

Operations Director Job Description

Operations Director — Cascadia Sustainable Aviation Accelerator (CSAA) and Institute (CSAI)

Operations Director, Cascadia Sustainable Aviation Accelerator and Institute

Location: Seattle, WA

Position Summary

The Operations Director will serve as the operational backbone of the Cascadia Sustainable Aviation Accelerator (CSAA) and Institute (CSAI), ensuring that day-to-day functions run smoothly so that leadership can focus on coalition-building, strategic partnerships, and mission delivery. Reporting to the Executive Director, the Operations Director will establish and maintain organizational systems, oversee financial administration, support stakeholder engagement activities, and help build the internal capacity needed to grow a startup nonprofit into a globally recognized model for public/private collaboration in sustainable aviation.

This role requires both systems-level thinking and hands-on execution. The Operations Director will be expected to wear many hats, build processes from scratch, and deliver results in a fast-paced environment that demands adaptability, resourcefulness, and a genuine passion for climate impact.

Key Responsibilities

Organizational Operations and Administration

- The Operations Director will establish and manage the internal systems and processes that enable CSAA and CSAI to operate efficiently and scale effectively.
- Build and maintain organizational infrastructure, including administrative workflows, document management, and internal policies aligned with nonprofit governance best practices.
- Manage vendor and contractor relationships, including legal, accounting, IT, insurance, and other service providers.
- Coordinate board and advisory council meeting logistics, including scheduling, agenda preparation, materials development, and minutes.
- Support the Executive Director in translating strategic priorities into actionable operational plans, timelines, and progress tracking.
- Support the build out of the research facility, equipment purchasing, and general business operations.

Stakeholder Engagement and Coalition Support

- The Operations Director will play a key supporting role in sustaining and growing CSAA's diverse coalition of industry, government, and academic partners.

- Coordinate logistics for coalition meetings, working groups, public convenings, and industry events across the Pacific Northwest.
- Support the development and management of CSAA's membership model, ensuring smooth onboarding, communications, and ongoing value delivery to members.
- Maintain stakeholder tracking systems and relationship management tools, ensuring the Executive Director and team have up-to-date information on partner engagement.
- Assist in the preparation of materials for funders, government liaisons, and public forums, including reports, presentations, and grant applications.

Financial Stewardship and Compliance

- The Operations Director will oversee CSAA and CSAI's financial operations, ensuring integrity, compliance, and transparency across both entities.
- Manage and oversee day-to-day accounting functions in coordination with external accounting partners, including accounts payable, accounts receivable, expense management, and general ledger oversight.
- Lead the annual budgeting process and deliver regular forecasting and financial reporting to the Executive Director and Board of Directors.
- Support the annual strategic planning process with leadership and key stakeholders.
- Ensure compliance with grant reporting requirements and funding obligations, including State and Federal funding; familiarity with both 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(6) financial and regulatory environments is required.
- Develop and enforce internal financial controls to safeguard organizational assets and ensure accuracy of reported results.
- Prepare clear, accessible, auditable financial summaries for leadership, the board, and funders.

Qualifications

Essential

- 10+ years of experience in operations, program management, nonprofit administration, or a related field. Preference will be given to operations professionals with significant nonprofit experience.
- Entrepreneurial mindset with demonstrated experience in an early-stage environment. We're looking for candidates who are agile, creative, and comfortable with ambiguity.
- Experience managing nonprofit financial operations, including budgeting, reporting, and compliance; familiarity with GAAP and nonprofit accounting principles required.
- Proven ability to build and manage systems and processes from the ground up within lean organizational structures.
- Detail oriented with strong project management skills. Candidates should have a track record of managing multiple concurrent priorities and meeting deadlines in a dynamic environment.

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to translate complex information for diverse audiences including funders, government partners, and industry stakeholders.
- Strong interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence, with demonstrated ability to build relationships across public, private, and nonprofit sectors.
- Deep commitment to addressing climate challenges and delivering meaningful global impact.

Desirable

- Familiarity with sustainable aviation, clean fuels, or the broader clean energy and climate transition landscape.
- Experience scaling an early-stage organization or nonprofit is a plus.

Compensation and Benefits

- Competitive salary and benefits package, commensurate with your background & experience
- \$170,000 - \$190,000

About the Institute, a 501(c)(3)

The Cascadia Sustainable Aviation Institute is a first-of-its-kind nonprofit startup created to accelerate the research, development, and adoption of sustainable aviation fuel. Located at Paine Field in Snohomish County, Washington — the heart of aerospace expertise in the Pacific Northwest — and anchored by a partnership with Washington State University, the Institute will house the world's first SAF sample repository, support finishing and fuel improvement, and enable large-scale testing to advance aviation decarbonization.

About the Accelerator, a 501(c)(6)

The Cascadia Sustainable Aviation Accelerator aims to enable capital investment across the Cascadia region in SAF production, infrastructure, new clean energy projects, and feedstock. This trade organization drives industry and policy solutions that promote market adoption of SAF and bring physical fuel to strategically important airports across Washington, Montana, Oregon, Idaho, and British Columbia.

How to Apply

To apply, please submit a cover letter and resume to info@cascadiaaccelerator.org.