

Job Description: Financial Controller (Ark and Ventures)

Reports to: Finance Director for Ark and Ventures

Location: Currently operating hybrid working in our West London Office

Contract: Permanent

Pattern: Full Time (standard hours 9am – 5.30pm)

Salary: £60,000 to £75,000 (depending on experience)

About the role:

This is a vital and high-profile role for us and requires a person with strong technical skills and the power of independent thought; meticulous organisational skills and attention to detail; and drive to constantly develop new and improved ways of working. The successful candidate will be a qualified and committed accountant, ready to lead financial control for Ark's central Finance team.

The Financial Controller will be mainly responsible for ensuring the highest standards of financial control are met across Ark, its subsidiaries and the various external ventures Ark supports. Within this, the role will be responsible for the processing and reporting of financial accounting data for Ark and its related entities, day-to-day cash flow management and compliant statutory returns (including VAT).

Key Responsibilities:

- Staff management including training and regular appraisals. The team consists of:
 - Two Finance Officers.
 - This role will also support two business partners and the finance director.
- Provide up-to-date financial information and technical advice to Ark management and the Venture teams, including cash management.
- Lead the year-end process, including creation of annual accounts for Ark and its related entities (excluding Ark Schools) and overseeing the audits.
- Submission of compliant VAT returns for Ark and its related entities.
- First review of monthly management accounts.

Financial

- Take responsibility for the year-end audit and preparation/supervision of draft statutory accounts for the Group and 5 subsidiary entities in accordance with Charities SORP, Companies Act and UK GAAP. Liaise with auditors and ensure timetable and deadlines are met.
- Management and oversight of the month-end process to ensure timely period close, including approval of all manual journals posted to the accounting system.
- Review and approval of balance sheets control account reconciliations, including bank reconciliation, petty cash, purchase ledger, staff loans, credit card, and PAYE/NICs.
- Preparation of all VAT returns, management of all VAT inspections and compliance matters.
- Complete Corporation Tax returns.
- Responsible for the day-to-day management of the Group's cash flow and Treasury and preparation of performance reports for the Ark Management Team and Finance and Risk Committee.
- Preparation of monthly investment ROI postings and reconciliation of the balance sheet position.

Internal Controls

- Responsible to the Ark and Ventures Finance Director in developing and maintaining an environment of robust financial control, and effective financial systems and processes.
- Set-up and maintenance of PS Financials (accounting system) and Concur (invoice and expense system), including maintaining workflows in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.
- Relationship owner for Lloyds (banker), including set-up of Commercial Banking Online and credit cards in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation. Responsible for maintaining all bank accounts and mandates.
- Responsibility for writing and maintaining finance policies and processes, including the financial Scheme of Delegation, and ensuring these are freely available to all relevant staff.
- Involved in planning and setup of replacement accounts system and purchase ledger system.

Other

- Liaising with the Ark Schools Financial Controller to ensure shared best practice throughout the Ark Family.
- Accounts Payable Lead ensuring all suppliers are paid on time. Responsible for processing weekly BACs runs and authorisations in line with the Scheme of Delegation.
- Manage insurance provision for the Ark Group.
- Ensure appropriate stewardship and accountability for public and charitable funding received.
- Support to the Finance Director for Ventures “spinning out” from Ark and/or Ark UK Programmes to become independent.
- To work on wider finance team tasks and any other additional duties as directed by the Ark and Ventures Finance Director.

Person Specification: Financial Controller (Ark and Ventures)

Qualifications

- Professional Accounting Qualification (at least 3-years post-qualification).
- Educated to degree level or equivalent.
- A record of Continuing Professional Development activities.

Knowledge & Skills

- Audit experience (essential).
- Hands on experience of producing statutory accounts (essential).
- Staff management (desirable).
- Knowledge of the latest Charities SORP and Companies Act (desirable).
- Experience of VAT, including international and/or construction industry scheme reverse charge, ideally in a charity context (essential).
- Understanding and/or experience of working across a Group structure with a variety of business activities.
- Advanced level IT skills and ability to make effective use of standard software packages, e.g. Excel, Microsoft Words, PowerPoint and Outlook (essential).
- Strong technical skills combined with a good grasp of service principles.
- Highly developed skills in using an accounts system such as PS Financials (desirable).
- Exceptional written and oral communication skills, influencing and relationship building skills at multiple levels.

Personal Qualities

- Self-motivated with excellent time-management skills and the ability to plan, manage and prioritise a varied workload, and to take responsibility for issues through to resolution.
- High attention to detail, proactive, confident, independent thinker and an enthusiastic 'can do' attitude.
- Flexible team player with demonstrable ability to use own initiative and work with minimum supervision.
- Ability to effectively present financial information at the appropriate level.
- Strong and supportive manager, capable of getting the best out of a team.
- Ability to challenge and influence assertively and cooperatively.
- Emphasis on the customer and delivering quality, remaining solution-focused within a fast-paced culture of change and continuous improvement.

Other

- Right to work in the UK.
- Commitment to equality of opportunity and the safeguarding and welfare of all students.
- Willingness to undertake training.
- This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.

Ark is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its academies. In order to meet this responsibility, its academies follow a rigorous selection process to discourage and screen out unsuitable applicants.

Ark requires all employees to undertake an enhanced DBS check. You are required, before appointment, to disclose any unspent conviction, cautions, reprimands or warnings under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Non-disclosure may lead to termination of employment. However, disclosure of a criminal background will not necessarily debar you from employment - this will depend upon the nature of the offence(s) and when they occurred. To read more about Ark's safer recruitment process, please click [this link](#).

We aim to build a diverse and inclusive organisation where everyone – staff and students – can do their best work and achieve their full potential. We want to reflect and represent diverse perspectives across our organisation because we know that doing so will make us stronger and more effective. To know more about Ark's diversity and inclusion commitments, please click on [this link](#).