

Chief Operating Officer

Community Heart & Soul

Full-Time | Reports to President

Position Summary

Based in Shelburne, Vermont, Community Heart & Soul is seeking a Chief Operating Officer (COO) to serve as the organization's senior internal operating executive. Reporting directly to the President, the COO leads day-to-day operations, staff coordination, financial management support, and organizational infrastructure—enabling the President to remain fully focused on national expansion, partnership development, and strategic growth.

This is a significant leadership opportunity at a compelling moment. Community foundations, statewide philanthropic networks, and civic organizations are key in the growth of Community Heart & Soul's resident-led program. The COO will play a central role in ensuring that this national growth is matched by strong systems, disciplined execution, and a thriving internal culture—without veering into mission-creep. The COO upholds the organization's commitment to its core identity as it scales.

This is an in-office position based in Shelburne, VT. Some travel is required to meet with partners, Heart & Soul communities, and attend conferences and events.

Primary Responsibilities

1. Organizational Operations

The COO ensures that Community Heart & Soul runs smoothly, efficiently, and professionally every day.

- Oversee day-to-day operations and translate approved strategic priorities into clear, actionable work plans.
- Coordinate internal systems across all departments and monitor progress against projects and deadlines.
- Identify opportunities to improve workflows, meeting rhythms, reporting systems, and decision-making processes.
- Ensure staff have the tools, information, and support needed to do their best work.
- Maintain operational momentum and continuity as the organization grows—especially when the President is traveling or externally engaged.

2. Staff Leadership and Culture

The COO strengthens accountability while preserving Community Heart & Soul's collaborative culture and mission-centered spirit.

- Provide day-to-day management that supports staff and sustains a healthy, high-performing team environment.
- Coach managers and staff through operational challenges; support performance management and professional development.
- Foster collaboration across the program, communications, market development, finance, and administrative functions.

- Preserve the current spirit of trust, flexibility, and shared mission as the organization evolves.

3. Financial and Business Operations

Working closely with the Finance Director and President, the COO ensures strong financial management, budget discipline, and businesslike operating practices.

- Lead annual budgeting and ongoing budget monitoring in partnership with the Finance Director and President .
- Translate budget decisions into operating plans; review operational expenses and identify efficiencies.
- Support the Finance Director in preparing the annual audit.
- Manage contracts, MOUs, vendor relationships, and purchasing processes.
- Ensure financial information is consistently available to inform planning and decision-making.

4. Risk Management and Compliance

The COO ensures the organization minimizes its risk exposure and protects its assets.

- Oversee risk management across contracts, human resources, intellectual property, and organizational compliance.
- Ensure that personnel policies are current, clearly communicated, and consistently applied.
- Oversee benefits administration, HR compliance, and accurate administrative recordkeeping.
- Ensure the organization renews and enforces its trademark protection, domain names (URLs), and other brand-related assets.
- Support policy updates and compliance matters that protect the organization's legal standing and reputation.

5. Human Resources and Administration

The COO oversees the administrative systems that support staff performance, organizational health, and long-term staffing capacity.

- Lead hiring, onboarding, and staff transitions; coordinate performance review processes.
- Support staff development and internal communication to build a strong, capable team.
- Help ensure the organization is appropriately staffed for current and future needs.

6. Technology and Internal Systems

The COO ensures Community Heart & Soul has reliable, scalable systems to support a growing national organization.

- Oversee internal technology systems and vendor relationships, including database, CRM, file management, and knowledge management platforms.
- Support cybersecurity, data integrity, and technology planning.
- Help the organization use technology to improve efficiency, accountability, and partner follow-through.

7. Partnership and Growth Support

The COO ensures that the organization's national growth is operationally supported and sustainably managed.

- Ensure partnership commitments are tracked, fulfilled, and supported by strong internal systems including MOU's and Seed Grant tracking.
- Coordinate internal readiness for conferences, partner gatherings, and national presentations.
- Build scalable systems that allow the organization to grow without outpacing internal capacity.
- Help ensure that expanding visibility and demand are met with operational excellence.

8. Board and Governance Support

The COO supports the President in preparing for Board meetings, committee work, and governance-related follow-through.

- Support preparation of Board materials and track follow-up from Board and leadership meetings.
- Help ensure organizational reports are timely, accurate, and useful for governance.
- Support governance calendars, annual planning, and policy updates.

Key Relationships

Reports to: President

Works closely with:

- Vice President of Programs
- Vice President of Communications
- Market Development leadership
- Finance Director

Candidate Profile

The ideal candidate brings senior operational leadership experience and a proven track record of building strong internal systems within mission-driven organizations. They are a skilled people manager, a practical problem-solver, and a culture-builder who understands how to support organizational growth while safeguarding its culture and staying true to its mission.

Qualifications

- Senior operational leadership experience in a business or nonprofit mission-driven organizations.
- Demonstrated success managing people, systems, budgets, vendors, and complex projects.
- Strong business judgment and financial acumen.
- Experience supporting an externally-facing executive in a growth-oriented organization.
- Comfort operating within a board-influenced environment.

- Excellent communication, interpersonal, and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to build systems and bring discipline without creating unnecessary bureaucracy.

Personal Characteristics

- Collaborative, organized, and calm under pressure.
- Trusted by staff; effective at working across functions.
- Decisive and confident, with humility to support and amplify others.
- Mission-centered and genuinely committed to Community Heart & Soul's values.
- Businesslike in approach, warm in manner.
- Clear-eyed about the distinction between operational authority and strategic authority.

Measures of Success

Within the first 12 to 24 months, a successful COO will have:

- Enabled the President to spend significant time in the field building national partnerships.
- Maintained a collaborative culture that promotes internal communication, staff coordination, and support across all departments.
- Ensured budgeting, HR, technology, contracts, and organizational reporting processes are operating smoothly and efficiently.
- Strengthened existing processes for tracking and fulfilling a growing number of partnership commitments.
- Supported the Finance Director in delivering a clean annual audit.
- Adhered to existing risk management practices that protect the organization's intellectual property and brand assets.
- Facilitated an organizational culture that embraces growth while maintaining a deep commitment to the mission and principles that make Community Heart & Soul special.

Overall Charge

The COO's primary responsibility is to ensure the smooth and efficient operation of the organization in a way that anticipates and prepares for the significant growth we anticipate in support of our goal of establishing 500 Heart & Soul communities across the country. This position exists to protect and strengthen the internal foundations of the organization—so that the President can lead externally, staff can do their best work, and the mission reaches more communities across the country. The COO will keep operations running well, build strong systems, steward the culture, and ensure that every stage of growth is matched by the discipline and execution it deserves.