
Head of Finance – Sense International – Job Description & Person Specification

Location:	Sense Touchbase Pears
Responsible to:	Director of Finance of Sense and Chief Executive of Sense International
Sense salary points:	£62225
Responsible for:	N/A

About Sense International

Sense International is an independently registered charity and is a subsidiary of Sense, a leading disability charity in the UK with a purpose of breaking down barriers alongside disabled people with complex needs. Sense International works closely with Sense on all aspects of its work.

Sense International is the only international non-governmental organisation dedicated to supporting people with deafblindness and their families around the world. Sense International supports programmes in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Romania, Peru, India, Bangladesh, and Nepal.

Sense International's 2022-2027 strategy aims to remove barriers in societies and systems, so that people with deafblindness are fully included and can fulfil their potential, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

About the Sense International Finance team

Working with the Sense finance team, the Sense International Finance Team plays a crucial role in managing the financial resources of Sense International. Our team ensures the financial health of the organisation, supporting UK and all countries we work in internationally to achieve their goals through sound financial practices and comprehensive financial oversight.

Our responsibilities include financial management, financial reporting, budget management, forecasting and planning, income and expenditure management, and finance systems management. The Sense International Finance Team also supports our global entities particularly East Africa, Peru and Romania on financial management, budget development and forecasting and finance systems management alongside supporting preparation of statutory accounts in these geographies.

The Sense International Finance Team works closely with the Sense Finance Team on all aspects and is also accountable to the Sense Finance team.

About the role

Objectives

The Head of Finance is responsible for the financial management, reporting, and compliance for Sense International. This includes overseeing management accounts, budgeting, forecasting, reconciliations, donor reporting, international financial operations, statutory accounts production and audit.

The role directly manages UK-based finance staff and leads financial oversight for international teams, ensuring best practice and compliance. It plays a key role in income processing, international transfers, and donor reporting, while also providing strategic financial insights to senior leadership. Additionally, the Head of Finance produces financial reports for the Sense International Executive and Leadership teams, Board meetings, and Committees, ensuring financial integrity and operational efficiency across all areas.

Key responsibilities

Financial Management & Reporting

- Oversee the financial management and finance operations of Sense International
- Reporting on Sense International at a senior level, including monthly management accounts for the UK and global consolidated, any high level donor reporting and any other reports requested by the Chief Executive and Executive Team
- Draft annual statutory accounts for SI and liaise with external auditors as required.
- Support SI global offices with account preparation and audits, and support them to follow through on recommendations arising from audits
- Review audited accounts from SI offices and lead partners
- Liaise with the Chief Executive of Sense International, the Chief Finance and Commercial Officer of Sense, the Sense Director of Finance and Group Management Team to determine and deliver required financial information.
- Identify key financial indicators for performance measurement and provide financial performance reports.
- Ensure the timely and accurate preparation of financial reports for the Sense International Executive and Leadership teams, Board meetings, and Committees.
- Support financial reporting to external donors, ensuring compliance with donor requirements.
- Oversee income and expenditure reporting across all domains in Sense International including fundraising and communications and programmes.

Budgeting, Forecasting & Business Planning

- Support the Sense International team, Global Leads and global finance teams in preparing budgets, offering training and financial guidance.
- Consolidate UK and locally developed budgets into a comprehensive consolidated budget, ensuring corporate deadlines are met.

- Lead on budget planning, reforecasting, cash flow projections, currency exchange calculations, and monthly and quarterly reporting for the UK and international offices.
- Provide sensitivity analysis on fundraising and programmes.
- Produce business plans for all initiatives, both in the UK and overseas.
- Conduct critical assessments of financial proposals, return on investment, and actual performance against expectations.

Leadership & Team Development

- Mentor and guide both UK-based and overseas finance teams, ensuring high performance and timely responses to Sense International and country programme needs.
- Provide training and ongoing financial policy support to Budget Holders, ensuring adherence to financial policies and procedures.
- Serve as a key member of the Sense Finance Management Team and Sense International Executive Team and Sense International Leadership Group attending regular meetings and contributing to strategy development.

Compliance, Risk & Audit

- Ensure compliance with donor rules and regulations (FCDO and other public grants) and provide guidance to country programme staff on financial and compliance matters.
- Liaise with internal and external audit teams to ensure robust financial auditing processes for UK and overseas activities.
- Investigate alleged financial malpractice, support disciplinary procedures, and ensure fraud prevention measures are in place.
- Remain up to date on legislative changes affecting Sense's UK and international operations.
- Conduct annual cost reviews, identifying potential savings and efficiency improvements across Sense International.

- Lead on development of financial policies and manuals and keep these under review.

Operational & Systems Oversight

- Ensure international transfers and payments are made efficiently.
- Manage foreign currency positions, ensuring financial stability across international operations.
- Oversee fixed asset purchases and disposals for Sense International
- Assist in project management initiatives to improve Sense's finance systems and reporting processes as needed and requested.
- Ensure the integrity of financial ledgers and transactions, working closely with the Finance Team.

Strategic Collaboration & Advisory

- Build and maintain strong relationships with key stakeholders across Sense UK, Sense International, and country programmes.
- Provide ad-hoc financial reports to support UK and international initiatives.
- Offer day-to-day financial guidance to budget holders and ensure alignment with Sense International's strategic goals and financial policies.
- Contribute to the production of annual corporate accounts, leading the financial reporting for Sense International.

Person specification

Knowledge and Experience

- Relevant financial qualification such as ACA/ACCA/CIMA, with evidence of own continuing professional development.
- Significant experience of Charity and International reporting at a senior level, including working with institutional donors and the management of donor reporting.

- Significant experience at a senior management level in developing and implementing financial management information and managing day to day ledger accounts in a multi cost-centre organisation with diverse income streams.
- Experience producing consolidated management accounts and statutory accounts.
- Good knowledge of charity finance and accounting standards (SORP).
- Knowledge of the Charities Act, Company law and charity VAT regulations and gift aid.
- Knowledge of Foreign Exchange accounting and transactions
- Knowledge of SUN systems accounting package
- Experience of developing and monitoring an annual budget within a multi-cost centre environment.
- Knowledge of delivering overseas compliance and Grant making trusts and Bodies.
- Experience of manipulating large data sets in Microsoft excel.
- Experience of building effective working relationships with internal colleagues and external agencies, so that objectives are met consistently, and change is introduced successfully.
- Experience of challenging current ways of working, revising or developing procedures and policies in order to deliver organisational benefits.
- A demonstrable commitment to enabling an inclusive and diverse workforce to reflect our community.
- A commitment to disabled people with complex needs and Sense and Sense International's vision and values; a willingness to learn how to communicate with the people we support and identify the barriers to their participation in all aspects of Sense and Sense International's work.

Skills

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills to nurture and develop relationships with key stakeholders and external agencies, so that objectives are met consistently, and change is introduced successfully.

- Ability to influence and partner with leadership and colleagues across the finance department.
- Able to plan and organise your own workload or contribute to the planning of team workload with an appreciation of short and long-term deadlines.
- Knowledge and understanding of Data Protection issues.
- A demonstrable commitment to the principles and practices of equal opportunities.
- Highly developed creative and practical problem-solving skills.
- An ability to analyse, monitor and present information in various formats, so that the financial position and performance of services, and the effectiveness of policies and procedures can be assessed and managed on a proactive basis.

Personal circumstances

- An ability and willingness to be in Sense head office in Birmingham twice a week and travel to the Sense London office as needed and requested.
- An ability and willingness to travel internationally if needed and requested.

Our values

Everything we do is underpinned by three core values. These values shape the way we work as we pursue our vision of a world without limits for disabled people with complex needs.

- We're creating change
- We're always learning
- We're better together

Other information

- This job description does not form part of the employment contract.