

Job Description: Finance Business Partner (EdCity)

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: £50,000 to £60,000 (depending on experience)

About the role:

We are looking for a qualified or part-qualified accountant to join Ark's finance team as a Finance Business Partner, with a focus on supporting our EdCity development project. This is a vital role for us and requires a person with excellent commercial knowledge and drive, alongside technical skills including cashflow modelling, who enjoys working as part of a busy team, has excellent organisational skills and meticulous attention to detail.

This role requires the Finance Business Partner for EdCity to have an ability to see the value in the information they are providing and to inspire others to make use of it. They will be responsible for preparing monthly management accounts and regular reforecasts. This is a customer service facing role and the successful candidate must be prepared to adapt their ways of working to meet the evolving needs and the ventures, to ensure a high-quality service whilst adhering to Ark's financial processes, policies and procedures.

Key Responsibilities:

Business Partnering

- Work with the EdCity Director on the service charge forecasting and scenario planning as we market the building to new tenants.
- Support the EdCity Director with cost analysis relating to Ark's own floors in EdCity – looking at financial forecasts including ways for serviced office revenue to be generated.
- Support with financial planning by leading on and/or inputting into budgets and forecasts, longer term financial models and other analytical reports as required. Analyse, comment on and challenge proposed plans throughout the process.
- Own the financial models ensuring that income and expenditure forecasts and cashflow are kept up to date and reporting for the board and for philanthropic lenders.
- Become a trusted business partner able to provide robust yet supportive challenge to operational staff.
- Provide a liaison between the finance team and the teams within the venture to ensure everyone understands their role in complying with financial processes and policies.
- Develop effective working relationships that influence and challenge senior management so that the role of Finance Business Partner is a valued and integral part of the organisation.
- Manage any ad hoc queries from areas supported.
- Maintain a view of material financial risks and opportunities throughout the year, helping to identify potential actions to mitigate risks and to fully exploit opportunities.
- Work collaboratively with the Finance Director to ensure a high level of customer service and support is delivered and avoiding duplication of effort.
- Ensure that financial information, reports etc. are delivered in line with service SLAs (where applicable).

Management Accounts

- Lead on preparing month-end management accounts for all areas of responsibility, ensuring delivery of timely, accurate and robust reporting of financial performance against budget, forecasts and KPIs.
- Post all month end accruals, prepayments, overhead/payroll allocations across departments and any other adjustments required to produce accurate management reports.
- Improve the financial confidence and competency of budget holders by providing timely financial analysis and reports, and meeting monthly to ensure they understand their finances and can make effective, informed decisions in the best interest of their venture.
- Deliver relevant management commentary for distribution to the senior stakeholders and providing insightful information and analysis to stakeholders.
- Upload budgets and forecasts into the relevant accounting systems to enable automated financial reporting and ensure complete and accurate financial information.
- Work as part of a team to streamline and simplify procedures to deliver relevant and accurate management information including, but not limited to, increased automation, more user-friendly reports, the development of KPIs and dashboards.

Financial Reporting

- Work closely with the Financial Controller to ensure key control accounts are regularly reconciled.
- Support the Financial Controller on quarterly and year-end procedures with ad hoc tasks required. This includes but is not limited to preparing and posting journals, analytical review of financial results, liaising with the business areas to ensure they understand requirements, providing supporting calculations, reconciliations and liaising with auditors.
- Work with the Finance team to ensure operation of an effective internal control framework to ensure compliance with statutory accounting, tax, and legal requirements.
- Assess the implications of organisational or legislative changes on financial reporting requirements and the impact this will have on the coding structure in the finance system. Ensure reports remain fit for purpose and appropriate analysis is produced for budget holders.

Other

- Train budget-holders on finance systems and processes.
- Prepare and present summary finance reports for Ark's Board and Finance and Risk Committee, and venture Programme Boards.
- Provide insight and support on financial processes and controls, including innovations in the use of technology and IT software. Where appropriate, suggest and implement process improvements to ensure these remain fit-for-purpose.
- Provide support as required to the System accountant and Finance team with the accounting, invoicing, and purchase order systems.
- Involvement with wider finance team projects/work-streams, working collaboratively with other teams across the Ark Group.

Person Specification: Finance Business Partner (EdCity)

Qualifications

- Qualified or part-qualified accountant (ACA/ CIMA).

Knowledge & Skills

- An understanding of budgeting and forecasting plus variance reporting.
- Experience of preparing financial reports and presentations for various stakeholders.
- Experience of working with a range of internal and external partners including non-finance personnel.
- Experience of processing month end journals and reconciliations including prepayments and accruals.
- Experience and/or knowledge of charity finance (desirable).
- Property experience including service charge reporting.
- Strong written and oral communication skills, including the ability to challenge and influence assertively and cooperatively, building relationships at multiple levels.
- Excellent numerical and financial skills.
- Competent computer skills, particularly Excel (including advanced modelling skills), Word, Outlook and financial databases.
- Proactive and self-motivated with good time-management skills, an ability to plan, manage and prioritise a varied workload and to take responsibility for issues through to resolution.
- Understands the importance of confidentiality and discretion.
- Have a flexible approach to team-working across disciplines.
- Strong organisational, project management and planning skills.
- Demonstrable ability to use own initiative to help identify improvements to systems and processes and to take a proactive role in resolving.
- Emphasis on the stakeholder and delivering quality, remaining solution-focused within a fast-paced culture of change and continuous improvement.

Personal Qualities

- Driven self-starter with a strong sense of personal responsibility.
- Meticulous attention to detail and capable of meeting strict deadlines.
- Team player who is flexible and adapts well to change.
- Ability to communicate effectively and explain finance to non-finance professionals.
- Able to follow instructions accurately, but make good judgments and lead when required.
- Ability to learn and operate new systems and processes and assess their effectiveness.
- Helpful and positive nature, and able to remain calm under pressure.
- Highly skilled and adaptable 'people skills' across a wide range of functions and grades.

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](#).