

PUBLIC MEDIA CO.

Job Description: Chief Operating Officer (COO)

Location: Remote with occasional travel (national)

Reports to: Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Type: Full time, Exempt

Direct Reports: Managing Directors, Director of Accounting

Organizational Context & Role Summary

The COO is the senior executive responsible for the day-to-day operations of Public Media Company, ensuring the organization is effectively, accountably, and impactfully advancing its mission. The COO will report to and partner with the CEO. Given the challenges and opportunities facing public and nonprofit media organizations, and the anticipated growth of Public Media Company over the near term, the COO must be able to lead through a moment of uncertainty and transformation. The COO is responsible for the operational performance, resource management, and employee productivity and policies that allow PMC to meet its goals and objectives.

Key responsibilities:

1. Strategy/Leadership

- Provide thought partnership and support to the CEO in shaping and operationalizing PMC's vision, strategy, and annual goals and objectives
- Translate strategic goals into operational roadmaps with clear metrics and accountability
- Lead teams and direct reports to high performing outcomes in service to PMC's mission and goals

2. Financial & Resource Management

- Partner with the Director of Accounting on budget planning, resource allocation, P&L, pricing models, and cost optimization
- Oversee vendor relationships and strategic partnerships
- Develop/drive initiatives to improve operational efficiency

3. Human Resources & Organizational Culture

- Lead HR strategy, including recruitment, onboarding, performance management, training, compensation, benefits, retention, and succession planning
- Cultivate a strong, mission aligned, accountable, and inclusive organizational culture

- Ensure HR practices comply with employment law, nonprofit best practices, and federal and state regulations

4. Legal, Compliance & Risk Management

- Oversee legal and compliance functions, including policies, contracts, risk assessment, insurance, regulatory compliance (state and federal nonprofit, tax, grant conditions), and organizational governance safeguards
- Coordinate with outside counsel, compliance officers, and risk management professionals

5. Systems, Technology & Infrastructure

- Lead selection, implementation, and scaling of internal systems (ERP or financial management software, CRM or grants management, HRIS, data and dashboards)
- Ensure integration between systems, information security, and data integrity
- Oversee IT, operations infrastructure, vendor contracts, and third party service providers

6. Operational Leadership & Team Management

- Directly manage key operational leadership roles and ensure cohesion across teams
 - Mentor, coach, and build capacity among operations staff
 - Cultivate a culture of continuous improvement, shared accountability, and operational excellence

Qualifications & Experience

Required / Highly Desired

- At least 15+ years of senior operations, finance, or administrative leadership in nonprofits, service organizations, or local media organization (or hybrid nonprofit models)
- Demonstrated experience in managing operations for organizations with complex revenue and service operations
- Strong financial acumen: budgeting, forecasting, fund accounting, cash flow management, financial controls, audits, compliance
- Proven track record in HR leadership: organizational design, culture building, talent management, compliance
- Deep experience with legal, regulatory, and compliance oversight in nonprofit and grantmaking settings
- Experience working with or reporting to boards, preparing board level materials, and responding to board governance related questions

- Excellent project management, process design, and change management skills in dynamic or fast-moving organizations
- Strong systems and technology literacy, comfortable with data dashboards, workflow tools, and integration of platforms
- Exceptional communicator, collaborator, and trusted partner to CEO and senior team, board, and external stakeholders
- Strategic mindset, ability to shift between detail and high-level thinking, and capacity to scale operations under growth and pressure
- Deep alignment with PMC's mission, values, and commitment to public media, local journalism, and civic infrastructure

Preferred / Plus

- Prior experience in media, public media, and nonprofit management
- Experience with philanthropic fund deployment, grant or loan structuring, donor reporting, and funder relations
- Understanding of the unique financial challenges of local public media
- Experience in crisis or transformational moments, having managed through funding stress or scaling under uncertainty

Competencies & Personal Attributes

- Integrity, honesty, and a high standard of fiduciary discipline
- Calm under pressure; able to manage competing priorities and ambiguity
- Data driven and metrics oriented, with the ability to translate strategic goals into operational reality
- Collaborative, team oriented, and able to build alignment across functional silos
- Excellent judgment, risk awareness, and capacity for critical thinking
- Humility and willingness to listen, learn, and adapt
- Passion for mission and an ability to inspire trust with staff, funders, and partners

Metrics & Success Indicators (First 12–18 months)

- Establishment and adoption of operational dashboards and KPI systems across PMC business units
- Clean audits, funder satisfaction with operational transparency, timely reporting
- Cost efficiency improvements, process simplification, and measurable reductions in back office overhead or duplication
- Team stability and retention, effective recruitment, and HR process maturity
- Seamless coordination with CEO, board, and funders; credible board level reporting

- Infrastructure and systems (financial, grants, HR, data) that scale with growth
- Risk mitigation (no major compliance issues, contract disputes, or operational breakdowns)

A note about compensation: PMC is committed to fair and competitive compensation for all our positions. We are currently undergoing a compensation review, and we expect to provide a range for this position by mid-November.