

Operations Director

- Recruitment pack



Introduction

Scholé International is delivering high quality, affordable education in Africa by transforming low cost private schools. We do this through the introduction of high quality systems and processes, rigorous implementation and a distinctive curriculum. We ensure that this is sustainable by developing local staff to take forward school improvement. Our aim long term is that all our leadership, including Operations Directors, will be drawn from our schools.

We have recently secured significant investment from a major player in Africa's education sector, which will enable us to deliver an ambitious expansion plan. We are engaged in detailed negotiations with schools that are interested in joining our group and expect to need four teams in place by the end of the year (one in each country: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia). We currently have two teams - in Lusaka, Zambia and Kampala, Uganda.

The Scholé model

Our model is to acquire schools in the mid-market that have the potential to be market leaders, but which are charging much lower fees than the schools currently regarded as such. We take these through an intensive school transformation programme introducing high quality systems and processes and high expectations of professionalism from all staff.

We also introduce a distinctive curriculum and a child centred ethos (details in this pack). In a market dominated by "exam factories", we create a teaching and learning culture that expects the progress and achievement of every child to be a priority. We set up structures and processes that enable the development of the whole child and emphasise the importance of wellbeing.

Acquiring mid-market schools provides the space to test approaches and the time to develop local staff. This enables us to create a model that is both proven and a cultural fit. As we bring more schools into the group, we are developing collaborative structures to enable them to engage with each other in continuous school improvement. Over time, our mid-market schools will become teaching schools at the centre of a network focused on school improvement. This year we will start to design schools that deliver this model affordably to a much lower income group.

Our organisational model is to have a School Development Director and Operations Director in each country. These directors work closely together to deliver all aspects of our work operationally - from the identification of school prospects, to the school assessment and due diligence phase, school transformation programme and ongoing school improvement programme. School Development Directors lead on education and Operations Directors on all other aspects. We expect each director to support three to five schools in steady state.

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Operations Director

These are senior roles within the organisation, requiring strategic outlook with a pragmatic approach. Operations Directors are expected to have strong skills across all areas of operational leadership alongside an enthusiasm for flexible deployment anywhere in the region on short or medium term assignments.

Key purpose:

- To oversee the development of excellent operations within Scholé schools, by working with, and building the capacity of, school staff.
- Work closely with the School Development Director in country to deliver the strategy and plans for school development in country.
- Lead on business development, identifying and responding to commercial opportunities for development in country.

Role and responsibilities

Operations

- Working with the Head Teacher and school operations staff, develop and capacity build Scholé schools to deliver excellent operations in the areas of finance, procurement, HR, facilities, ICT, health, safety and security, administration and marketing.
- Introduce UK good practice in policies and systems whilst understanding and retaining the best of local and regional practice.
- Build and capacity build a high performing operations team in the schools, including the school business manager, finance and administration staff and site supervisor. With school senior staff manage out any underperforming staff and lead on recruitment.
- Identify opportunities for shared services across the schools and implement as necessary.
- Ensure each school is compliant with all legal, tax and Ministry of Education requirements and guidelines in country in relation to operations; including in the areas of HR, tax, insurance, health and safety.
- Be accountable for school finances and banking, ensuring budgets are met and timely financial reporting is provided to Scholé and to investors. Ensure that the school is well protected against fraud or theft.
- Ensure each school implements clear, transparent and fair policies and procedures relating to operations; in particular finance, HR and health and safety. Ensure these are shared and understood amongst school staff and that policies are consistent across Scholé schools.
- Manage any facilities upgrade programmes.
- Lead on marketing, working with the Head Teacher and operations staff to implement annual marketing campaigns, ensuring student enrolment targets are met. Lead on any marketing events such as open days or exhibitions.

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- Work with the School Development Director to implement an external relations strategy for the Scholé schools in country, particularly in relation to alumni development and corporate partnerships.
- Support the implementation of the Scholé date strategy.

Business development and school transition

- Identify opportunities for business development in country; including identifying new schools for potential purchase or management contracts.
- Manage the negotiations and acquisitions process in country.
- Build relationships and partnerships with individuals and organisations (e.g. school owners, other organisations in the education sphere) in order to further the aims of Scholé.
- Carry out due diligence on school acquisition targets, including assessment of all operations (e.g. quality of HR, admin and finance systems, facilities and infrastructure)
- Work with the School Development Director, to lead the initial school transition. This is likely to include, direct line management of operations staff and significant HR duties in relation to staff restructure and performance management.

Other requirements

- Work as part of a supportive team of operations directors across the countries where Scholé operates to share and develop practice and identify new opportunities for development.
- Prepare progress reports for Scholé, investors, school owners as required.
- Perform additional activities as required

Skills and experience

- Strong leadership qualities and track record of developing others to deliver transformational change.
- In depth understanding of school (or an equivalent context) operations and experience of leading quality improvements in these areas.
- Strong financial management experience
- Highly competent operational leader
- Ability to develop partnerships, including strong relationship building and negotiating skills
- Prior experience working in developing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa is highly desirable
- Able to work in potentially challenging environments and able to understand and be sensitive to cultural difference.
- Entrepreneurial, flexible and creative
- Commitment to Scholé's vision and aims.

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Further Information

For information regarding our current schools, please visit <http://schole.org.uk/#section-our-schools>

To learn more about what it's like to work with us, read this blog post from one of our School Development Directors <http://schole.org.uk/leading-school-development-in-the-african-context/>

Application process

Please submit your current CV plus a covering letter setting out why you would be an exceptional candidate for this role to Jenny Willmott, Scholé's Chief Operating Officer, via Jenny@schole.org.uk. The deadline for submissions is 19th February 2017.

Successful candidates will be offered the role of Operations Directors designate. This makes them eligible for an Operations Director role without the need for a further application or interview process. Offers of these roles will be made at the time school acquisitions are confirmed; this is expected to be from April / May for a start date from July / August. It is possible that roles may arise earlier than this.

We will be in regular contact with all successful candidates to provide as much information as possible on timing and likely opportunities.

Equal Opportunities at Scholé International

Scholé International is committed to promoting equal opportunities through non-discriminatory procedures and practices. When recruiting, we do not discriminate against applicants on the basis of

- Age
- Gender
- Race or colour
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Disability

Package

- \$35 – 45,000 gross p.a. depending on experience and location. This will enable a good standard of living in-country
- One return flight home per year
- Healthcare cover

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- Work permit