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## **David Lynch Foundation Chief Operating Officer Job Description**

**The David Lynch Foundation (“DLF”)**, the country’s leading philanthropic organization promoting programs that reduce stress in at-risk populations through the widespread adoption of Transcendental Meditation, is seeking a highly intelligent and experienced professional with a strong commitment to its mission to become its new **Chief Operating Officer (“COO”)**.

### **Background:**

The David Lynch Foundation was established in 2005 by renowned filmmaker David Lynch in order to promote widespread adoption of Transcendental Meditation (“TM”), the most widely researched and scientifically validated form of meditation, which he credits with giving him higher levels of energy, greater focus and consciousness, as well as greater happiness. He created the Foundation in order to raise funds and provide grants for the implementation of scientifically proven modalities to reduce toxic stress and the effects of trauma, alleviate suffering, and improve the performance and cognitive capacity of at risk populations.

The vision for the David Lynch Foundation is for it to be the global catalyst for the implementation of the evidence-based Transcendental Meditation program to address the epidemic of trauma and toxic stress in modern society. Through partnership with an international network of specially-trained instructors, the Foundation will ensure that Transcendental Meditation is widely available to at-risk populations and the institutions that serve them.

The David Lynch Foundation also funds independent university and medical school research to assess the effects of TM on academic performance, ADHD and other learning disorders, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, cardiovascular disease, post-traumatic stress disorder, and diabetes.

It is critical to note that the Foundation has undergone tremendous growth over the last five years, growing in size from four people in a single office to over 35 full time staff located across four cities (New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and Fairfield, Iowa). The Foundation is in the final stages of a Strategic Planning process, the preliminary drafts of which confirm that the Foundation is poised for explosive growth and in so doing, will be in a position to relieve suffering for tens of thousands of people experiencing the debilitating effects of traumatic stress. Although the current team is excellent, there is a clear and immediate need to have in place an experienced, full-time COO to help guide the organization.

**The Position:**

The David Lynch Foundation is seeking a Chief Operating Officer who will work closely with the Executive Director and the Executive Team as a full partner in the Foundation's mission, vision and growth. The COO will work "hand in glove" with the Executive Director to establish appropriate objectives, paying attention to key performance criteria with accuracy, urgency and insight, and must therefore possess a strong ability to understand strategic goals and be able to define and implement tactical capabilities to meet those goals. The COO should be able to assess collateral impact of decisions and actions, plan ahead to multiply impact of positive actions and mitigate anticipated or unforeseen risks. The COO must have a strong and developed ability to motivate and develop staff, to work respectfully with a senior team and its advisors and be oriented to the effective and careful use of resources.

The ideal candidate will handle complex situations and multiple responsibilities simultaneously, mixing long-term projects with the urgency of immediate demands. He/she must also have the demonstrated ability to deal with confidential information and act as a liaison between the Executive Director and other constituencies, both internal and external. He/she must exhibit the skills to collaborate with and achieve actionable results through others, the ability to build strong and sustainable relationships and the capability to interact within all levels of the foundation.

The COO must be a highly intelligent self-starter who shares the Executive Director's and the Board's commitment to the agency's core mission. This individual must be able to clearly articulate DLF's purpose and objectives to the business, government and nonprofit communities, as well as the public. He or she should have proven ability to foster the growth of an organization, demonstrate significant accomplishments and past successes, be hands-on, a strategic thinker, planner and problem solver, and be comfortable driving change.

Excellent communication and negotiation skills are critical. He or she must be able to work closely with the active and engaged Board as well as with an experienced and committed staff. The COO must communicate in a transparent and honest fashion that promotes inclusiveness, cooperation and teamwork. In addition, he or she will be bright, diplomatic, analytical, of the highest integrity, and possess sound judgment as well as a sense of humor and humility.

***Position Responsibilities:***

The COO will work closely with the Executive Director in what must be a strong, trusting, symbiotic relationship where the COO and ED are publicly and privately aligned towards the staff, Board, and stakeholders. Among other duties, the COO will:

- Oversee all internal operational, programmatic and administrative functions of the Foundation, freeing up the ED to focus on external matters (such as cultivation and fundraising, teaching, and engaging in high visibility speaking engagements and public appearances)

- Provide a strong day-to-day leadership presence for all staff – both in NY and in offices nationwide, and create systems and effective processes to bridge regional operations and improve communication and coordination among the different offices, sites and program locations
- Work closely with, and oversee, the Foundation’s executive leadership team who collectively have responsibilities for Program, Finance, Strategic Growth, Human Resources, Operations, Technology, and Fundraising and External Relations including doing assessments in each area to assure proper staffing, efficient operations and the establishment and implementation of accurate systems and departmental goals and objectives
- Oversee all human resources and insurance matters, including developing and refining performance appraisal criteria and related hiring and retention processes with a focused eye on assuring that all staff, including the Executive Team, are operating with the requisite urgency, efficiency and accuracy in their respective areas and that each area is appropriately staffed
- Working closely with the CFAO, assure that the annual budgeting process is conducted in the most effective and efficient way given the fluid landscape of the Foundation and its continual growth and assuring that, at all times, the Executive Director has all the information he needs related to budgeting, program fund allocation, fundraising and resource allocation
- Work to instill a human capital culture within the David Lynch Foundation by establishing a more clear system for defining respective job functions, delineating job descriptions and reporting lines, clarifying the reporting and organizational chart, and establishing a more rigorous adherence to processes for intra-organization communication, recruiting, hiring and termination
- Work with the senior team to analyze the current development, programs, financial and accounting, and technology infrastructure and recommend changes as determined to be necessary to support the Foundation’s growth and the goals espoused in the Strategic Plan.

*Qualifications:*

The successful candidate must believe in the core values of the David Lynch Foundation and embrace its mission. DLF is seeking a candidate who has proven experience in scaling a multi-city fundraising and/or program-driven organization, and a demonstrated ability to both lead and build the capabilities of a driven, bright, diverse team.

Additional attributes include:

- A proven track record of consistently making sound and sometimes difficult decisions through a combination of analysis, wisdom, experience, and judgment; high level of business acumen including successful P&L management; the ability to balance the delivery of programs against the realities of a budget; and problem solving, project management, and creative resourcefulness
- Experience with capacity building—ability to effectively build organization and staff capacity, developing a top-notch workforce and the processes that ensure the organization runs smoothly
- Exceptional ability to manage and lead people -- with experience in scaling up organizations; strong ability to connect with staff both on an individual level and in large groups; capacity to enforce accountability, develop and empower top-notch leaders from the bottom up, lead from the top down, cultivate entrepreneurship, and learn the strengths and weaknesses of the team so as to put people in a position to succeed
- Strong yet collegial management style—thorough understanding of finance, systems, and HR; broad experience with the full range of business functions and systems, including strategic development and planning, budgeting, business analysis, finance, information systems, and human resources and ability to take charge of a situation and to address or overcome resistance to leadership and take unpopular stands when necessary
- Solid educational background—undergraduate degree required; MBA or similar advanced degree highly desired

Salary will be commensurate with experience. The David Lynch Foundation is an equal opportunity employer. For more information about the David Lynch Foundation, please visit their website at [www.davidlynchfoundation.org](http://www.davidlynchfoundation.org)

**To Apply:**

The David Lynch Foundation has retained the services of Harris Rand Lusk to conduct this search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications may be directed in confidence to:

Jack Lusk, President/CEO  
or  
Anne McCarthy, Senior Director/COO  
Harris Rand Lusk  
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Please put the words “DLF COO” in the subject line of your e-mailed application.