



Finance Director Recruitment Pack

Job Description: Finance Director



Contract

Full-time, permanent
(We welcome proposals for flexible working arrangements)

Salary

£55k per annum

Background

The Edinburgh International Book Festival is a charity which has been bringing outstanding writers and thinkers from around the world together with curious audiences for over forty years. We celebrate the power of words, examine pressing issues, shift perspectives, and create joyful experiences for those of all ages. Our programme sparks essential conversations about the world around us, our place in it, and how we can improve it, together. Making these discussions accessible to anyone is at the heart of everything we do.

Each August we present 600 events for children and families, young adults, and adults, as well as delivering year-round community activities. Our event formats include conversations, workshops, performances, storytelling sessions, exhibitions, and podcast recordings, and also extend to shared meals, book clubs, wine tastings, and crafting sessions.

Here, a book is a beginning – of a conversation, of a better understanding, of a debate, of a memory. What happens next is up to you.

The team

The Book Festival has a permanent staff of 28 throughout the year, expanding over the spring and summer to a peak of around 150 staff during the Festival. All staff members play a role in the ongoing development of the organisation through several full team planning and debrief meetings during the year.

This is a newly created role with senior management responsibility within the organization, reporting to the Chief Executive, and with dotted line reporting to the Board's Audit and Risk Committee.

The Senior Management Team is made up of Directors of Operations (currently recruiting), Programming, Communities, Development, and Brand & Audiences.

The Finance Director is supported by a permanent Finance Officer.

Over the course of the year, a number of seasonal and freelance members of staff join the wider team to deliver specific projects, some of whom may be managed by the Finance Director. Further details of these are included below.

The role

This is a newly created role, with responsibility for financial management owned previously by the Executive Director, supported by the Head of Finance & Operations. In the refreshed structure operational and finance functions are separated.

The purpose of this role is to ensure the organisation is financially sustainable, well-governed, and able to deliver its mission effectively. You will lead the financial management of the organisation, ensuring robust financial control, high-quality reporting, and effective financial planning to support strategic decision-making and long-term sustainability. This is a hands-on, collaborative role in a busy team, spanning both strategic and operational finance.

Being a success in this role will essentially balance three things at the same time:

1. **Financial stability, control and risk management**
2. **Artistic and charitable ambition**
3. **Long-term organisational resilience and sustainable growth**

Over the last two years the Festival has refreshed a number of our platforms and ways of working, including updating our CRM, ticketing and finance systems (Xero). We have worked with an external consultancy firm who have reviewed our systems and processes in finance and recommended new approaches; we are seeking a financial leader who can continue to progress this transformation, embedding new systems and ways of working across the team, while managing the busy annual BAU finance operations. We are in year two of a refreshed Strategic Plan, with a focus on building organisational resilience, maximising income and building new revenue streams; our new Finance Director will play a key role in realising these ambitions.

The role will be the key liaison with the Audit & Risk Committee of the Board of Trustees.

Key responsibilities

Financial leadership

Ownership of:

- Annual budgeting and reforecasting
- Multi-year financial planning
- Cash flow management
- Management accounts and Board reporting
- Audit preparation and statutory accounts
- Charity compliance and governance
- Financial controls and risk management
- Financial Governance frameworks including liaison with Audit and Risk Committee and Board engagement

Financial reporting and insight

- Prepare accurate monthly management accounts and financial reports
- Oversee annual budgets for Festival activity, year-round programmes, and operational functions
- Lead the preparation of statutory accounts and annual audit processes
- Ensure effective financial controls, procedures, and reporting systems are in place
- Ad hoc financial modelling to inform decisions around specific proposals or opportunities
- Oversee payroll, pensions, VAT, banking, and treasury functions
- Ensure timely and accurate financial reporting to funders, regulators, and trustees

Festival and programme support

- Work collaboratively with wider teams to support Festival delivery
- Provide financial oversight of festival budgets, contracts, and event expenditure
- Work with teams to monitor and maximise income streams (including ticket modelling), and to manage project expenditure
- Work with the team to explore new avenues for opportunity for the Festival. including commercial growth
- Support financial planning for new initiatives, partnerships, and audience development activity
- Balance artistic ambition with financial sustainability

Sustainability and development support

- Support the development of funding applications and project budgets
- Monitor restricted and unrestricted funds
- Ensure compliance with grant conditions and reporting requirements

- Work with Fundraising and Development colleagues on income diversification strategies and forecasting
- Support financial reporting to funders and sponsors
- Support scenario planning and long-term financial strategy

Systems & data (ownership of integrity)

- Work with the Operations Director to implement and embed newly adopted systems, processes, and ways of working
- Own financial systems (Xero and related tools)
- Hold overall accountability for financial data integrity across the organisation
- Lead financial aspects of integration with Spektrix and Artifax
- Work with the Operations Director to ensure consistency between financial, CRM, and operational data to drive one version of the truth

Compliance, governance and risk management

- Ensure compliance with charity law, company law, and financial regulations
- Act as Company Secretary and support reporting requirements for Companies, House, OSCAR and other funding bodies (for example, Creative Scotland)
- Ensure compliance with Charity SORP accounting standards
- Support governance processes including finance committee and board reporting
- Maintain organisational risk registers and support risk management planning
- Contribute to organisational policy development and review

Leadership and team management

- Lead and develop the finance function and associated staff
- Promote strong financial understanding across the organisation
- Support managers with budget monitoring and financial planning
- Contribute to a collaborative and inclusive organisational culture
- Act as a member of the senior leadership team

The successful candidate will possess the following:

Knowledge, skills and experience

Essential

- Qualified accountant (ACA, ACCA, CIMA, CIPFA or equivalent experience)
- Significant senior financial management experience including Xero accounting system

- Experience of budgeting, forecasting, and financial planning
- Experience preparing statutory accounts and managing audits
- Strong understanding of financial controls and governance
- Experience presenting financial information to boards or trustees
- Excellent communication and stakeholder management skills
- Ability to work strategically and operationally in a fast-paced environment

Desirable

- Experience working within the charity or cultural sector
- Knowledge of Charity SORP and charity accounting requirements
- Experience of grant funding and restricted fund management
- Experience working within festivals, arts organisations, or events
- Interest in literature, arts, education, or public engagement

Personal attributes:

The Director of Finance is expected to:

- Support the organisation's charitable mission and artistic ambitions
- Demonstrate integrity, accountability, and professionalism
- Work collaboratively and inclusively across teams
- Communicate financial information clearly to non-finance colleagues
- Balance strategic thinking with practical delivery
- Work flexibly and with agility, balancing the Festival's annual rhythm and pressure points with year-round requirements
- Promote a positive and solutions-focused approach to problem-solving

Success measures

Success in the role will include:

- Strong financial sustainability and cash flow management
- Accurate and timely financial reporting
- Successful audits and regulatory compliance
- Effective support for festival delivery and organisational strategy
- Improved financial systems and processes
- Positive relationships with colleagues, trustees, funders, and stakeholders
- Organisational resilience, sustainable growth

Staff wellbeing

The Book Festival has an open and active staff wellbeing culture and is committed to making everyone in our team feel safe, welcome, and included. An Employee Assistance Package is available which offers a variety of levels of counselling, one-to-one personal support and resilience tools, along with personal legal and financial advice and family support. Several of our team have chosen to be trained in First Aid for Mental Health and our Safer Spaces Policy actively promotes a culture where everyone's experience (staff, artists, partners and audiences) is valued, and no one is made to feel unsafe or excluded. We continue to reflect and consult with our team.

Terms and conditions

The post is based at our offices 121 George Street, Edinburgh and at the Festival site in Edinburgh Futures Institute during August. Normal hours of work are 9:30–5:30, Monday to Friday outwith Festival time. Additional hours are sometimes required during the Festival itself, with some long days and working up to six days a week. Flexible/hybrid working is welcomed – our team work from the office at least three days per week and are expected to discuss and agree their work patterns with their manager and team. Time off in lieu is given for days worked outside agreed working patterns.

Employees receive 34 days of paid holiday per annum pro rata including public holidays. Six days are used for the shutdown of the office over Christmas, as well as four of the public holidays - Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day, 2 January.

The salary for this position will be £55,000 per annum. The Book Festival will pay a contribution of 5% of salary into our approved, auto-enrolment pension scheme. Employees may make voluntary additional contributions through payroll.

Equal opportunities

The Edinburgh International Book Festival is an equal opportunities employer and a Real Living Wage employer. Our work is framed by a commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

The Book Festival is a working environment where everyone is treated fairly, and our differences are celebrated as strengths. We actively encourage applicants with diverse backgrounds and experiences to apply.

If you have any specific access requirements, please let us know and we will do our best to meet your needs.

How to apply

Please complete the online application using the links on our website:

<https://www.edbookfest.co.uk/about-us/jobs>

Please ensure you upload a **copy of your current CV** and an **application letter**. Your letter should outline your suitability for the post and why you wish to work at the Book Festival. You may include any other information to support your application.

If the job description doesn't answer your questions, or you would like to discuss the role further, please contact admin@edbookfest.co.uk in the first instance.

Closing date for applications: Monday 29th June 2026

Interviews will be held in central Edinburgh during the week of 6th July. Remote interview requests will be considered but in person is preferred.

The Edinburgh International Book Festival Ltd has its registered office at 121 George St Edinburgh and is a company limited by guarantee (SC079939) with charitable status (SCO10120).