisation and contributing as a trusted adviser to the Chief Executive Officer, Executive Leadership Team and Board.
- Proven ability to develop and implement financial strategies that support organisational objectives, including leading budgeting, long-term financial planning, forecasting, treasury management, investment oversight and business case development to enable informed decision-making.
- Extensive knowledge of financial management, accounting standards, statutory reporting, taxation, treasury, financial modelling, cash flow management and financial analysis, with a demonstrated ability to deliver accurate, timely and insightful financial reporting.



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- Demonstrated experience establishing and maintaining strong governance frameworks, internal controls and enterprise risk management practices, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation, accounting standards, donor requirements and regulatory obligations.
- Experience leading finance transformation initiatives, including implementation or optimisation of enterprise financial systems, digital technologies and data analytics to improve organisational performance, efficiency and decision-making.
- A proven track record of building, leading and developing high-performing teams through coaching, mentoring and performance leadership, while fostering a culture of accountability, collaboration, innovation and continuous improvement.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills and strong analytical, critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Experience in managing Operations and IT functions and in developing strategies for AI usage.
- Exposure to alternative and innovative financing — such as impact bonds, impact investment, or social enterprise — and developing new revenue models within a purpose-driven organisation.

Desirable

- Experience managing government funding.
- Sage Intacct experience.

Key Relationships

Internal: CEO; Executive Leadership Team; the Board and relevant Board committees; fundraising and supporter relations; programs; finance and risk; and people and culture.

Commitment to EDO's Values and Cultural Pillars:

All employees are expected to contribute to a workplace culture that reflects EDO's values and cultural pillars through their actions, behaviours and decision-making.



Thriving People & Professional Excellence

- Demonstrates professionalism, accountability, and commitment to continuous learning.
- Contributes to a safe, respectful, and supportive workplace where people can thrive.
- Delivers high-quality work and seeks opportunities to develop capability and expertise.



Shared Direction & Courageous Action

- Works collaboratively toward shared organisational goals and purpose.
- Demonstrates initiative, adaptability, and courage in addressing challenges and opportunities.
- Supports innovation and contributes positively to organisational change.



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Grounded in Clarity, Strengthened by Trust, Driven by Ownership

- Acts with integrity, transparency, and accountability.
- Builds trust through respectful communication and follow-through on commitments.
- Takes ownership of responsibilities and contributes to effective decision-making.



Inclusive Impact

- Values and respects diverse perspectives, backgrounds and lived experiences.
- Demonstrates cultural competence and contributes to a culturally safe and inclusive workplace.
- Supports EDO's commitment to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, including meaningful engagement with First Nations peoples and communities.



Purposeful Joy

- Contributes to a positive, connected, and respectful workplace culture.
- Supports the wellbeing of colleagues and celebrates achievements and contributions.
- Brings enthusiasm, curiosity and optimism to their work.

Supporting EDO Values

- Commitment – Working together to achieve environmental justice and positive outcomes for communities.
- Diversity – Respecting and valuing differences, inclusion and cultural safety.
- Integrity – Acting ethically, professionally and with accountability.
- Visionary – Embracing innovation, creativity and continuous improvement.