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Head of Finance and Operations

November 2026

About Akili Dada

Akili Dada is an award-winning leadership incubator anchored on the belief that girls and young women CAN, DO and WILL LEAD. Our mission is to nurture transformational feminist leadership in girls and young women from underserved backgrounds to meet the urgent need for more African women in leadership.

We journey alongside adolescent girls and young women, supporting them in creating and implementing solutions to their communities' challenges. We build their capacity to lead, applying a holistic approach that encompasses financial investment, intergenerational mentorship, movement building, and advocacy through education and leadership.

After close to two decades of engaging and collaborating with girls and women, our philosophy is embedded in Igniting inherent power and amplifying voices and perspectives while nurturing Legacies of influence that can be sustained and replicated worldwide. Through W.A.U (Washa – Ignite. Angaza – Amplify. Legacy – Urithi), we conduct rigorous research and development to inform our programmatic pillars.





The Role

Role:
Head of Finance and Operations

Reporting to:
Executive Director

Direct Reports:
Finance Officer, Junior Finance Officer and Operations Officer

Location:
Nairobi, Kenya

Contract:
2-year fixed-term contract renewable based on performance and funding.

Compensation:
KES 375,000 – 434,000 per month, commensurate with experience.

Job Summary

The Head of Finance & Operations is the organisation's senior leader for financial stewardship, operational excellence, risk management and institutional controls. The role converts financial and operational data into timely decisions; protects restricted and unrestricted resources; ensures compliant, efficient systems; and enables programs to deliver without avoidable administrative bottlenecks.

As a core member of the Senior Management Team, the role advises the Executive Director and supports the Board and Finance Committee with accurate, forward-looking information on financial health, sustainability, risk and organisational performance. The role leads through clear delegation and review and is not the default preparer of routine transactions, audit schedules, or donor reports.



Roles and Responsibilities

1. Strategic Financial Leadership

- Lead the finance and operations strategy and annual departmental plan, aligned with organisational priorities.
- Advise the ED and SMT on sustainability, affordability, resource allocation, cost recovery and trade-offs.
- Develop multi-year financial models, cash forecasts, annual forecasts and minimum/base/maximum operating scenarios.
- Provide accurate financial health reports and analysis to the Finance Committee and work closely with the Board Treasurer on Finance Committee priorities and decision-making.
- Provide recommendations on reserves, liquidity, investments, endowment governance, receivables, payables and funding concentration.

2. Budgeting and Performance Analysis

- Lead the annual budget and quarterly reforecast process with accountable budget-holder participation.
- Ensure work plans, procurement plans, staffing assumptions, donor restrictions and cash timing are integrated.
- Produce monthly organisational BVA analysis with clear drivers, risks, forecast impact and corrective action.
- Challenge persistent under-spend, over-spend, miscoding, unsupported assumptions and unfunded commitments.

3. Financial Reporting and Governance

- Ensure timely, accurate monthly management accounts and dashboards for the SMT and ED.
- Prepare concise, decision-oriented Finance Committee and Board packs covering financial position, cash/runway, reserves, investments, forecasts, variances, compliance, audit and top risks.
- Maintain agreed reporting calendars and ensure papers are circulated within governance timelines.
- Translate financial information for non-finance leaders and support accountable decisions.

4. Grant Finance and Donor Compliance

- Set standards for proposal costing, grant set-up, restricted-fund tracking, donor reporting, close-out and document retention.
- Review and approve proposal budgets and donor financial reports.
- Allocate donor portfolios across finance staff, ensuring primary and backup ownership.
- Partner with Resource Mobilisation and program teams while preserving the distinction between donor relationship ownership, program delivery ownership and financial compliance.

5. Controls, Compliance and Risk

- Maintain fit-for-purpose Finance, Procurement, Travel, Cash Advance, Asset, Investment, Reserves, Fraud and Delegated Authority frameworks.
- Ensure effective segregation of duties, maker-checker controls, reconciliations, exception management and evidence retention.
- Maintain a compliance calendar covering tax, payroll, PBO/regulatory, donor, insurance, lease, licence and operational obligations.
- Own the department's contribution to the organisational risk register and ensure mitigation actions are implemented.

6. Audit and Assurance

- Set the audit strategy, timetable, governance approvals and readiness standards.
- Hold the Finance Officer accountable as audit coordinator and the full team accountable for monthly evidence readiness.
- Lead key accounting judgements, auditor escalation, management responses and Finance Committee communication.
- Track audit recommendations to closure and prevent repeat findings.

7. Treasury, Banking, Payroll and Investments

- Oversee liquidity, banking relationships, payment controls, signatories, investment performance, receivables, payables and cash advances.
- Review and approve payroll, statutory schedules, and material payroll changes; ensure secure handling of confidential information.
- Ensure daily operational work is prepared by the Finance Officer and independently reviewed according to the control matrix.

Roles and Responsibilities

8. Procurement and Operational Excellence

- Set procurement governance, thresholds, approval routes, service levels and value-for-money standards.
- Hold the Operations Officer accountable for sourcing administration, vendor due diligence, contract records, logistics, facilities, physical assets and safety/ security operations.
- Ensure Finance performs budget, tax, donor, and financial-control checks without duplicating Operations' process ownership.
- Monitor payment turnaround, procurement cycle time, vendor performance and operational risks.

9. Systems, Data and Automation

- Own the finance and operations systems roadmap, including ERP controls, access, workflow design, integrations, backup coverage and reporting automation.
- Ensure mandatory data dimensions and evidence are captured at source.
- Reduce spreadsheet dependency and manual rework while maintaining documented business-continuity procedures.
- Ensure no critical system, process, approval, or relationship depends on one person.

10. People Leadership and Succession

- Set clear objectives, KPIs, portfolios, review standards and development plans for direct reports.
- Build a culture of service, control, timely escalation, documentation and continuous improvement.
- Delegate preparation and coordination work while retaining appropriate review and accountability.
- Maintain cross-training and tested backup coverage for all critical processes.
- Partner with the HR Business Partner on recruitment, performance, employee relations and sensitive people matters; do not absorb the HR function by default.





Key Performance Indicators

- **Monthly close cycle time:** Close completed within **10 working days** for 10/12 months, with documented checklist, owners, and sign-offs.
- **Management reporting timeliness & quality:** SMT monthly finance pack issued by the agreed date each month, including BVA commentary, cash/runway, top risks, and corrective actions.
- **Forecast accuracy & cadence:** Rolling 13 week cash forecast updated **weekly**; quarterly reforecast completed on time with clear scenario assumptions.
- **Donor compliance: 100%** donor financial reports and compliance submissions delivered by deadlines.
- **Audit readiness:** Standing audit file updated **monthly**; annual audit completed on schedule with **no repeat high risk findings** and action plan tracked to closure.
- **Controls & segregation of duties:** Maker checker controls implemented for payments, payroll, and journal postings; zero material control breaches without documented exception approval.
- **Budget-holder accountability:** Monthly budget-holder sign offs received on time (variance explanations + forecast updates) for all departments.
- **Cash & working capital management:** Monthly cash/commitments review held; overdue staff advances reduced to within policy thresholds; supplier payment ageing within agreed terms.
- **Policy & governance rollout:** Finance/ Procurement/Travel/Cash Advance/Asset and Delegated Authority frameworks reviewed, approved, and rolled out with staff training and compliance checks.
- **Systems & automation:** ERP mandatory fields/attachments configured; reduction in manual rework evidenced by fewer recoding corrections and fewer incomplete payment packs.
- **Team performance & succession:** Clear portfolios and backups assigned; cross training completed for payroll, payments, donor reporting, and ERP admin; performance objectives set and reviewed quarterly.

Candidate Profile

- Professional accounting qualification such as CPA(K), ACCA, or equivalent; relevant degree required.
- At least 8 years of progressive finance experience, including 3 years in a leadership role; strong NGO/ nonprofit experience preferred.
- Demonstrated experience with restricted grants, donor compliance, multi-project accounting, budgeting, forecasting, treasury, audit, tax/statutory compliance, and Board reporting.
- Evidence of improving ERP-enabled processes, internal controls, monthly close, and management reporting.
- Experience overseeing procurement and operational functions through clear role separation.
- Strong people leadership, delegation, change management, judgement, and communication skills.
- Ability to communicate complex financial issues clearly to non-finance audiences.

Skills and Competencies

- Strategic and analytical judgement
- Integrity and stewardship
- Risk-based decision-making
- Clear delegation and accountability
- Operational discipline and continuous improvement
- Collaborative business partnering
- Calm escalation and problem-solving
- Board-ready communication
- Coaching and succession development





How to Apply

All correspondence, at this stage, should be via Oxford HR. To apply for this post, click on the "Apply" button on the job advert page, complete our online application form and submit your CV and cover letter as two different documents, which should be prepared before applying as they will be considered in the application process.

The cover letter should be no more than two pages long and explain why you are interested in this post and how your skills and experience make you a good fit.

The document should be saved in PDF in the following format: Your First Name-Your Last Name-Document Name-Date (mmyy)-Organisation e.g., Pat-Jones-CV-1126–AkiliDada or Pat-Jones-CoverLetter-1126-AkiliDada.

Timeline

- **Closing Date:** 3rd December 2026
  (Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. The role will be closed once a suitable candidate has been found.)
- **First Interview:** 14th – 15th December 2026
- **Second Interview:** 17th – 18th December 2026

Selection Process

All candidates will receive an update regarding their application after the closing date. We advise candidates to add the role email to their safe senders list and regularly check their spam folder.

Equality Statement

Equality and diversity are at the core of Akili Dada's values. Staff are expected to work collectively and individually to promote a constructive and sensitive approach to others from a variety of backgrounds, where the work of others is valued and respected.

Queries

If you have any queries on any aspect of the appointment process, need additional information, or would like to have an informal discussion, please email satieno@oxfordhr.com in the first instance.

About Oxford HR

Oxford HR is a B Corp certified leadership consultancy. Having worked within a diverse range of institutions, from not-for-profits and charities to governments and corporate environments, we've seen the powerful impact that the perfect team can have.

Finding innovative leaders can be a challenge; and yet their transition into leadership is vital to an organisation's mission and success. We work across the globe to search for and support remarkable leaders and teams, improve their board effectiveness and support on a range of leadership functions.

Learn more at: oxfordhr.com







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