Strategic Finance and Planning Specialist

Reports to: Director of Finance and Operations
Hours: Full-time
Contract: Permanent
Start date: ASAP

Overall purpose
The Strategic Finance and Planning Specialist provides strategic financial analysis and decision support, supports the School's long-term financial and capital planning, and contributes to strategic and business planning across the DFO's portfolio.

The role works alongside the DFO and in tandem with the Finance, Facilities and Operations teams, focusing on complex analytical and planning work, including discrete strategic reviews, outside day-to-day departmental operations. The postholder will work independently and collaborate with senior leaders, trustees, department managers and external advisers.

Responsibilities

Capital Programme and Financial Analysis

- Provide financial analysis to support the feasibility and development of programmes and projects within the facilities master plan.
- Develop and maintain long-term financial models incorporating the capital programme and capital campaign into the School's overall financial planning.
- Provide ongoing financial analysis, forecasting and scenario modelling to support major capital and financing decisions as plans and assumptions evolve.

Strategic Analysis and Financial Planning

- Provide targeted analysis of financial and operational performance, programmes and activities to inform planning and decision-making, working with the Finance Manager as appropriate.
- Develop forecasts and scenario analyses to support long-term financial planning and strategic decision-making.
- Provide financial analysis and decision support for significant initiatives, including compensation, educational and operational programmes, enrolment planning and investment decisions.
- Lead or support strategic reviews and analytical projects on behalf of the DFO, working across the School and with external advisers as required.
- Develop business cases and options appraisals to support significant decisions and initiatives.
- Develop management information and dashboards to support strategic performance monitoring and decision-making.

- Support year-end reporting and governance, including analysis of key matters arising from the statutory accounts and preparation of relevant sections of the Trustees' Report.

Sourcing and Contracting

- Support significant sourcing and vendor-selection processes for professional, outsourced and other major services, including market analysis, tendering and evaluation.
- Draft and review vendor, consultant and other commercial agreements, identifying key commercial, financial and operational considerations.
- Provide commercial analysis to support negotiations, supplier reviews and value-for-money assessments.

Research and Governance

- Monitor market, regulatory and sector developments and assess their implications for the School.
- Conduct peer research and benchmarking across financial, staffing, organisational and employment practices to inform planning and decision-making.
- Provide analysis and briefing to support the DFO, Senior Leadership Team and Board committees.
- Develop and review financial, commercial and operational policies and support related governance and compliance work within the DFO's portfolio.
- Provide analytical support to the School's Enterprise Risk Management process, including assessment of material risks, their financial implications, and development of risk frameworks and reporting to inform strategic and financial planning.

General

- Work collaboratively across the School and with trustees, advisers, external partners, senior leaders and departmental managers.
- Undertake other strategic analysis and project work within the DFO's portfolio consistent with the purpose and level of the role.
- Any other duties as are within the scope, spirit and purpose of the job, as requested by the Director of Finance and Operations.

Essential Criteria

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- Degree-level education or equivalent relevant professional experience.
- Significant relevant experience in financial analysis, financial planning, strategy, consulting, commercial analysis or a related field.
- Strong financial modelling and analytical skills.
- Experience delivering complex analytical or project-based work, including research, benchmarking and preparation of high-quality outputs for senior decision-makers and multiple stakeholders.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to explain complex financial and strategic issues clearly.
- Ability to work independently, exercise sound judgement and manage multiple priorities.

- A demonstrated commitment to the safeguarding of children and young people.

Desirable criteria

- A recognised professional accountancy or finance qualification, or relevant postgraduate qualification.
- Experience in an independent school, international school, university, charity or other mission-led organisation.
- Experience in one or more relevant areas such as long-term or capital planning, treasury or investment, procurement or contracts, Board and governance support, policy development, or Enterprise Risk Management.
- Experience using business intelligence, dashboarding or data-visualisation tools.

This position description is current at the date shown but following consultation may be changed to reflect or anticipate changes in the role that are commensurate with the job title and salary.

The American School in London is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all trustees, employees and volunteers to share this commitment. All new appointments will be subject to appropriate checks: Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS enhanced), Disqualification by Association Self-Declaration, Declaration of Criminal Record, checks against the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) Prohibition List (Teacher Status Checks) including Identity, Address, Date of Birth, a Full Employment History, Right to Work in the UK, overseas checks where applicable, at least 2 references (one with current or most recent employer, where appropriate) and original documentation of Qualifications (where appropriate). For positions into Senior Management a Prohibition from Management Check (s128 Directive) will also be undertaken.

All posts involving direct contact with children are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. However, amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013 & 2020) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected'. These are not subject to disclosure to employers and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found on the Ministry of Justice website. Shortlisted candidates will be asked to provide details of all unspent convictions and those that would not be filtered, prior to the date of the interview. You may be asked for further information about your criminal history during the recruitment process. If your application is successful, this self-disclosure information will be checked against information from the Disclosure & Barring Service before your appointment is confirmed.

Diversity and equality of opportunity are cornerstone values of The American School in London. The American School in London will not discriminate against an applicant or employee based on race, color, religion, creed, national origin or ancestry, sex, age, physical or mental disability, genetic information, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, or any other legally recognised protected basis under local law. Read our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion statement here.