

Role profile – Chief Operation Officer

Reports to – Chief Executive Officer

Broad band - 10

Background

The British Council exists to build 'trust and opportunity' for the UK. As a consequence of the 2010/11 strategy review this is being achieved by focused delivery of services and activities in the three core areas of English & Exams, Education and Society and the Arts. Activities are delivered via eight geographical regions with a presence in 110 countries, giving a matrix operating environment. Success is measured by both cultural and financial targets. Activities are provided to a wide range of stakeholders ranging from government institutions to commercial customers and revenue is therefore generated from an equally wide range of sources from direct allocation of UK government funding to commercial customers. This creates a complex internal operating environment with parallel operating systems and at times difficulty in achieving a holistic understanding of achievement against targets. The complexity can create barriers to achieving scale synergies.

Presently 25% of British Council funding comes from the UK government which will reduce to 15% of funding by 2014/15 by when the British Council will generate 85% of its own funds.

Purpose of role

As a senior member of the Executive Board, the Chief Operating Officer (COO) is accountable to the CEO for delivery of the annual operating plan (impact/financial). He/she leads the senior management team in delivery of the plan managing organisation levers to enable achievement of OVERALL organisation annual targets. He/she has authority to 'course correct' in year as necessary. The job holder is a key member of the Executive Board contributing to the overall deliverables of the Board and is accountable for the operation of the overseas network.

Accountabilities

1. Delivery of annual operating plan – accountable for delivery of all annual operating targets. Achieved by:

- Developing 'fit' for purpose rolling planning process appropriate for an income generating organisation focusing on deliverables and transparent measures.
- Acts a facilitator and 'span breaker' between region and SBU's/functions when necessary making decisions based on overall organisation needs.
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- Owns Management .Board developing it into an operationally focused team which constantly reviews achievements against plan and is comfortable with robust review mechanisms.
 - Has authority to adjust individual deliverables and reallocate resources in order to ensure delivery of plan.
 - Reviews key projects which are critical to plan achievement
 - Manages appropriate grant spending profile and removes systemic barriers to even spend.
2. **Takes ‘holistic’ overview** on behalf of EB of interdependencies between significant change/delivery projects. Has oversight of multi year delivery plan and ensures key interdependencies are understand and managed.
 3. **Efficiency agenda** – uses organisation oversight to identify efficiency opportunities, particularly via synergies and reducing system complexity.
 4. **EB member** – as EM member provides visible, high impact leadership to the organisation. Accountable for delivery of 2015 plan and shaping future strategic direction post 2015. Works with SBU/Functional leads to translate strategy into deliverables.
 5. **Overseas network** – Manages global network via 8 regional reports. Accountable for delivery of 2015 ‘global presence and cost’ objectives and ensuring the required leadership and capability exists to deliver ambition. Facilitates effective matrix organisation and global team working.

CEO	COO
External	Internal
Strategy	In year/rolling plan
‘Big hairy targets’	Delivering against specific measures
Accountable for 2015	Accountable for specific years
Overall performance systems – philosophy/purpose	Group/individual delivery within system
Organisation wide communication	Project based communications
Figure head/vision	Implementation

Core skills

Analytical. Translates big picture into operation plan. Brings order and focus to complex situations. Comfortable with the figures and planning systems. Brave in creating change. Can handle conflict. Brings colleagues together

around a common plan. Can do the detail. Quizzical and relentless. Creates trust.