



Photo credit: EducAid Sierra Leone

## Global Schools Forum

### Finance Manager

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**Candidate Pack  
September 2024**

# About Global Schools Forum

Global Schools Forum ([GSF](#)) is a collaborative community, innovation accelerator, and partnership builder for non-state organisations working to improve education at scale for underserved children in low- and middle-income countries.

Since our establishment in 2017, we've [grown our community](#) to **123 organisations** spanning **65 countries**, collectively **running or supporting over 252,772 schools and centres** and providing education to well over **22.4 million children**. Our members are standalone schools; a diverse set of school networks working within or across countries; or organisations providing core support services to non-state schools.

Our work currently covers three core areas:

**Growing a global, interconnected learning community.** We are continuously expanding our community of mission-aligned, non-state organisations across Asia, Africa, and South America. We provide opportunities for our community of leaders to collaborate and learn from each other, as they confront shared operational and pedagogical challenges. Based on the needs and challenges of the community, we curate an annual programme of events and communities of practice.

**Testing promising approaches and diffusing evidence.** We fund and support education entrepreneurs to develop, test and scale promising education approaches. We generate and share evidence on 'what works' in education and what makes organisations more effective.

**Partnering strategically to shape policy and scale solutions.** We enable our community to engage in the strengthening of education systems by engaging in global policy processes, and with support in forging partnerships with other organisations, funders, and policymakers.

We are a small, fully-remote global team with colleagues based in the UK and across Africa, Asia and Latin America, reflecting the communities in which we work.

Our values guide everything we do as a team, as a global community and in our engagements with partners, funders and the global education community:

- **Collaboration:** We leverage each other's strengths and knowledge to drive and amplify purpose driven collective action.
- **Intentional Inclusivity:** We cultivate and celebrate diversity of backgrounds, culture, perspectives, and approaches promoting inclusivity and mutual respect.
- **Continuous Improvement:** We commit to continuously learning, improving, and innovating, while sharing best practices and failures.
- **Honesty and Transparency:** We conduct ourselves with integrity, openness, accountability and kindness.

## Role Purpose

This is a newly created role and an exciting opportunity for a finance professional with experience in the charity sector to play a key role in developing a robust finance function for a growing fully remote organisation, while maintaining the smooth running and management of day-to-day financial operations.

Two years ago GSF spun out from Ark where we were incubated for the first 5 years of operation and since then our finance function has been outsourced to [Prodos Advisors](#). Due to continuing growth we are creating this in-house role to create a greater connection between the work we do and the financial engine that drives it. The post holder will have the opportunity to work on strategic projects such as financial forecasting, reporting and analysis in support of our long-term financial sustainability goals, and will also lead on developing and updating our policies, procedures and ways of working to ensure a robust and efficiently run finance function. Prodos will continue to manage GSF bookkeeping and payroll.

The Finance Manager will work closely with Prodos, the Operations Director and the Chair of the Finance Audit and Risk Committee to ensure effective financial planning, control, management and reporting to support our financial sustainability and our long-term impact in the global education sector.

The successful candidate may be formally qualified or qualified by their prior experience of working in charity finance. Critical to success in this role will be the ability to be the ‘non-finance persons finance person’ – connecting bookkeeping to strategic decision making and ensuring financial information and analysis are available and accessible to everyone from the GSF Board to project managers.

In addition to the relevant technical skills and experience, we are looking for someone who is committed to GSF’s mission, who is proactive, and who can identify, define and propose solutions to problems, with excellent people skills to build and maintain effective collaborative relationships with colleagues across the organisation.

If you want to be part of an impactful and committed team, that is continually innovating, and improving then we want to hear from you.

## Responsibilities

### Finance Function Development

- Managing the relationship with Prodos and acting as the primary link between Prodos and the GSF team.
- Initiating new ways of working to ensure the smooth running of the finance function, integration with fundraising and other functions and access to financial information across the GSF team.

- Maintaining and continuously improving GSF finance processes and procedures ensuring they are efficient, transparent and fit for purpose for a remote team.
- Developing and updating GSF finance policies to ensure they are robust, effective and easy to follow.
- Maintaining accurate financial records including implementing appropriate data retention and archiving policies and procedures, working closely with Prodos.
- Supporting team members to understand and work with financial information appropriate to their roles, including answering ad hoc queries and delivering training to the team and/or individual team members.

### **Financial Control**

- Ensuring financial controls and the integrity of financial records are maintained, working closely with Prodos
- Leading the month-end process, in liaison with Prodos and the programme managers to ensure income and expenditure is reconciled and accurate.
- Working with the Operations Director to maintain an accurate register of internal and external financial risks and to develop and implement plans to mitigate them wherever possible

### **Financial Planning and management**

- Leading the annual budgeting process, working with SMT and programme managers across GSF. Presenting the budget to the Finance Audit and Risk Committee for approval.
- Leading the monthly income and expenditure reconciliation process, liaising with Prodos and programme managers.
- Owning and managing the GSF Full Cost Recovery model, working across the team and liaising with Prodos to review the allocations each quarter.
- Managing the quarterly reforecasting process, liaising with the Senior Management Team.
- Developing projections and models to support longer term strategic planning.

### **Financial Reporting**

- Liaising with Prodos to prepare monthly management accounts, leading on developing the commentaries and analysis to accompany the numbers and presenting them for discussion at Senior Management meetings.
- Preparing quarterly reports of progress against finance and fundraising milestones and KPIs for GSF team and Board of Trustees.
- Preparing papers for, and attending meetings of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

### **Fundraising and income**

- Supporting the project teams with project budget development, full cost recovery and financial reporting for donors.
- Owning and maintaining the fundraising pipeline in close collaboration with the Senior Management Team.
- Ensuring smooth integration between finance and fundraising systems and data.

- Supporting with funder due diligence requirements as necessary.
- Establishing and maintaining systems and processes required to roll out a new fee-charging model for GSF members, including providing receipts, and tracking and chasing due and overdue payments.

### **Grant Administration**

- Supporting the programmes teams to design and maintain fund dispersal systems and processes for GSF grantees.
- Supporting the programmes teams to design and implement due diligence policies and procedures for GSF Grantees.

### **Audit and Banking**

- Leading on appointing and liaising with GSF auditors and overseeing the audit process from preparation to successful completion, working closely with Prodos.
- Liasing with Prodos to produce draft accounts and ensure all documentation is made available and queries responded to in a timely manner.
- Ensuring all statutory filings are completed on time. Submitting financial statements and annual returns to the Charity Commission and liaising with the Auditors to submit financial statements to Companies House.
- Managing GSF bank account(s) and acting as the main point of contact for bank communication.
- Working with the Finance Committee and Senior Management Team to create and execute a strategy to maximise returns on surplus funds.
- Other requirements as may be required as part of a small team

## **Person Specification**

- **Charity finance experience** – You may be a fully qualified accountant, or you may be qualified by strong prior experience with charity accounts, data and formats.
- **Accounting** - You will have experience with QuickBooks or similar accounting software, knowledge of accounting principles and internal controls.
- **The non-finance persons finance person** – You'll have a keen ability to extract meaning from financial data and reports and make it accessible to GSF team members in a range of roles for a wide range of purposes.
- **Proactivity and solution orientation** – You'll be a self-starter, able to work independently and show initiative in identifying areas for improvement and implementing solutions.
- **Pragmatic and practical** - You are passionate about developing a finance function and producing financial information that engages and supports the GSF team to deliver their work.

- **Planning and organising** - You'll have strong planning and time management skills with the ability to effectively manage multiple priorities and stakeholders.
- **Attention-to-detail** - You'll be someone who prides yourself on getting the details right, with experience of managing high-volume workloads, without compromising on quality and accuracy.
- **Flexibility** - You'll be comfortable working in a young, fully remote organisation. You'll be quick to adapt to changes in priorities and tasks.
- **Communication** - You'll have excellent written and oral communication skills, and experience communicating effectively with a range of audiences in a range of formats.
- **Collaborative team player** – You value others' ideas, skills, perspectives and contributions and work actively to share ideas and support with colleagues .
- **Commitment to continuous improvement** – you are committed to actively developing and sharing your knowledge and skills, to seeking and applying feedback and to sharing feedback with others.
- **Honesty and transparency** – you share information and updates in a clear and transparent way, when things are going to plan and when they aren't.
- **Intentionally inclusive** – You are committed to understanding, respecting and collaborating with colleagues from a wide range of backgrounds and experience levels.
- **Tech literacy** – You'll be proficient in working with the Microsoft 365 suite and other platforms and tools that make remote work possible . You will have excellent excel skills
- **Passion and motivation** - You'll be passionate about education and making a difference, with a strong work ethic and willingness to get stuck in.

## Terms and Conditions

**Salary:** Competitive within non-state education sector, adjusted based on location and experience.

**Contract:** Two-year fixed term with expectation of extension. Consultancy agreements will be considered for candidates not based in the UK, where GSF is currently headquartered.

**Hours:** Full Time, typically 9-5 in your time zone, but with significant flexibility. Given that we work across different time zones, some non-traditional hours for early or late calls may be required.

**Location:** We are a fully remote organisation. We welcome applications from anywhere in the world, with a preference for a time zone between GMT-2 to GMT+5:30. Local work authorisation is required. Some international travel may be required.

**Anticipated Start Date:** As soon as possible, subject to any notice periods.

**Responsible to:** Philippa Frankl, Operations Director



## Our benefits include:

- 35 fully flexible holiday days (including flexible bank holidays)
- Flexible working - work from home or at a location that suits you and at the times that work best for you
- Co-working space allowance
- Personal learning and development budget
- Access to GSF events
- Access to Learning Platform iHasco
- Annual team retreat
- Employee pension scheme (only available to UK employees at present)

## How to Apply:

**Application deadline:** Monday 14<sup>th</sup> Oct, 9am BST

**In order to apply for this role, please access our application portal here:**

<https://apply.workable.com/j/2F3D44FB65>

You will need to upload your CV and a cover letter detailing:

- What excites you about GSF and this role in particular
- Your achievements and experience as they relate to this job description
- What you would do in this role to really make an impact

Please note we will not consider any applications unless they include a CV, cover letter and response to the points above, and/or if they have not been submitted through our application portal.

Recruitment Process:

- First-round interviews: w/c 21st October
- Second-round interviews w/c 28th October

If you apply, we will process your personal data for recruitment purposes only and in accordance with our [Data Privacy Policy](#).

**GSF is committed to cultivating a fair and inclusive workplace, where everyone can be themselves and thrive. We welcome applications from everyone regardless of race, age, disability, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or faith.**

If this role isn't quite right for you but you like the idea of working at GSF, please submit your CV to our talent pool and be the first to hear about new opportunities in future here: [Global Schools Forum - Current Openings \(workable.com\)](#)