Operations & Development Manager

Closing Date:	6pm, Friday 20th November 2026
Interview Date:	**TBC**
Start Date:	**TBC**
Contract:	12 months fixed term contract (potential of extending)
Hours:	To be agreed
Salary:	£18 per hour - £35,100 pro rata
Location:	Cornwall, with travel across IWN's areas of activities
Reports to:	CEO & Directors
Responsible for:	Staff, operational coordination and programme delivery

About Inspiring Women Network

Inspiring Women Network (IWN) is a women-led, community-based organisation working across Cornwall. We create spaces where women from diverse backgrounds can connect, build relationships, share experiences, access opportunities and play an active role in their communities.

Our work is rooted in intersectional feminism, anti-racism, inclusion and community-led development. We work particularly with women who experience barriers to participation, including women of colour, migrants, refugees, women on low incomes and women facing social isolation or other inequalities.

Our activities span community connection, outreach and advocacy, learning and creativity, wellbeing, culture, enterprise and leadership.

This post is only available to women applicants as permitted under the Equality Act 2010 Schedule 9 (Part 1). We particularly welcome applications from those who identify as Black, or women of colour, or from any minoritised background.

Purpose of the Role

The Operations and Development Manager will lead the effective day-to-day management of IWN, ensuring that our people, programmes, resources and systems work together to deliver our organisational priorities.

Working closely with the CEO and Directors, the postholder will translate IWN's strategic direction into practical plans, support and manage staff, oversee programme delivery, strengthen partnerships and contribute to the organisation's long-term development and financial sustainability.

This is a role requiring someone who can take ownership, make sound operational decisions, identify opportunities and challenges, and maintain accountability without requiring close day-to-day supervision.

Key Responsibilities

1. Operational Management

- Lead the day-to-day operations of IWN, ensuring activities and services are well coordinated, appropriately resourced and delivered effectively.
- Develop and maintain operational plans, work schedules, systems and procedures that support efficient working.
- Translate strategic priorities agreed by the CEO and Directors into clear actions, responsibilities and deadlines.
- Monitor progress across IWN's programmes and identify operational challenges, risks and opportunities for improvement.
- Ensure effective communication and coordination across staff, volunteers, facilitators and partners.
- Make day-to-day operational decisions within agreed responsibilities and budgets, referring significant matters to the CEO and Directors.

2. Staff Management and Leadership

- Provide day-to-day line management, guidance and support to IWN staff.
- Set clear objectives, agree work priorities and monitor individual and team performance.
- Coordinate staff meetings, supervision, workload planning and professional development.
- Promote a positive, accountable and collaborative working culture consistent with IWN's values.
- Support recruitment, induction, training and staff development as required.
- Address performance, communication or operational concerns promptly and appropriately, in line with IWN's policies.
- Work with the Volunteer Coordinator to ensure volunteers are effectively supported and integrated into programme delivery.

3. Programme and Project Delivery

- Oversee the planning, coordination and delivery of IWN's programmes, activities, campaigns and community events.
- Ensure projects meet agreed objectives, timelines, budgets and funding requirements.
- Support staff to develop community-led activities that respond to women's interests, experiences and priorities.
- Maintain oversight of safeguarding, accessibility, risk assessments and appropriate delivery standards.
- Monitor participation, outcomes and feedback, using learning to improve programmes.
- Ensure funder monitoring, evaluations and project reports are completed accurately and on time.

4. Organisational Development and Sustainability

- Work with the CEO and Directors to identify opportunities to strengthen and develop IWN.
- Contribute to funding applications, tenders, commissioned work and partnership proposals.
- Support the development of earned-income opportunities, including IWN's training, enterprise and other trading activities.
- Identify opportunities for collaboration, service development and organisational growth that align with IWN's mission.
- Help develop systems, processes and organisational capacity to support IWN's longer-term sustainability.
- Contribute operational knowledge and evidence to strategic planning and organisational reviews.

5. Financial and Resource Management

- Work within agreed budgets and financial procedures, ensuring responsible use of organisational resources.
- Monitor project expenditure, funding commitments and operational costs.
- Work with the CEO and finance support to prepare budgets, forecasts and management information.
- Identify financial pressures, potential overspending or funding gaps and raise these promptly.
- Ensure staff and project spending follows IWN's financial controls and approval procedures.
- Support the effective management of premises, equipment, contracts and other operational resources.

6. Partnerships and External Relationships

- Maintain and develop productive working relationships with community organisations, statutory services, funders and other partners.
- Represent IWN at relevant meetings, networks and partnership discussions, as agreed.
- Identify opportunities for collaborative projects, referrals, community engagement and commissioned work.
- Ensure partnership arrangements reflect IWN's values, responsibilities and safeguarding expectations.
- Support the CEO and Directors in developing strategic relationships and new opportunities.

7. Governance, Reporting and Accountability

- Report regularly to the CEO and Directors on operational performance, programme delivery, staffing, finances, risks and emerging opportunities.
- Prepare concise management reports, highlighting progress against priorities, issues requiring attention and recommended actions.
- Support the implementation and review of IWN's policies, procedures and organisational standards.
- Ensure appropriate records, reporting systems and monitoring processes are maintained.
- Support compliance with relevant legal, contractual, safeguarding, employment and funding obligations.
- Implement decisions made by the CEO and Directors and provide timely updates on progress.
- Escalate significant risks, safeguarding concerns, financial issues and matters outside delegated authority.
- Establish and monitor clear performance indicators across programmes, funding, staff and operational delivery, providing evidence of progress, outcomes and areas requiring improvement.

Person Specification

Applicants must be able to demonstrate that they meet all the essential criteria, including substantial management experience and a proven track record of successfully securing significant grant funding. This is a senior management position requiring established experience in both operational leadership and organisational development.

Essential Experience and Skills

1. Significant experience in operational, project or programme management, with responsibility for delivering agreed priorities, budgets, deadlines and outcomes.
2. Proven experience of managing staff, setting clear expectations, monitoring performance, addressing challenges and developing effective, accountable teams.
3. Experience of financial management, including developing and monitoring budgets, managing resources and meeting funder or contractual requirements.
4. Experience of organisational or service development, identifying opportunities for growth, improving systems and contributing to longer-term financial sustainability.
5. **Proven track record of securing significant grant funding**, including successfully developing and submitting major funding applications. Applicants must be able to provide specific examples of funding secured, their personal contribution and the amounts awarded.
6. **Demonstrable experience of delivering measurable results**, including setting objectives, monitoring performance, evaluating outcomes and providing evidence of organisational or programme impact.

7. Strong experience of developing and maintaining strategic partnerships with funders, community organisations, statutory bodies and other stakeholders.
8. Excellent organisational and leadership skills, with the ability to manage competing priorities, make sound decisions, solve problems and work independently without close supervision.
9. Strong written and verbal communication skills, including producing persuasive funding proposals, clear management reports and evidence-based recommendations.
10. Understanding of community-led development and a demonstrable commitment to IWN's intersectional feminist, anti-racist, and inclusive values, alongside safeguarding and good governance.

Desirable Experience

- Experience of developing successful tenders, commissioned services or other income-generating opportunities.
- Experience of developing trading activities, training services or social enterprise initiatives.
- Knowledge of Cornwall's voluntary, community and statutory sectors.
- Experience working with women experiencing structural inequalities, including women of colour, migrants, refugees and other marginalised communities.
- Experience supporting organisational change or strengthening systems within a small community organisation.
- Familiarity with monitoring, evaluation and reporting to funders or governing bodies.

Working Relationships and Decision-Making

The Operations and Development Manager will work closely with the CEO and Directors, who retain responsibility for IWN's strategic direction, governance and major organisational decisions.

The postholder will have delegated responsibility for managing day-to-day operations, staff and agreed programmes. They will be expected to exercise initiative and professional judgement within agreed budgets, policies and authority levels.

The role requires regular communication with the CEO and Directors, including reporting on progress, identifying risks and bringing forward recommendations where decisions or approvals are required.

What Success Looks Like

The successful postholder will help create an organisation where:

- Staff understand their responsibilities, feel supported and are accountable for their work.

- Programmes are delivered effectively, with clear planning, budgets and reporting.
- Operational problems are identified and addressed early.
- Partnerships are purposeful and contribute to IWN's mission.
- The CEO and Directors receive timely, reliable information and can focus on strategic leadership and governance.
- IWN continues to develop in ways that are financially responsible, community-led and consistent with its values.

Data Protection Act:
Inspiring Women Network is committed to protecting your privacy. Information provided by you in your application form will be kept for the purposes of monitoring. It will be copied for use during the recruitment process. Once the recruitment process is completed, the data will be stored for a maximum of 6 months and then destroyed. If you are the successful candidate, relevant information will be taken from this form and used as part of your human resources record. All personal information that you supply to us as part of your application will be processed in accordance with prevailing UK Data Protection legislation.

By submitting your completed application form you are consenting to your personal data being used and held as described above.

Please ensure that the information you give to us is correct and that you let us know of any changes immediately.

Inspiring Women Network is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees.

Website listing:
Are you a passionate leader with a commitment to social justice and women empowerment? IWN is seeking a Chief Operations Officer (COO) to play a pivotal role in advancing our mission. In this key position, you will oversee the day-to-day operations of our organisation, ensuring that we deliver high-quality support services to marginalised women and communities. If you are ready to make a meaningful impact and help shape the future of IWN, we invite you to apply for this exciting opportunity.