



## **Candidate Information**

### **Head of Finance**

**Background Briefing**  
**Job Description**  
**Person Specification**  
**Application Form**  
**How to Apply and timetable**

For Background Information please go to [www.gaiafoundation.org](http://www.gaiafoundation.org)

## **Gaia Foundation - Background Briefing**

The Gaia Foundation (Gaia) has over 20 years experience working to protect the environment and the rights of local communities. We are a small team who thrive on passion for the work and a commitment to make a difference.

Gaia is the Greek Earth Mother Goddess, and the name given to James Lovelock's scientific Hypothesis, recognising that the Earth is a dynamic living whole, of which humans, and all other life, are an inextricable part.

Gaia works with a global network of innovative people and initiatives that strengthen cultural and biological diversity, local governance and resilience. We provide access to information, advocacy support, strategic advice, funding, international alliances and media with a wide sphere of influence. This began in the Colombian rainforest in the 1980s when, collaborating with our partner Gaia Amazonas, we worked with Amazon indigenous peoples to secure their right to govern and protect their traditional lands. Twenty years on, an area larger than the size of the UK is safe from destruction and legally back in the hands of these communities.

Today, our network has grown into a global web of partners in Africa, India, Europe and South America. Gaia serves as the networking hub creating added value and strength through connecting our partners across the globe. Our purpose is to strengthen community cohesion and people's collective capacity to respond to the unfolding social and ecological crises. We believe there has never been a more critical time to strengthen and scale up this work.

Our ongoing challenge is to raise the funds to carry out this work. However Gaia has an exceptional track record raising more than £25m between 1987 and 2007, of which at least 90% has been re-granted to projects. The funding landscape has changed over the years, but Gaia remains well placed to retain its excellent track record.

Gaia operates from a small, busy administrative base in North London, and a nearby learning centre from where we host talks, workshops, strategic meetings, and where Associates and partners stay as they travel through London. The Head of Finance will be joining the Gaia team at an exciting time of transition and as a result new systems are being put into place to enhance the resources and efficiency of the organisation. They will be wholly responsible for the Finance department with the remit of developing the role and the systems to ensure that the finance function acts as a cornerstone of the organisation. The Head of Finance will also contribute to organisational discussions and work closely with trustees, so they will need to be an effective communicator.

The Head of Finance also provides support and capacity building to partners, particularly in Africa; it is a complex but rewarding task managing the various funding streams and empowering the partners to take control of the project finances. This work is particularly important now and involves building close working relationships with project managers and finance people on the ground. This will involve an element of travel and requires someone with good people skills who has experience of and understands the challenges of working in the developing world.

## **Job description**

<b>Title of post:</b>	<b>Head of Finance</b>
<b>Responsible for:</b>	Book-keeper
<b>Accountable to:</b>	The Director and Trustees
<b>Location:</b>	Belsize Park/Hampstead

### **Purpose of role**

Reporting to the Director and the Finance subgroup of the Board the main objective of the Head of Finance is to provide financial and management accounting systems to ensure that assets and liabilities of the Foundation are identified, collected, disbursed and otherwise dealt with in an effective and appropriate manner. The Head of Finance is also responsible for the efficiency, effectiveness and integrity of the finance systems as well as internal and external financial reporting.

The Head of Finance provides advice, analysis and assistance to Gaia staff and partners, providing expertise on forward planning and budgeting, developments, financial strategy, taxation, and governance.

They will also be responsible for preparing year-end and management accounts and keeping all financial records in accordance with current legislation and regulation. As the Foundation is a registered charity, the accounts are prepared in compliance with the Charities SORP and the Charities Act 1993. The Head of Finance works alongside a part-time Book Keeper who will report to the Head of Finance.

The Head of Finance will be active throughout Gaia at a senior level including representation at trustee and team levels, as well as representing the organisation externally.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Financial management**

- Leading, directing, managing and developing the Finance Department in order to meet the overall objectives of the department as follows.
- Responsible for the day-to-day running of the accounts of the Foundation using Sage Line 50 and Excel spreadsheets, including the preparation and distribution of monthly management accounts, which measure the Foundation's performance against agreed objectives and the annual budget.
- Responsible for the management of the payroll using the Sage 50 Payroll.
- Responsible for the preparation of statutory accounts and year-end financial statements, and to liaise with the external auditors on the production of final accounts.

- Responsible for the preparation of the annual budget and rolling forecasts for controlling income and expenditure, monitoring projects against budgets, and preparing monthly variance reports.
- Preparing accounts for audit which comply with the relevant and most up to date accounting standards and charity legislation.

### **Liaising with Funders, Partners and Trustees**

- Attending meetings of the Trustees to advise on financial matters alongside the Trust Secretary.
- Providing support, training and financial advice to project staff including overseas partners as necessary. This will involve travel to partners to build their capacity and develop systems within their organisation.
- Prepare budgets for funding proposals and oversee funding contracts.
- Manage and develop the financial system of project reports and to be responsible for financial reports to donors as required.
- Keep up to date with good financial practice and in the charity sector and apply the same to the Foundation

### **General**

- Assist with office administration as necessary in particular liaising with and presenting financial information to the Trustees, overseeing the requirements of the Charity Commission and assisting with personnel issues.
- Ensure that adequate insurance cover exists to protect the Foundation's property and legal obligations to its employees, suppliers and the public.
- Carry out such other reasonable duties as may be agreed with the Director and the Finance subgroup of the Board.
- Be open to participating fully in exploring and living the values and principles Gaia promotes in its work.

### **Terms and conditions**

The salary for this post will be c£46,000. The hours worked are 35 per week, with core hours of 9.30-5.30pm including lunchtime. Overtime is not paid however time off in lieu may be taken by agreement with the Director. The post is subject to a six-month probationary period. Annual leave is 25 days per year plus public holidays and any organisation-provided extra days (usually to include office closure between Christmas and New Year). There is a contributory stakeholder pension scheme, and a season ticket and bicycle loan scheme.

## Person Specification

Attributes	E = Essential	P = Preferred
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualified accountant – ACA, ACCA, ACMA, CIPFA (or equivalent) (E)</li> </ul>	
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least five years post-qualification experience (E)</li> <li>• Experience of compliance with charity and company law, financial reporting statements and the charity SORP (E)</li> <li>• Strong background in preparing budgets for/reporting to external funders (E)</li> <li>• Previous experience of international NGO project work – particularly the developing world (P)</li> <li>• Familiarity with European Commission, DFID or similar institutional funding (P)</li> </ul>	
Knowledge and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to build effective and beneficial relationships at all levels, across the organisation and with key stakeholders (E)</li> <li>• Project management skills; ability to co-ordinate complex and multiple projects (E)</li> <li>• Excellent attention to detail (E)</li> <li>• Ability to manage and motivate staff (E)</li> <li>• Good level of diplomacy (E)</li> <li>• Able to contribute to organisational issues (P)</li> <li>• Good understanding of the not-for-profit sector (E)</li> <li>• Experience and understanding of Africa and/ or developing countries (E)</li> <li>• Knowledge of the issues related to the Gaia Foundation, e.g. environment, sustainability, indigenous communities (E)</li> <li>• Ability to relate to the big picture and strategic overview of Gaia’s work (P)</li> <li>• Able to assimilate issues and data and make critical judgments and assessments (E)</li> <li>• Strong IT skills (E) and a knowledge of SAGE (P)</li> </ul>	
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent communicator able to present information and ideas in an engaging manner(E)</li> <li>• A demonstrable commitment to and aptitude and passion for our work, aims and values (E)</li> <li>• An inclusive and collaborative approach to working with partners (E)</li> <li>• Strong inter-personal and listening skills and emotional intelligence (E)</li> <li>• Able to travel internationally (E)</li> <li>• Commitment to equal opportunities (E)</li> <li>• A logical and structured approach to problem solving and accounts, whilst also being flexible and creative (E)</li> <li>• Willing to take initiative and evaluate/set up systems and processes (E)</li> <li>• An openness to participate in exploring and living the values and principles we promote in our work (E)</li> </ul>	

**Confidential Application**

**Head of Finance**

**The Gaia Foundation**

**Please complete this brief application form and attach a CV outlining your career to date, plus any academic and professional qualifications. Also include details of any voluntary post undertaken. Please send your application, by the 24 November, to [allyson@wholepeoplesolutions.co.uk](mailto:allyson@wholepeoplesolutions.co.uk), or post to Allyson Davies, 20 St Georges Mansions, Causton Street, London, SW1P 4RZ.**

Full Name:

Address:

Work Phone:

Mobile Phone:

Home Phone:

Email:

How did you hear of this post:

Are you eligible to work in the UK?

**REFERENCES**

Please give details of two professional referees, your current employer (they will not be contacted prior to an offer), your previous employer and also a personal referee:-

1 - Name and professional relationship to you:

Tel:

OK to approach Yes / No

2 - Name and professional relationship to you:

Tel:

OK to approach Yes / No

3 – Name and relationship to you:

Tel:

OK to approach Yes / No

**Personal Health Issues**

Do you suffer from any disability, illness or health problem that may affect your ability to carry out this role?

Yes

No

If yes, please give details:

**Current Employment Terms Details**

Basic Annual Salary:

Annual Leave:

Pension: Employer contribution:

Employee contribution:

Any other benefits?

Notice required:

**Please include a chart of your current organisation/team – clearly indicating your position:-**

**Please state – on no more than 2 pages:**

- 1) Why you would like to be the Head of Finance at the Gaia Foundation**
- 2) What three key areas of your experience and skills you can bring to this role  
(Please draw upon the Person Specification to inform your answer)**

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that the information that I have provided on this form is true and accurate, and in particular that I have not omitted any fact which may have a bearing on my application. I understand that any subsequent contract of employment with the Gaia Foundation will be made on the basis of the information I have provided. Furthermore, I understand that a false declaration, which results in my appointment to the Gaia Foundation, will render me liable to dismissal without notice.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

## The Recruitment Process

### Timetable

<b>Deadline for applications</b>	<b>24 November</b>
First stage screening interviews	27 and 28 November, and 1 and 2 December
Second stage panel interviews	9 December
Final stage meeting	11 December

### To Apply

If you would like to apply for the role then please send your CV and Application Form by post or preferably email to:

**Email:** [allyson@wholepeoplesolutions.co.uk](mailto:allyson@wholepeoplesolutions.co.uk)

**Phone:** 020 7828 3855

**Address:** Allyson Davies – 20 St Georges Mansions, Causton Street, London SW1P 4RZ

### Information

If you require any further information or you would like to discuss anything in more detail, please contact our recruitment adviser, Allyson Davies, (on 020 7828 3855, 0796 855 6164, or email: [allyson@wholepeoplesolutions.co.uk](mailto:allyson@wholepeoplesolutions.co.uk)) who would be more than happy to answer any questions you may have.