Finance Assistant, Plum Village UK

Position Overview

Location: Hybrid, with a monthly in-person meeting in Oxfordshire and regular visits to the Being Peace Centre in Gloucestershire
Employment Type: Permanent, part time, 2.5 days per week (0.5 FTE)
Probation Period: 3 months
Salary: Band 2, £29,400–£34,650 FTE (£14,700–£17,325 for 2.5 days per week). Starting salary up to £32,025 FTE (£16,013 for 2.5 days), based on experience.
Application Deadline: 9am, Monday 7 December 2026

If you're interested in this role, but don't meet all the criteria, we'd still love to hear from you.

About Plum Village UK and the Being Peace Centre

Plum Village UK is a national charity dedicated to cultivating a culture of mindfulness, compassion, and ethical living. Guided by the teachings of Thich Nhat Hanh, we support individuals and communities of all backgrounds to experience the transformative power of Plum Village mindfulness. In response to the suffering of our time, we aim to nurture personal and collective transformation, contributing to a more just, peaceful, and sustainable society. We do this by sharing the teachings of Engaged Buddhism, supporting a growing network of practice groups, and offering courses, events, and retreats - online, in person, and at the new Being Peace Practice Centre in Abenhall, Gloucestershire which is home to a small resident, lay community.

With the centre now open, the charity's finances have grown in scale and complexity, with income coming from retreats, courses, book sales, donations, Gift Aid through several online payment platforms. A strong, reliable finance function is essential to supporting both the centre and PVUK's wider mission.

Role Purpose

As Finance Assistant for Plum Village UK, you will keep our day-to-day accounts accurate and up to date in Xero, so that the Finance Manager, trustees and the Centre Director can rely on clean ledgers, reconciled accounts and timely month-end figures.

You will own the purchase ledger and bank reconciliations, process income from our payment platforms, and be the first point of contact for supplier and finance queries. Working closely with the Finance Manager, you will help us maintain strong financial controls as the charity grows.

We hope you will bring care and steadiness to the work. Accurate, transparent finances are one of the ways we honour the trust and generosity of the community that supports us.

Key Responsibilities

Purchase ledger and payments

- Maintain the purchase ledger in Xero, including posting incoming purchase invoices received through Wise.
- Prepare supplier payments and set them up in online banking for authorisation by the Finance Manager or another authorised signatory.
- Set up new suppliers and verify any changes to bank details, to protect the charity against fraud.
- Process staff expense claims in line with our Travel and Expenses Policy, and reconcile purchase card spending each month.
- Correspond with suppliers and resolve finance queries, mainly by email.

Income, bank and donations

- Reconcile our bank accounts regularly.
- Post income from payment platforms such as Stripe, GoCardless and Square, and reconcile it to bank receipts.
- Record donations accurately, including restricted funds, and keep Gift Aid declarations up to date.
- Prepare Gift Aid claims for submission to HMRC.
- Respond to finance queries from donors, such as donation receipts and regular giving, working with the Director of Fundraising and Development.
- Raise sales invoices where needed and follow up outstanding amounts.

Month end and balance sheet

- Post journals for payroll, accruals, prepayments and depreciation.
- Prepare balance sheet reconciliations, such as deferred income for retreat bookings.
- Keep the fixed asset register up to date.
- Help maintain records of loans from supporters, including repayment schedules.

Supporting the Finance Manager

- Prepare monthly payroll and Nest pension payments for authorisation, and check payroll reports.
- Handle routine finance correspondence with Plum Village communities and partners, such as transfers between organisations.
- Help prepare year-end working papers and the annual accounts, and respond to queries from our accountants or independent examiner.

- Help prepare annual returns and filings to Companies House and the Charity Commission, for approval by the Finance Manager and trustees.
- Support VAT records, budget monitoring and management reporting as needed.
- Keep finance records and procedure notes well organised.
- Carry out general data entry and other finance tasks as required.

All staff follow our safeguarding, data protection and financial control procedures.

Person Specification

This role calls for accurate, reliable bookkeeping skills in Xero, combined with the personal qualities to work well on your own in a small, values-led charity. Shortlisting and interviews are based on the criteria below.

Essential: Technical skills and experience

- At least 18 months' recent experience of using Xero for day-to-day bookkeeping or accounts.
- Experience of maintaining a purchase ledger and reconciling bank accounts.
- Experience of posting journals, such as accruals, prepayments, payroll or depreciation.
- Good Excel skills, such as lookups, pivot tables and reconciling data sets.

Essential: Personal qualities

- Strong attention to detail and accuracy.
- Organised and reliable, able to manage your own workload and meet deadlines when working remotely.
- Clear, courteous written communication for resolving queries by email.
- Discretion in handling confidential financial and personal information.
- Able to attend a monthly in-person meeting in Oxfordshire.

Desirable: Values alignment

- Sympathy with PVUK's mission and values of mindfulness, compassion and ethical living, and an interest in the Plum Village tradition.
- Willingness to bring care, patience and kindness to everyday work and working relationships.
- Commitment to inclusive practice and to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion principles.
- Personal alignment with ecological and sustainable living principles.

Desirable: Qualifications and Experience

- Experience of charity finance, including restricted funds or deferred income.
- Experience of preparing or supporting Gift Aid claims.

- Experience of payment platforms such as Stripe, GoCardless, Square or Wise.
- AAT qualification, part-qualified ACCA or CIMA, or equivalent experience.
- Experience of supporting year-end accounts, payroll, VAT or charity annual returns.

Working Arrangements

Compensation and Benefits

- **Salary:** £29,400–£32,025 FTE (£14,700–£16,013 for 2.5 days per week), based on experience. We are committed to paying at least the Real Living Wage, and pay is reviewed each year.
- **Pension:** Real Living Pension scheme through Nest, with a 7% employer contribution and 5% employee contribution. You are enrolled after completing probation.
- **Annual Leave:** 33 days a year FTE including bank holidays, pro rata (16.5 days at 2.5 days per week). Up to 5 unused days can be carried forward.
- **Sick Pay:** Enhanced sick pay: full pay for the first 4 weeks and half pay for the next 4 weeks of absence in any rolling 12 months.
- **Meals:** Provided when working on site at the Being Peace Centre
- **Practice:** Opportunities to take part in practice, retreats and centre events.

Working Pattern

- 2.5 days per week (18.75 hours), with the working pattern agreed with the Finance Manager
- Hybrid, with a monthly in-person meetings in Oxfordshire and at the Being Peace Centre
- Some flexibility needed around month end and year end.

Reporting Structure

- **Reports to:** Finance Manager
- **Direct reports:** None
- **Works closely with:** Being Peace Centre Director and team, the Trustee Treasurer, Finance Sub-committee, the Director of Fundraising and Development, and our external accountants and payroll provider.

Application Process

How to Apply

Please submit the following by **9am on Monday 7 December 2026**:

1. A completed application form, answering each question.

2. A CV (you can upload this on the application form)
3. A completed equal opportunities monitoring form, which is kept separately and not seen by the panel.

Interviews will include a short practical Xero and Excel task, with details sent in advance.

If you're interested in this role, but don't meet all criteria, we'd still love to hear from you.

Selection Timeline

- **Application deadline:** 9am, Monday 7 December 2026
- **Shortlisted candidates contacted:** by Friday 11 December 2026
- **Interview dates:** w/c 14 December
- **Start date:** As soon as practical

Plum Village UK is committed to being a diverse and inclusive community. We welcome inquiries and applications from all suitably experienced individuals regardless of age, disability, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, relationship status and neurodiversity. Offers are subject to two satisfactory references and right to work checks.

If you need any clarification, support, or alternative methods to complete your application, please don't hesitate to contact us at **roles@plumvillage.uk**. We're here to help.

For further information about Plum Village UK and the Being Peace Centre please visit https://plumvillage.uk/ and www.beingpeace.uk.