

Role Title

Western Balkans Finance Manager - Contracts

Role Information

Role Type	Pay Band	Location	Duration	Reports to
Business support	PB6/G	Western Balkans country	2 years fixed-term	Western Balkans Head of Finance and Operations / dotted line to Western Balkans Business Development Manager

Role purpose

To manage the financial planning, accounting, analysis and reporting for FCR Donor funded and co-funded contracts business in the Western Balkans, contributing towards winning new contracts and supporting the delivery of existing contracts to ensure sound financial management and compliance with client and British Council standards.

The post will be a finance business partner to the Business Support Services team, Business Development team, Contract delivery teams and Regional Finance team.

About us

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. We do this by making a positive contribution to the UK and the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust.

We work with over 100 countries across the world in the fields of arts and culture, English language, education and civil society. Each year we reach over 20 million people face-to-face and more than 500 million people online, via broadcasts and publications. Founded in 1934, we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body.

Geopolitical/Strategic Business Unit/Function overview:

The British Council in the Western Balkans is part of the Wider Europe region of fifteen countries which borders the Middle East to the south, Asia to the east and EU Europe to the west. The region's population, currently around 335 million, will be 2 billion people by 2050, with the majority living in an urban environment.

In the Western Balkans we create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. We have more than 75 years of experience in the Western Balkans and six offices across the region. We work with local, UK and international partners. We design and implement programmes, deliver donor funded contracts, offer advice and consultancy to governments, deliver training programmes, administer international exams, teach English and run English testing for organisations and institutions, advise UK companies on market opportunities and provide information about the UK.

Instability, corruption and weak rule of law in the Western Balkans countries directly impact on the security and prosperity of the UK and the rest of Europe. Once again, tensions across the Western

Balkans region are high with rising nationalism and growing religious sentiment. The role of competing external influences is pulling the region in different directions and further escalating the existing tensions. Despite economic improvements, GDP per capita is low. Youth unemployment is one of the highest in the world (up to 60 per cent) prompting concerns that with such bleak economic prospects the six countries will become a breeding ground for extremism.

To help ensure a secure and prosperous future for the people of the Western Balkans, we work with governments, international organisations, businesses and other partners on institutional reform and capacity building. We enable professionals and young people to gain international skills and qualifications that will help them prosper and build a better future. Our key area of focus is on vocational education, entrepreneurship and core skills, with English as a key skill which supports this objective. We work in visual arts, film and music to build trust and understanding between people in the UK and the Western Balkans. Through our digital platforms, over 2 million people each year discover more about UK culture and education.

Main opportunities/challenges for this role

Opportunities

- Provide effective financial management and control over a significant contracts portfolio, delivered over a geographically dispersed region;
- Develop collaborative relationships across global, regional and country finance teams, business development and project teams;
- Develop sustainable financial costing models for delivering the Contracts portfolio, including commercial pricing, tendering and negotiation;
- Contribute to the development of sound financial management, reporting and risk management practices across project and operational teams;
- Provide insightful financial analysis and management reporting to inform decision making at the Western Balkans and regional level.

Challenges

- Provide effective business partnering services to finance and business development teams to support the achievement of aspirational financial targets and sustainability of the Contracts pipeline.

Main accountabilities for this role:

Accountabilities, responsibilities and main duties

The job holder is accountable for the effective operation of financial management, planning, forecasting, analysis and reporting against client contracts, as well as supporting the Business Development team for costing and pricing new business opportunities. Specific responsibilities and duties are:

- Produce monthly financial reports to provide a clear understanding of the performance, risks and opportunities across the Contracts portfolio. Information should provide insight into the financial performance of contracts including income, expenditure and surplus to identify and respond to emerging trends.
- Manage quarterly re-forecasting exercises, to ensure that re-forecasts accurately reflect the expected position of individual contracts.
- Provide accurate and timely costing and pricing information to support the contract pursuit teams in winning new contracts, ensuring contracts are priced effectively to recover cost and follow best practice examples.
- Support country teams for set up and implementation of new contracts, to ensure SAP structures

are working correctly to record income and expenditure according to the client reporting requirements and in accordance with British Council best practice.

- Support finance and project managers across the Western Balkans to analyse their own reports in order to provide accurate reporting at a regional level, and build financial management skills and consistency across the operation. Use monthly meetings to review financial reports with project teams to ensure income, expenditure and surplus are recorded and reported correctly.
- Support the Contracts business financial planning and budgeting processes on SAP with project teams, to ensure SAP records contain accurate data for management planning and reporting.
- Support the Business Development team with contract negotiations and surplus share arrangements with clients and partners, while ensuring quality reviews and assurance on all commercial proposals. Provide accurate financial information to ensure Pursuit teams are able to negotiate effectively with partners and clients.
- Support the Business Development Manager in preparing and delivering the 5 year financial operating plan, by tracking pipeline opportunities to identify potential business over the 5 year plan, and provide accurate costing information for contracts already under implementation.
- Ensure the Western Balkans Leadership Team and Wider Europe Regional Executive Team is aware of material financial and commercial risks, and provide support and solutions as to how these risks will be mitigated. Support internal and external audits across the Contracts business, and deliver a rolling programme of financial reviews and 'health checks'.

Key Relationships:

Internal

- Western Balkans Head of Finance and Operations
- Western Balkans Business Development Manager
- Contract delivery and pursuit teams
- Western Balkans Business Support Services team
- Wider Europe Regional finance team
- Shared Services Centre (India Hub)
- Corporate Affairs Team (Corporate Governance and Legal)
- Internal auditors

External

- Donor and co-funding partner organisations
- External auditors

Role requirements:

Threshold requirements:		Assessment stage
Passport requirements/ right to work in country	Right to work in one of the Western Balkans countries	Shortlisting
Notes	Some work during unsocial / evening hours may be required, as well as travel around the Western Balkans countries and Wider Europe meetings. Criminal record check.	Shortlisting
Person specification:		Assessment stage
Language requirements		

<i>Minimum / essential</i>	<i>Desirable</i>	<i>Assessment stage</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fluent written and spoken English (level C1) ▪ Native Speaker in one of the Western Balkans Countries 		Shortlisting, Interview
Qualifications		
<i>Minimum / essential</i>	<i>Desirable</i>	<i>Assessment Stage</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ University degree qualification in finance, accounting or related field 	Shortlisting
Role Specific Knowledge, Experience & Skills		
<i>Minimum / essential</i>	<i>Desirable</i>	<i>Assessment stage</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowledge of donor funded financial accounting and contracting (specifically EC contracts or similar) ▪ Demonstrated knowledge of management accounting and contract accounting ▪ Financial planning, including management information reporting ▪ Experience of working with a diverse and dispersed team (able to contribute to effective working of geographically dispersed team) ▪ Highly organised and deadline oriented ▪ High level of accuracy and attention to detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strong knowledge of SAP 	Shortlisting and/or interview
British Council core skills		<i>Assessment stage</i>
<p>Analysing Data and Problems (Level 2): Uses data – Reviews available data and identifies cause and effect, and then chooses the best solution from a range of known alternatives.</p> <p>Communicating and Influencing (Level 2): Relates communications to circumstances – Displays good listening, writing and speaking skills, setting out logical arguments clearly and adapting language and form of communication to meet the needs of different people/audiences.</p> <p>Managing risks (Level 2): Supports a risk management culture – Has track record of identifying and highlighting risks and suggesting mitigating actions.</p> <p>Planning and Organising (Level 2): Plans ahead – Organises own work over weeks and months, or plans ahead for others, taking account of priorities and the impact on other people.</p>		Shortlisting and/or interview

<p>Financial Reporting and Compliance (Level 1): Use accounting and analysis skills to interrogate data and financial reports to support the business in taking appropriate action.</p> <p>Professional Accounting Standards (Level 2): Use analysis skills to analyse and interrogate data, ensuring accuracy and validity of recorded financial transactions and related reports.</p> <p>Transactional Accounting and Closing (Level 1): Understand month and year-end close activities and provide accurate and timely financial submissions.</p> <p>Business Partnering (Level 1): Engage with others to understand needs and support the business by providing relevant, accurate and consistent financial information on a timely basis.</p>	
British Council behaviours	Assessment stage
<p>Being Accountable (More demanding): Putting the needs of the team or British Council ahead of my own.</p> <p>Connecting with Others (Essential): Making regular opportunities to understand others better.</p> <p>Making it Happen (More demanding): Challenging myself and others to deliver and measure better results.</p> <p>Working Together (More demanding): Ensuring that others benefit as well as me.</p> <p>Creating Shared Purpose (More demanding): Creating energy and clarity so that people want to work purposely together.</p> <p>Shaping the Future (Essential): Looking for ways in which we can do things better.</p>	Interview