



Unicorn Preservation Society

Job Description

Job Title: Finance Officer

Location: Dundee City Centre

Line Manager: Chief Financial & Administrative Officer

Job Family: Finance & Administration

Working Hours: Full-time including some evenings and weekends

Annual Leave: 34 Days inclusive of public holidays and closures (Christmas and New Year)

Contract Length: Until end May 2026. Contracts may be extended beyond this, subject to funding.

Grade: 2

Salary: £26,500 per annum

Introduction

Launched in 1824, HMS Unicorn is the third oldest ship in the world still afloat and Scotland's only surviving wooden warship. Now an Accredited Museum in Dundee's City Quay, visitors can explore four decks that offer a unique glimpse into 19th century naval life.

Our mission is to deliver a world-class museum experience while safeguarding HMS Unicorn's future and making our collections accessible to all. We aim to inspire visitors and staff alike, providing lifelong learning and engagement opportunities for our local communities and beyond.

The Unicorn Preservation Society has recently secured nearly £1 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to advance Project Safe Haven - our ambitious conservation initiative to relocate HMS Unicorn to Dundee's East Graving Dock. This critical move will ensure the long-term preservation of this irreplaceable maritime treasure while creating a purpose-built visitor centre that will transform Dundee's historic waterfront and enhance community engagement.

This role is made possible through National Lottery Heritage Fund support and represents an exciting opportunity to join our team at a pivotal moment in HMS Unicorn's 200-year history.

Main Purpose of Role

The Finance Officer will be responsible for maintaining accurate financial records and providing essential bookkeeping services to support the financial management of the Unicorn Preservation Society. Working under the guidance of the Chief Financial & Administrative Officer (CFAO), this role will handle day-to-day financial processes, assist with budgeting and reporting, and ensure compliance with financial regulations and procedures.



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The post-holder will work closely with the CFAO and Administrative Officer to ensure smooth financial operations across the organisation, including supporting Project Safe Haven's financial administration requirements. Additionally, the Finance Officer will provide support to other UPS teams such as Fundraising & Communications, Heritage & Learning, and will occasionally provide direct support to the CEO when required. This role is essential for maintaining robust financial systems during a period of significant organisational growth and development.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

Day-to-Day Financial Operations

- Process purchase orders, invoices, and expense claims using Xero accounting software
- Maintain the purchase ledger and sales ledger, ensuring accurate and timely processing
- Reconcile bank accounts and petty cash on a regular basis
- Process payments to suppliers and contractors in line with organisational procedures
- Record income from various sources, including donations, ticket sales, and retail
- Manage and maintain online ePos and donation systems, ensuring accurate recording of transactions
- Process and reconcile electronic payments from various payment platforms
- Assist with Gift Aid administration and claims

Financial Reporting and Analysis

- Assist with the preparation of monthly management accounts and financial reports
- Support the CFAO with budget monitoring and financial forecasting
- Contribute to the preparation of financial information for grant applications and reports
- Support the CFAO with the production of financial reports for the Board and committees
- Monitor departmental budgets and highlight variances to budget holders
- Generate financial data for monitoring and evaluation purposes
- Undertake financial analysis and produce reports as required by the CFAO

Systems and Compliance

- Maintain financial filing systems, both electronic and physical
- Process payroll information and liaise with external payroll providers as required
- Support the annual audit and independent examination process
- Maintain asset registers and depreciation schedules
- Maintain appropriate financial controls and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements
- Contribute to the development of financial systems and processes



Cross-Organisational Support

- Assist with financial aspects of funding applications and reporting
- Support the financial administration of Project Safe Haven
- Provide financial information and guidance to colleagues across the organisation
- Provide support to other UPS teams such as Fundraising & Communications, Heritage & Learning
- Provide occasional direct support to the CEO for financial matters when required
- Provide occasional coverage for Visitor Experience Assistants during lunch breaks and periods of absence, ensuring continuity of front desk operations

General Duties

- Adhere to HMS Unicorn's policies and procedures including health and safety, security, and fire regulations
- Represent HMS Unicorn professionally to visitors, stakeholders and partners
- Participate in team meetings and staff development activities as required
- Undertake training and development as required for the role and maintain professional knowledge and skills
- Undertake any other reasonable duties as directed by the CFAO

PERSON SPECIFICATION

This section details the attributes, skills, knowledge, qualifications and competencies which are required in order to undertake the full remit of this post.

Essential Criteria

- Minimum 2 years' experience in a finance or bookkeeping role
- Experience using Xero accounting software or similar financial systems
- Experience with online ePos systems and electronic payment platforms
- Experience of processing invoices, reconciling accounts, and maintaining financial records
- Experience of financial reporting and budget monitoring
- Experience of working with multiple budgets and cost centres
- Experience of maintaining financial filing systems
- Strong numerical skills and attention to detail
- Knowledge of financial regulations and procedures
- Strong IT skills, particularly in Microsoft Excel and Office 365 applications
- Ability to maintain confidentiality when handling sensitive financial information
- Ability to work accurately under pressure and meet deadlines
- Good communication skills, both written and verbal
- Self-motivated with the ability to work independently and as part of a team



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- Willingness to work evenings and weekends as needed

Desirable Criteria

- Bookkeeping qualification (e.g., AAT) or part-qualified accountant
- Experience of charity finance and fund accounting
- Experience of Gift Aid administration
- Experience of supporting grant funding financial administration
- Experience of supporting audit processes
- Experience of financial administration for projects
- Experience of working in a heritage, museum, or charity environment
- Knowledge of SORP requirements for charity accounting
- Knowledge of financial compliance requirements for charities
- Experience of using SharePoint
- Understanding of procurement processes
- Knowledge of Dundee's heritage sector

Essential Criteria – requirements without which a candidate would not be able to undertake the full remit of the role. Applicants who do not clearly demonstrate in their application that they possess the essential requirements will normally be rejected at the shortlisting stage.

Desirable Criteria – requirements which would be useful for the candidate to hold. When shortlisting, these criteria will be considered when more than one applicant meets the essential requirements.

Access Information

HMS Unicorn is currently not fully physically accessible for all users, and there are therefore physical requirements that come with this role on board a wooden, historic ship.

- HMS Unicorn is accessed via an entry gangway which can rise up to a 50-degree angle at high tide and dip to a 50cm drop at low tide.
- The different decks on board HMS Unicorn are only accessible via ladderways.
- For a full description of access aboard HMS Unicorn, please refer to our access guide available on request.

Career Development and Fair Work

At the Unicorn Preservation Society, we are committed to supporting the professional growth and development of our staff. While we recognise that as a small organisation advancement opportunities may be limited, we have a duty to support our team members to be their best and to prepare them for future career growth. We create clear progression pathways, support skills



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development, and empower staff to achieve their professional potential, whether within UPS or as they move on to broader opportunities in the heritage sector.

As a Fair Work employer, we adhere to key principles that ensure an equitable and supportive workplace:

- **Voice:** We ensure staff have opportunities to contribute to organisational decisions
- **Security:** We provide appropriate job security and consistency of hours where possible
- **Opportunity:** We support skills development and career progression
- **Respect:** We foster a workplace culture of dignity and respect
- **Fulfilment:** We create meaningful work environments

UPS is committed to ensuring all staff receive at minimum the Real Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation. Our salary structure reflects both Museums Association recommendations (adjusted for regional context) and competitive positioning within the Scottish independent museum sector. We believe fair pay is essential to maintain staff wellbeing, reduce turnover, enhance engagement, and uphold our reputation as a responsible employer.

Through our formal grading structure, we provide clear pathways for progression and professional development, with regular reviews to support your growth and career aspirations.

Equal Opportunities

The Unicorn Preservation Society is a Disability Confident Committed employer and operates a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for people living with a disability who fulfil the essential criteria in the job specification. If you would like to be considered under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme, please let us know as part of your application.

HMS Unicorn is committed to the principles of Fair Work and paying the real Living Wage to all our employees. We believe that fair work practices lead to better outcomes for individuals and organisations, contributing to a more successful economy and inclusive society. As an employer, we are dedicated to providing appropriate channels for effective workers' voice, investing in workforce development, opposing inappropriate use of zero-hours contracts, and offering flexible working from day one of employment where possible.

Our commitment to fair work extends to addressing workplace inequalities, including pay and employment gaps. We strive to create a workplace where all staff are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their background or personal characteristics.

All staff and volunteers working with UPS must undergo Disclosure and PVG checks.



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How to Apply

We encourage applicants to apply by submitting:

- A CV and covering letter explaining how you meet the requirements of the role

Please submit informal enquiries and applications to: recruitment@hmsunicorn.org.uk

Application deadline: 09:00 on Monday 2 June 2025

Interview date: Week commencing 9 June 2025

Applicants will be required to bring proof of right to work in the UK to the interview. This should either be a UK passport, birth certificate, or form of ID recognised by the Home Office. Further details here - <https://www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-work>



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