

Job Description: Finance Director, Ark UK Programmes

Reports to: Managing Director, Ark UK Programmes (trading activities)

Location: West London (with flexible working available)

Contract: Permanent

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

Salary: £90,000

About the role:

We are looking for a strategic finance professional to join the senior leadership team of Ark UK Programmes and support the sustainable growth and development of our traded programmes. This is an exciting opportunity for someone with strong commercial experience who is passionate about our mission and motivated by how different funding models and blended finance can enable us to create social impact at scale.

Within this role you will work closely with the Group Finance team, which is responsible for all the group financial processing and reporting, and supported by a group financial controller. We are looking for someone who will bring a firm understanding of the drivers of income and expenditure to support effective decision making across our programmes, ensuring that financial sustainability and mission impact are considered together and influence every part of the organisational strategy. The Finance Director will own all the financial modelling underpinning this, managing forecasting and budgeting, and providing rapid and reliable assessments of the financial impact of business decisions.

This role requires a curious and commercially minded approach, using a strong grasp of the economics of our ventures to identify risks and opportunities and deepen organisational understanding of key metrics such as subscription renewals. Working closely with the Group Finance team, the Finance Director will ensure management reports provide an accurate view of performance and will oversee spend and income risks, ensuring corrective action is taken where needed. The role will also work closely with the Managing Director to develop new ventures, ensuring their underlying economics are sound.

Reporting directly into the Managing Director of Ark UK Programmes, this role will also have dotted line reporting into the Group CFO who oversees all Ark's financial activity, to ensure consistency and management of risk throughout the Ark Group.

Key Responsibilities:

- The financial performance of Ark UK Programmes, highlighting risks and issues to the Managing Director to ensure effective commercial decisions are promptly made
- Developing the strategic plans for Ark UK Programmes including forecasting and budgeting
- Developing a fully auditable, flexible financial model able to provide rapid and reliable answers about the impact of different decisions on the financial performance

Strategic Responsibility

- Responsible for the financial performance of Ark UK Programmes, highlighting risks and issues to the Managing Director to ensure effective commercial decisions are promptly made and ensuring attention is on the most important finance levers

- Preparation of Ark UK Programmes budgets and forecasts in line with the strategic objectives of Ark UK Programmes
- Working with the Managing Director and product strategy team on developing new ventures, conducting robust financial analysis to support decision making and fundraising applications
- Responsibility for highlighting any financial risks to the Managing Director and Group CFO

AC+ Financial Management & Reporting

- Working with the Group Finance Business Partner responsible for Ark UK Programmes to obtain relevant and accurate monthly Management Accounts in a format that supports sound financial management
- Present Management Accounts to the Ark UK Programmes senior leadership team
- Work with colleagues to ensure sales and financial reporting align and give a fair picture of income generation
- Responsible for compiling and presenting the quarterly report to the AC+ Programme Board
- Train the Ark UK Programmes team to understand coding and use purchase orders as appropriate, and to ensure full compliance
- Work with the Group FD, FC and group finance team in making sure financial processes are efficient, processing is accurate, and that we make the most of the use of available technology
- Work with the Managing Director and the Group FD to ensure group finance resourcing remains aligned with Ark UK Programmes evolving needs
- Attend the Finance and Risk Committee of Ark at least once annually to present the financial performance of AC+
- Work with the Group FD and FC in the annual preparation of the statutory accounts of Ark UK Programmes

AC+ Financial Modelling and Analysis

- Work with the Managing Director of Ark UK Programmes to develop a fully auditable flexible financial model able to be interrogated to provide financial insights into the impact of different decisions on the financial performance and long-term sustainability of the ventures, and to use this to advise on proposed changes such as pricing, contractual terms and programme structures
- Responsible for providing analysis on underlying economics of the business, including creating and reporting on financial KPIs. For example this includes analysing subscription renewal rates (repeat subscriptions) and multiple purchasing of curriculum by customer
- Analyse and investigate new opportunities and compile a full financial analysis of such opportunities. To then develop those into detail budget and forecasting
- Work with the Managing Director to negotiate favourable terms with both for-profit and non-profit partners, in the interests of the long-term impact and influence of the Ark group

Senior Leadership

- As part of the senior leadership team, contribute to organisational direction and priorities that maximise long-term impact, ensuring financial sustainability is central to decision making
- Promoting the important role of Ark UK Programmes in supporting wider Ark priorities including the exceptional performance of our schools and nurseries which underpins our work
- Work together to build a highly motivated and effective team with confidence in the organisation direction
- Other responsibilities consistent with the seniority and spirit of the role

Person Specification: Finance Director, Ark UK Programmes

Qualifications

- Professional Accounting Qualification, with a preference towards CIMA
- Educated to degree level or equivalent

Knowledge & Skills

- Minimum of 5 years' experience in a senior finance role in complex organisations or start ups
- Understanding the importance of strong financial modelling and experience building and interrogating models
- Strong commercial management and project experience, including financial management experience in organisations that depend on trading income in highly competitive markets
- Strong computer skills using Microsoft Office (Excel, Word, Outlook) and financial databases
- Experience of identifying, and implementing, procedures and process improvements
- Strong numerical and analytical skills including confidence in analysing large data sets and presenting important findings clearly
- Excellent communication skills, with the able to focus stakeholders on the most pertinent information
- Experience operating at a leadership level, with the ability to work independently and to structure and lead complex projects

Personal Qualities

- Strong relationship skills with enthusiasm for working in an entrepreneurial environment
- Confident and highly credible with colleagues and stakeholders at all levels
- Able to juggle multiple priorities and enjoy an environment which is constantly changing
- Curiosity and readiness to learn

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](#).