

Job Description

Job Title: Chief Operating Officer (COO)

Location: Eastleigh, Hampshire. Flexible, hybrid working

Salary: £50,000

Hours: 37 hours per week

Contract: Permanent

About us:

Learning through Landscapes is the UK's leading school grounds charity, dedicated to enhancing outdoor learning and play for all. Our vision is a society where the benefits of regular time outdoors are valued and appreciated, and outdoor learning, play and connection with nature is recognised as a fundamental part of education, at every stage, for every child and young person.

We have unrivalled expertise based on three decades of experience, practical action and research. With offices in England and Scotland and staff based across the UK, our team and our accredited network of outdoor learning experts have the capacity to work nationally and internationally. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

What you'll be doing:

As COO, you will play a critical leadership role in the strategic and operational success of LtL. You will work closely with the CEO and the management team to deliver the charity's vision, overseeing day-to-day project delivery across the UK. You will take the lead for LtL H&S and Safeguarding responsibility alongside deputising for the CEO. It is essential you are happy to and would enjoy frequent travel across the UK.

Key Responsibilities

- Operational Leadership.
- Drive operational excellence and innovation in the charity's systems, processes, and project infrastructure.
- Work closely with the CEO and senior leadership to translate strategic and project plans into operational delivery.
- Attend and contribute to the planning of board meetings.
- Deputise as CEO.

Project Management

- Oversee the delivery of multiple, complex projects, in all four home nations, ensuring timelines, budgets, and outcomes are met, and line manage project managers.
- Work on national programme implementation, including government contracts, charitable grants, and corporate-funded initiatives.
- Develop and manage project delivery plans, risk registers, evaluation processes, and resource allocation, health & safety, and safeguarding.

- Support the CEO and Finance Manager in budget planning, financial forecasting, and reporting for projects.
- Ensure projects are run within guidelines and legal responsibilities, including data protection, GDPR, health and safety, and charity governance.
- Act as the operational safeguarding lead, working closely with the charity's Designated Safeguarding Leads to embed best practice in all areas of delivery.
- Work with the CEO to ensure safeguarding policies are robust, understood by all staff partners and network, and adhered to in all operational activities.
- Work with the CEO on contract negotiation and management.

Systems and Operational Development

- Lead the development and improvement of internal systems and processes to support efficient, effective, and collaborative working across the charity.
- Oversee the use and optimisation of IT and digital tools for internal communication and project coordination.
- Embed a culture of continuous improvement, ensuring systems are user-friendly, fit for purpose, and compliant with data protection and other regulations.

People and Culture

- Line manage project managers across the UK, fostering a positive and values-led organisational culture rooted in inclusion, equity, and safeguarding.
- Coordinate leadership and professional development for staff, partners and networks.
- Champion true diversity, equity, and inclusion across all operational activities.

Stakeholder and Partnership Management

- Act as a senior representative for LtL at external meetings, events, and with funders or partners.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with schools, local authorities, funders, and delivery partners.
- Represent LtL in national forums, working groups, and networks relevant to education and the environment.

Travel

- Regular travel across the UK to support project delivery, engage with stakeholders, and lead regional teams with occasional international travel.
- Regular overnight stays required.

What you need

Essential

- Proven experience in a senior operational role, preferably within the charity, education, or environmental sector.
- Track record of successfully managing complex, multi-partner projects at a national or regional scale.
- One or both of Safeguarding and Health & Safety training qualifications.
- Excellent leadership, line management, and team development skills.
- Outstanding project management skills including budgeting, planning, evaluation, and reporting.
- Strong understanding of governance, safeguarding, and risk management in a not-for-profit context.
- Embody LtL friendly and inclusive culture of support and kindness.
- Ability to influence and inspire with excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
- Willingness and ability to travel regularly across the UK and occasionally internationally.

Desirable

- Knowledge of outdoor learning, environmental education, or play-based pedagogy.
- Experience of working with schools or in the education sector.
- Familiarity with charity finance and CRM systems.
- Qualification in project management (e.g. Prince2, Agile, or similar).

If you don't have all of the above but feel it could be the role for you, talk to us!

What we offer:

- Flexible working.
- Holiday, 28 days + bank holidays + a "birthday gift" day.
- Laptop, phone and all travel & subsistence expenses.
- Family & carer friendly policies.
- Annual training package including: LtL Professional Accreditation in Outdoor Learning and Play, LtL Climate School 180 Network Training package.
- Sick pay.
- Salary sacrifice pension scheme – 5% employer contribution.
- Subsidised Christmas meal.
- A supportive and welcoming team of colleagues, including our 20+ Delivery Team members.

We're an equal opportunities employer. All suitable applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, colour, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age, or veteran status.

We are actively seeking to increase diversity within our workforce and are committed to recruiting the best people on the objective basis of their skills, ability and experience. We

offer a guaranteed interview to eligible applicants who choose to opt-in to the scheme and can demonstrate that they have at least 5 out of the 9 from the “what you need - essentials” list. To be eligible to apply via the Guaranteed Interview Scheme, you must be from an ethnic minority. **Please state clearly in your covering letter if you are applying under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme.**

We are happy to support with any reasonable adjustments that are needed within the recruitment process.

If you would like an informal chat about the role, please contact the HR Manager, Sarah Knott on 07557 028600 or email sknott@ltl.org.uk.

To apply: Please send the following by email to recruitment@ltl.org.uk

- Your CV.
- A covering letter explaining in no more than two sides of A4, your interest in the role and the skills and knowledge you have that make you an ideal candidate.
- Contact details (including email address and phone number) of two referees, one of whom should be your most recent employer.

The recruitment process:

The deadline for applications is **9 am on Thursday 10th July 2025**

If you have not heard from us by 5pm on Monday 14th July 2025 , you have not been shortlisted.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview In person at our Eastleigh office on Tuesday 12th August 2025.

Candidates will be informed of the outcome of the interviews by Friday 15th August 2025.