

Operations Manager Position Description

April 2026



Role: Operations Manager

Reports to: Chief Executive Officer

Basis: Full-time preferred

Location: Canberra office preferred

Positions managed: Administrative Officer, Partnership and Development Coordinator, Finance Manager

About Country Needs People

Country Needs People (CNP) is a medium-sized environment non-profit organisation, making positive impact across Australia and beyond. Founded as a standalone organisation in 2020, we work with Indigenous land and sea management groups around Australia to deliver protection and good management of biodiversity and cultural values on land and sea. Our unique approach contributes to a truly sustainable economy and benefits all Australians.

We are a small team, with an office in Canberra and staff and contractors working in a combination of remote and in-office roles.

We work closely and strategically with Indigenous partners, governments, and other stakeholders to enhance the quantity, quality and security of Indigenous-led natural and cultural values management. We combine:

- strategic, non-partisan advocacy to state and federal governments;
- communications campaigns to build a broad public support base across Australia; and
- collaborative project work and organisational advice and support with and for our Indigenous land and sea management partner organisations.

Overview of role

This senior role is responsible for maintaining and strengthening CNP's capacity by managing priority operational areas and providing executive services to our Board. The Operations Manager is a significant role within the organisation, working closely with the CEO to develop and maintain robust processes to sustain the organisation and deliver outcomes for the Indigenous land and sea management sector nationally. They provide leadership across ICT, governance and compliance, human resources, day to day financial management, and overall organisational sustainability. They support the CEO with external and internal stakeholder relationships.

Duties

The Operations Manager leads:

- Compliance with legal, governance and risk management requirements and policies;
- Operational planning, monitoring and accountability processes;
- Development and application of operational policies and procedures;
- ICT development and maintenance for CNP overall, including for website, CRM, finance and fundraising purposes.

The Operations Manager supports financial management through:

- Day-to-day activities such as authorising expenditure, staff and contractor related payments, and bank transactions in accordance with the delegations policy;
- With the Finance Manager and CEO, supporting development of annual budgets, maintaining oversight of the budget, planning and monitoring revenue and expenditure in line with the approved budget and making adjustments as required through the year;
- Supporting annual accounts auditing processes.

The Operations Manager supports organisational culture and human resources management by:

- With the CEO, building and developing the CNP team and promoting a healthy, safe and productive working culture;
- Managing HR processes for staff and contractors, including recruitment, systems and administration, staff appraisal and support systems.

The Operations Manager supports organisational fundraising efforts by:

- Working with the CEO and other fundraising staff to hone and execute the fundraising approach, accountability and reporting;
- Assisting with philanthropic donor support activity, and online donations and bequests programs.

The Operations Manager supports communications, advocacy and events by:

- Working with the CEO and Communications Manager to ensure organisational communications and events are strategic, well-timed and within budget;
- Assisting with coordination of advocacy activities within the team.

The Operations Manager supports governance by:

- Scheduling and coordinating board meetings and AGMs, preparing papers and minutes;
- Working with the board policy committee to develop and review governance policies.

In addition, the Operations Manager undertakes other tasks as agreed with the CEO in line with organisational priorities and needs.

Qualities / About You

We are seeking an experienced, enthusiastic and highly-organised person to strengthen a sustainable organisation making a proven difference. A team-focused, problem-solving approach is required to support consolidation and growth of a national non-profit delivering big outcomes for nature, people, culture and community.

The ideal candidate will be:

- invigorated by CNP's purpose of protecting and preserving the natural environment through Indigenous community-based conservation and land and sea management;
- motivated by the opportunity of strengthening the organisation and providing the operational backbone needed for success;
- an energetic team player, comfortable combining strategic thinking and leadership with hands on delivery in their day-to-day work; and
- able to demonstrate experience in a relevant role or capacity with a track record of achievement.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants are strongly encouraged to apply.

Selection Criteria

Essential

- Strong and demonstrable project management and operational management skills with five years or more experience;
- Experience supporting a team to use software such as CRMs and cloud-based storage systems for organisational management and internal communications;
- Excellent management and interpersonal skills that engage and motivate the team and stakeholders/partners;
- Experience working with not-for-profit boards, governing bodies or similar entities;
- Financial monitoring and budgeting experience.

Desirable

- Experience working with advocacy organisations and/or campaigns;
- Knowledge of the Indigenous land and sea management and/or environment sector;
- Experience working with small to medium organisations;
- Human Resources administration experience;
- Experience working with philanthropic funders;
- Understanding of communications management.

Employment terms

- This role is ongoing, subject to a six month probation period.
- This role will preferably be filled as a full-time position.
- Terms and conditions are based on the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award. Above Award salary can be negotiated for candidates with strong experience in essential and desirable selection criteria.
- There is a strong preference for candidates based in, or willing to relocate to, Canberra. Exceptions may be made for exceptional candidates. Some travel and occasional weekend work may be required. Moving allowance can be negotiated.

How to apply

Within two pages, applicants should outline the extent to which they satisfy the essential skills required and desirable attributes, using examples where relevant. In addition, applicants should include a brief cover letter and a current CV. The applicant should also be able to supply two current referees we can contact.

** The preferred file format for applications is one compiled pdf document. We will reply to all applicants and keep them informed of the status of their application.*

We will be commencing shortlisting for this role immediately. Applications will be closed once a suitable applicant has been identified so **please get your application in ASAP.**

Please forward applications to: executive@countryneedspeople.org.au under the subject header: Operations Manager position.

Inquiries about the role can be directed to Paddy O'Leary on 0417 063 917.