

# Senior Finance Manager

Candidate pack – April 2026

# The power of design

Everything not made by mother-nature has been designed.

From computers and coffee cups to skyscrapers and services, design shapes the world around us.

It has the power to drive economic growth, transform lives, and build a regenerative future for all.

# About Design Council

Established in 1944, the Design Council is a royal chartered charity and the UK's long-standing and highly respected national champion for the effective use of design, for the benefit of the UK economy, society and the environment.

Dedicated to all design disciplines, we showcase design brilliance, lead on new thinking, evidence value and influence policy to create an environment for design to thrive.

We demonstrate value of design and impact of design thinking through our projects, policy and advocacy work and the knowledge and toolkits we've developed and launched, and our purpose is to make life better by design.

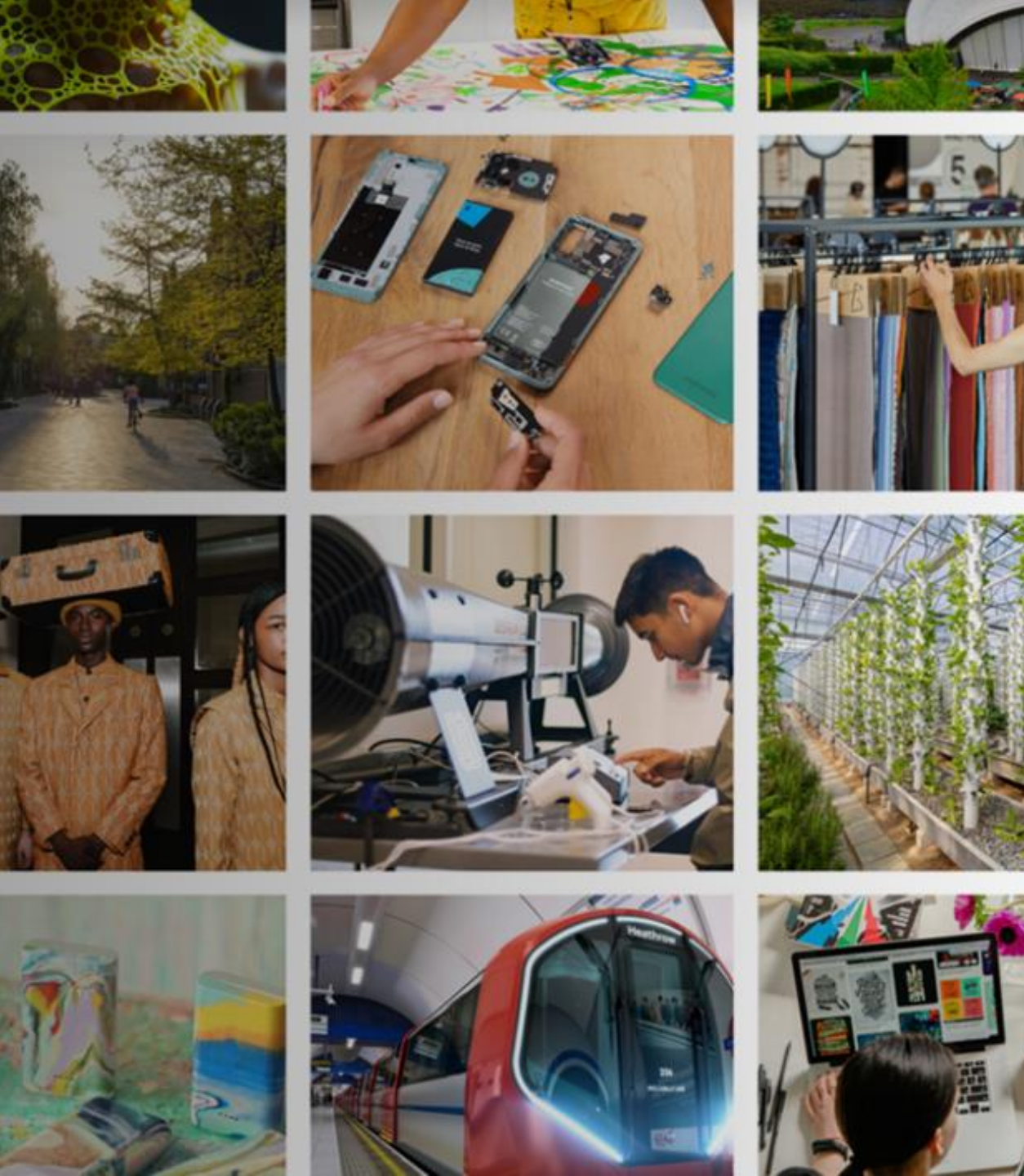
## Design for Planet Mission

Design has a powerful role to play in fighting the climate crisis. And with that power comes responsibility as we re-design nearly every aspect of how we live our lives.

Our Design for Planet mission aims to galvanise and support the 1.97 million people working in the UK's design economy to help address the climate crisis and achieve net zero and beyond, making design regenerative, not extractive.

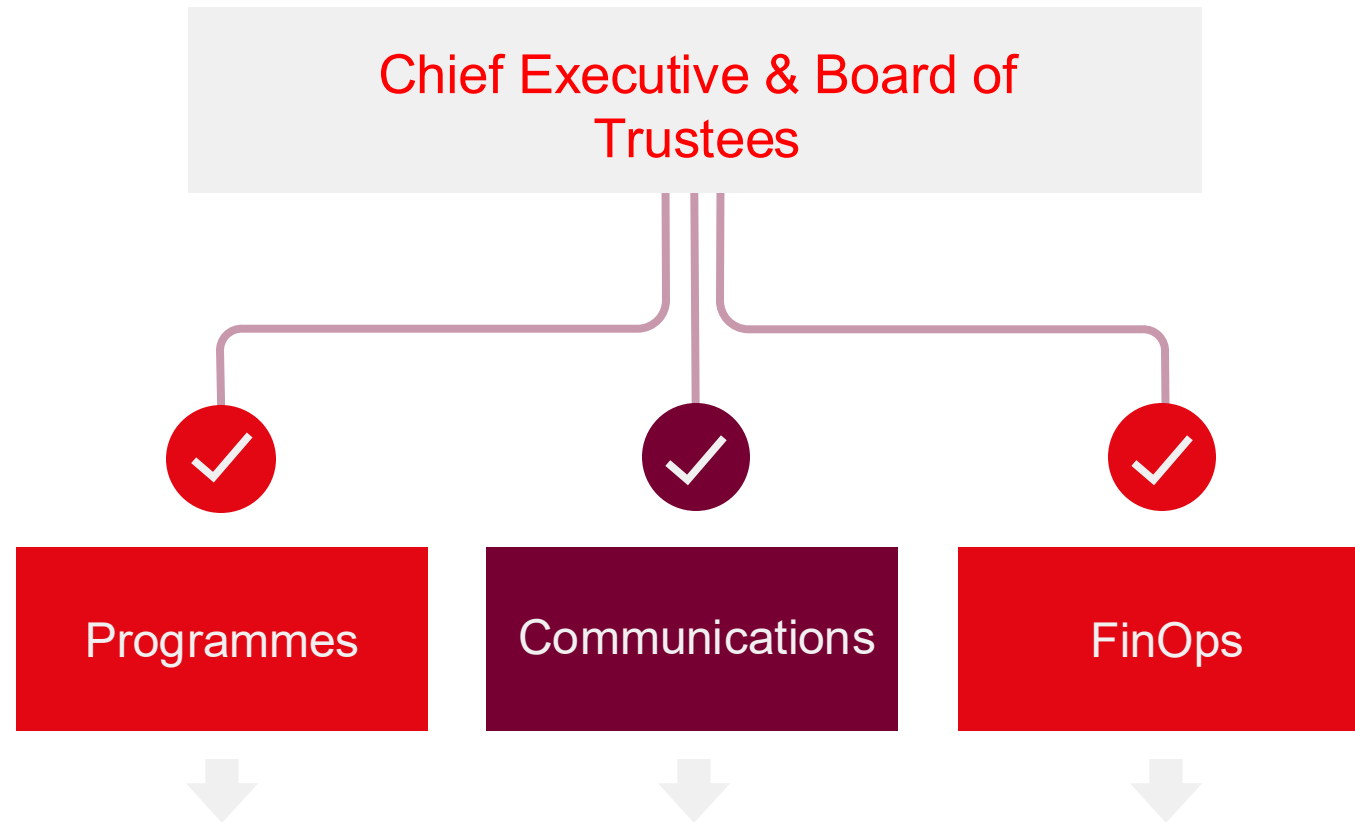
Design for Planet provides a platform for visionaries, designers, business, government and communities who are leading the way in climate action. Our goal is to provide support for everyone to make the planet a key stakeholder in everything we design.

We need to accelerate the speed with which we make design part of the solution, acknowledging that it has been a big part of the problem.



# About the Team

Based in Clerkenwell in London, the Design Council is a team of around 30 people. As a small team with a massive remit, we work collaboratively within this structure:



# Job summary

<b>Job title</b>	Senior Finance Manager
<b>Reporting to</b>	Head of Finance & Operations
<b>Location</b>	Central London/ Hybrid
<b>Contract type</b>	Part time (4 days a week)
<b>Salary band</b>	Senior Manager
<b>Salary</b>	from £46,800 p/a FTE (dependent on experience)



# Benefits

The Design Council offers a number of benefits, including:

- 28 annual leave days pro rata
- 2 Additional days off over Christmas
- Option to buy additional 5 days leave
- Bupa private health insurance scheme
- 5% employer pension contribution – going up to 7.5% if requested
- Hybrid working policy – working in office 2 days per week
- Flexible working
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Life Assurance Policy
- Cycle to work scheme
- Season ticket loan
- Enhanced maternity and paternity leave
- Learning & Development time – 5 days per year





**Skills  
for Planet**



**Design  
for  
Planet**



**Design  
Economy**



**World  
Design  
Congress**  
Design for Planet  
London 2025

**Design  
Council**

## About the role

Sitting within the Finance and Operations team and reporting to the Head of Finance & Operations, the Senior Finance Manager plays a pivotal role in ensuring the organisation's financial integrity and health. An exciting mix of management accounting, business partnering, financial analysis and process improvement, this hands-on role oversees the full financial cycle of the Design Council — from managing day-to-day processes and payments to delivering accurate financial reporting, insightful analysis and supporting programme delivery and strategic decision-making.

Working closely with internal budget holders and programme managers, external accountants and other service partners, the Senior Finance Manager ensures sound financial planning, robust controls and clear, timely reporting that drives transparency and accountability across the organisation.

They will be proactive in identifying opportunities for continuous improvement of financial processes and systems, utilising technology and data in supporting efficiency and transparency in everything we do.

The Senior Finance Manager is a confident, detail-focused finance professional who thrives in a dynamic environment and enjoys both the technical and collaborative aspects of financial management. They will bring strong analytical skills, excellent communication, and a proactive and creative approach to problem-solving and managing data and systems.

# Key responsibilities

The role includes the following responsibilities:

## **Providing high quality finance business partnering**

- Meeting with programme managers and other colleagues on a regular basis to track latest estimates of project budgets and resourcing
- Generating meaningful insights to support data-driven decision making
- Supporting colleagues with general finance queries including expense management and invoicing

## **Delivering process excellence through service partners**

- Managing the day-to-day delivery of external service partners for accounting and book-keeping processes, including weekly bank reconciliations, credit card reconciliations and monthly journal management
- Managing monthly payroll processes including the external payroll provider, payroll journaling and pension management

## **Procure to pay process**

- Liaising with third-party vendors for confirmation of banking details and/or any invoice queries/disputes
- Reviewing approved supplier invoices and manage supplier invoice postings
- Managing weekly payment runs, including payment journals and related controls
- Reviewing and posting employee expense claims including credit card transactions
- Posting client sales invoices

## **HMRC processes**

- Ensuring accurate coding of VAT transactions including Domestic/EU/International classifications
- Quarterly processing of VAT Return, calculating irrecoverability in accordance with resource allocation rules to business and non-business activity
- Management of all payments, submissions and liabilities to HMRC on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis
- Ensuring compliance with HMRC regulations including liaising with external advisors where required

# Key responsibilities

## Financial reporting and analysis

- Timely and accurate production of monthly management accounts
- Production of monthly financial forecast (P&L and cash flow)
- Regular analysis of margin and resource allocation, utilising data to generate actionable insights
- Provide first-level analysis across financial reporting (P&L, cashflow) to support Head of Finance & Operations provide clear information and narratives for Senior Management, board and committee reporting
- Work closely with Head of Finance & Operations on the annual budgeting process

## Process & systems ownership and improvement

- Process owner for the Microsoft Business Central system and connected applications
- Leading on the identification of opportunities to improve finance-related processes, systems and controls with a focus on achieving “right first time” outcomes and “one source of truth” for data
- Support Head of Finance & Operations with ensuring finance systems and connected applications keep pace with technological change and remain fit for purpose

## Financial controls and compliance

- Ensuring compliance with all financial controls set out in the organisation's Financial Framework, Financial Procedures and Schedule of Authority
- Ensuring robust and complete records are kept across all financial processes to ensure all regulatory obligations are met
- Ensuring audit process is fast, efficient and maintains the confidence of auditor, colleagues and the Board of Trustees

# About you

The role requires a hands-on, flexible financial professional, used to working in a fast-paced dynamic environment and willing to learn and grow in the role.

You are confident managing the broad range of finance-related activities within a small charity and understand the power of data to support business decision-making and organisational outcomes.

You are tech-savvy, and confident working with systems and manipulating datasets to generate insights and drive action.

You understand the importance of maintaining robust financial controls as well as timely and accurate management information.

You are an experienced business partner with the ability to drive financial engagement across the organisation. You are also organised and confident delivering process improvement and service quality both individually and through external partners.



# Skills & Experience

Qualified or part-qualified finance professional eg AAT/CIMA/ACCA/ACA/CIPFA.

Experienced finance business partner, with proven track record of providing quality finance support and advice to colleagues, particularly non-finance colleagues.

Excellent financial accounting and reporting knowledge including UK charity SORP, accounting for grants, charity VAT rules and unrestricted vs restricted funds.

Confident user of accounting software packages and working digitally, preferably with working experience of Microsoft Business Central.

Confident and effective at delivering quality outcomes through external service partners.

Experience of improving and developing systems and processes.

Experience of maintaining a robust financial control environment.

Experience of working with auditors and other external advisors such as tax and legal.

Broad understanding current audit, tax, treasury and other regulatory requirements.

Confident user of MS Excel and preferably also PowerBI.

# You will also be

Able to work at pace and sometimes to tight timelines.

Confident and skilled communicator across a range of stakeholders, verbally and in writing.

Empathetic, pragmatic and adaptable, with a solutions-mindset.

Hands on in your attitude and ability to find flexible solutions.

Proactive and take ownership of issues through to resolution.

Curious and open to new ideas and ways of working.

A team player but also confident working on your own.

Resilient and comfortable with navigating through change.

Aware of the rewards and challenges of working in the not-for-profit sector.



# Join us

To apply for the role please submit your CV and covering letter, via this [LINK](#).

The closing date for all applications to be received is **22 April 2026**.

The Design Council is fully committed to being a diverse and inclusive organisation. We welcome applications from everyone who meets the criteria. If you need any additional support, please do send in an early alert to our email address below.

Further questions can be directed to Ishbel Allotey, Head of HR at the following email address: [recruitment@designcouncil.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@designcouncil.org.uk) but please note that submissions must be made via the link above.

Visit [designcouncil.org.uk](https://designcouncil.org.uk) to discover more about our work and mission.





*“The  
fundamental idea  
of design is to  
make the world a  
better place.”*

**Bruce Mau, Designer**

@designcouncil



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