



CHIEF STRATEGY & OPERATING OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTION

BASIC INFORMATION

Job Title: Chief Strategy & Operating Officer

Status: Full Time, Exempt

Place of Performance: Hybrid (T/Th in office);
Seattle, Washington

Travel Requirements: Limited (10%) overnight travel

Supervisor: Chief Executive Officer

Direct Reports: Director of Communications; Director of Finance; Operations Manager; Human Resources staff

POSITION SUMMARY

Why Washington STEM

Young people grow up in Washington surrounded by a thriving economy, where 70% of high-demand jobs require science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) skills. However, not all students - especially students of color, girls, and those living in poverty, and rural areas - have access to the STEM education that prepares them for these jobs. Through collective action and policy change, we're transforming Washington's education system so all students can leverage STEM for economic and civic health and lifelong learning. Our vision is to create an equitable cradle-to-career STEM education that nurtures students' aspirations and empowers them to lead a thriving society. Do you share this vision?

This Position

Strategist. Chief Culture Carrier. Executive-Level Leader. Operations Expert.

That's the profile for our next Chief Strategy & Operating Officer (CSOO). Supported by a high-functioning staff, strong executive team, and committed board, the next CSOO will have the opportunity to help lead the organization and make a statewide impact on our cradle-to-career education system.

A successful candidate will be a seasoned executive who has a proven track record in leading organizations with empathy, curiosity, inspiration, and fairness. This person will be responsible for leading the execution of our ambitious strategic plan. They will align with the CEO's vision but also be impartial and provide sound thought partnership. As a systems-level leader, they will understand how operations support the advancement of our mission. Acting as a proxy for the CEO, the CSOO will lead the internal rhythm of business for the organization and ensure alignment across divisions. As an executive team member, this position will be responsible for representing the organization's best interest in terms of culture, finances, and reputation. As a key culture carrier, the CSOO will model high integrity, accountability, empathy, and respect.

The CSOO will lead a talented team of eight, accountable for the organization's financial health, culture, human resource practices, internal and external communications, grants and vendor compliance, and operations (IT, facilities, legal, office management, and project management). They will uphold an organizational culture grounded in equity, trust, and transparency, and will lead with clear communication. The CSOO will employ sophisticated approaches to people management that include accountability, mentorship, and direct feedback. They must possess strong business acumen to drive strategy and ensure Washington STEM meets its strategic planning goals.

If you are eager to foster a positive and inclusive environment for all staff, while overseeing organization-wide strategy and operations, and you have a proven track record in executive-level leadership, we are excited to hear from you!

Why Work With Us

As we work toward equitable STEM learning for all, we are looking for individuals who share our dedication to innovation, excellence, and mission-driven work through the lenses of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. If you want to be part of a diverse team with top-notch skills that is making significant changes at a systems level in Washington state, then we are your place.

At Washington STEM, we are invested in YOU! Our total compensation package ensures employees are paid competitively and feel valued as individuals. We are a people-first organization offering a hybrid work schedule, generous time-off policies, professional development opportunities, a robust benefits package, and co-workers who are smart, mission-driven, and fun to work with!

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- As an executive leader, ensure Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (JEDI), and belonging are at the center of how work is executed internally and externally. Hold peers accountable for JEDI practices.
- Partner with CEO and executive team to lead and execute the multi-year strategic plan and associated annual goals and workplans.
- Lead and mentor all staff across departments while ensuring psychological safety and a supportive, thriving culture rooted in JEDI principles.
- Oversee financial management, HR practices, grants and vendor management, IT, and communications strategies to optimize organizational performance.
- Cultivate and maintain both internal and external relationships that align with our mission, understanding the intersections of partnerships, data, and advocacy.
- Drive strategic thinking and decision-making processes, across all departments, to shape the organization's future, balancing analytical and emotional intelligence.
- Model ingenuity in leading the evaluation and development of cost-effective and efficient systems, processes, and relationships to maximize organizational success and impact
- Serve as a representative of the organization, exhibiting executive presence and engaging effectively with both staff and external stakeholders.
- Collaborate with staff, the organization's board, and external stakeholders to identify opportunities for growth and innovation both internally, across departments, and externally.
- Inspire a fun, committed, and thriving team culture that embraces challenges and celebrates successes.
- Be both a confident decision-maker and collaborator.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- Minimum 8 years' experience as an executive, ideally leading nonprofit operations, finance, or strategy.
- Proven commitment to leading an inclusive and psychologically safe workplace.
- Action-oriented - enjoys working hard and looks for challenges; can overcome resistance to leadership and take unpopular stands when necessary.
- Successful leadership and management experience
- Strong executive presence and ability to influence board, funders, and partners.
- Experience leading strategy development against complex goals, business and financial modeling and analysis, and design and use of performance measurement and management systems and tools.
- Experience with grants management, accounting, human resources, DEI, and technology-enabled operational processes.
- Experience negotiating and managing contracts
- Experience collaborating across high-functioning teams
- MBA, graduate, or bachelor's degree in finance, human resources, business administration, operations management, nonprofit management, or relevant field (or equivalent employment and learning experience).

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

- Excellent interpersonal skills with a focus on mentorship, empathy, and ethical decision-making.
- A strategic thinker with the ability to translate complex concepts into actionable plans
- Be a systems-level thinker. See the bigger picture, while understanding how different parts interact and influence each other.
- Be a long-term strategist but also drive for results through tactical execution.
- Able to move controversial and/or differing opinions to consensus with professionalism and grace.
- A high level of business acumen including GAAP principles and budget management and adherence.
- Demonstrated ability to lead, develop, and support high-performing boards and teams.
- Able to uphold ethical standards and foster a diverse and inclusive workplace.
- Strong alignment with our organizational mission and values.
- Entrepreneurial mindset and the ability to be flexible and responsive to changing priorities.
- Strong project management and organizational skills with a record of developing and strengthening systems and processes.
- High-level of proficiency with Microsoft Office (Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and SharePoint), Adobe (Acrobat DC), and Abila MIP Fund Accounting or other accounting software preferred.
- Ability to periodically participate in meetings and events outside of core business hours.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job:

- Able to operate a computer and other office productivity equipment; able to remain stationary at a computer for extended periods of time and move around assigned workspace.
- Ability to work in open office format. Washington STEM's office design is an open format and the noise level in the work environment is typically low to moderate.

BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION

- Health, dental, vision, Rx, short-term disability, long-term disability, and life insurance.
- Paid Time Off at an accrual rate of 6.462 hours per payroll, with accrual rate increasing with tenure
- 17 Paid holidays, including one week at the end of each calendar year
- Matching 401(k)
- Medical, dependent care, and transportation flexible spending accounts
- Cell phone reimbursement
- Mileage reimbursement for work-related travel beyond the normal commute
- This position is an outstanding opportunity for a highly motivated leader to assume a pivotal role in the continued evolution of a fast-growing, highly respected organization. As such, compensation for this role is competitive. The starting salary will be commensurate with the candidate's experience. The salary range is \$152,879 - \$186,851.

HOW TO APPLY

Washington STEM is a proud equal opportunity employer committed to an inclusive work environment and to building a team that reflects the rich diversity of our community. People of color, people with disabilities, and people of diverse sexual orientations, gender expressions, and identities are encouraged to apply.

To apply, please submit your resume and a cover letter. Your cover letter should express your specific interest in this role and should include a statement about your personal commitment to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Please submit this information to hr@washingtonstem.org. Application materials will be accepted and reviewed until the position is filled. If the position is visible on our website, it remains open.