

NORTH
BENNET ST.
SCHOOL

Director of Finance
Position Description
March 2024

NORTH BENNET ST. SCHOOL

Director of Finance

Boston, MA

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The renowned North Bennet Street School (NBSS), an esteemed Boston institution where the time-honored tradition of fine craftsmanship remains a vital influence on the City's culture and economy, seeks a collaborative and experienced Director of Finance who can move seamlessly between thought partnership and tactical execution to help the School reach ambitious goals, anticipate future needs, and establish best financial practices.

With a refreshed strategic plan underway and a newly forming operations team coming together, this is a special moment to bolster finance and accounting systems and design integrated business processes to make it more fully possible for NBSS faculty, staff, and students to do their best work. This role is well-suited to a proactive, analytical, detail-oriented, and hands-on finance manager with a successful track record of teamwork, creative problem-solving and effective resource management.

POSITION OVERVIEW

America's first trade school, NBSS is a welcoming institution recognized both nationally and internationally for learning excellence. Its spacious, 64,000-square-foot facility is located in Boston's historic North End neighborhood, the community in which it was originally founded 140 years ago. Today, the school continues to bridge opportunity and demand by training the next generation of traditional tradespeople using time-honored methods and skills while also creating rewarding, life-long careers. NBSS offers a range of accredited and non-accredited courses including professional career training programs, skill-building classes and experiences, public programs, exhibitions, community partnerships, and more.

NBSS recognizes that its success has been built on the strength of its faculty and staff: committed professionals achieving great results in teaching, student support, administration, and fundraising. A vital opportunity to support their efforts has emerged as the School looks to meaningfully invest in its people and bolster its systems. The new Director of Finance (Director) will be responsible for building up the infrastructure necessary to promote a thriving, highly engaged, and productive environment at NBSS, reinforce collaboration and integration, and ensure that the School's resources make it possible for faculty, staff and students to do their best work.

Reporting to the Senior Director of People and Operations, the Director will oversee finance, accounting, and reporting activities for an \$8M budget as well as reporting on its \$29M endowment. They will serve as the senior advisor and partner to the President, Provost, and Board of Directors in all financial activity including annual planning and budgeting; and ensure that NBSS has the systems and workflows in place to support outstanding program implementation and mission attainment.

This role is uniquely student-facing. 70% of NBSS students receive financial aid, so experience in financial aid management or a similar federal funding model is highly desired, although on-the-job training in this area will be provided. The Director will partner with the Scholarship Committee, a cross-department team of student services, development, enrollment, and financial aid, to manage

and inform the scholarship budget and ensure that students are being served by the School from a financial standpoint.

The Director will also be charged with identifying new opportunities to improve efficiencies and respond proactively to department needs. This includes partnering with the Development team as they report out to corporate and foundation funders, and with the Provost's office particularly during financial aid cycles each semester to ensure that payments and reimbursements are administered properly and efficiently. They will need to analyze the existing processes to ensure compliance and mitigate risk, work closely with senior administrators to streamline financial operations, leverage new information technology, and establish standard processes that provide maximum benefit to all parties involved, including students.

NBSS seeks a seasoned professional with creativity, enthusiasm, self-motivation and energy. They should be able to quickly contribute in a meaningful way as a highly effective and engaged partner to senior leadership; use the utmost discretion in all presentations, correspondence, and communication with staff, faculty, Board of Directors, and President; and be able to thrive in a small team environment, where members "roll up their sleeves", to deliver practical internal support to colleagues and students.

The desired candidate will bring finance and accounting experience in a mission-driven, growth environment along with a quick-thinking, flexible, and inclusive approach that appreciates the need for consensus while driving progress against stated goals. They will embody systems thinking, able to shift between strategy and execution - translating ideas to tactics that affect targeted outcomes. They must also bring the cultural fluency, kindness, customer-service orientation, and authenticity necessary to represent the institution and serve as a key liaison to its audiences.



RESPONSIBILITIES

FINANCE MANAGEMENT

- Manage all aspects of finance and accounting: financial statements, general ledger, cost accounting, AP/AR, invoices, budgeting, tax compliance, inventory accounting, and revenue recognition.
- Comply with all local, state, and federal laws regarding finances, tax filings, and reporting.
- Maintain internal controls and safeguards for receipt of revenue, costs, and program budgets and actual expenditures.
- Build and maintain a documented system of finance, accounting, and administrative policies to support program operations.
- Prepare quarterly/annual financial reports and manage fiscally responsible quarterly/annual budgets and forecasts.
- Advise on financial analyses and strategic decision-making regarding forecasting, contract negotiations, significant costs, benchmarks, and similar strategic matters.
- Consistently analyze financial data and present financial reports in an accurate and timely manner; clearly communicate monthly, quarterly, and annual financial statements.
- Define, benchmark, and implement financial best practices.
- Monitor progress and changes and keep senior leadership informed of NBSS financial status.
- Partner with the Senior Director to staff the Audit Committee.
- Prepare and organize financial statements for record and review and coordinate all audit activity including the annual 990 process.
- Ensure compliance and reporting for grants, collaborating with the Director of Development and supporting program audits and grant writing activities.
- Manage organizational cash flow, forecasting by working in partnership with the administrative and program directors.
- Manage and track the performance of invested assets in keeping with policies and investment guidelines.
- Stay informed about changes in accounting standards for nonprofit organizations.

FINANCIAL AID

- Manage all full-time student accounts, collections, including payment plans and disbursement of financial aid, with support from the Academic Administrator.
- Reconcile Title IV disbursements to student accounts with COD data from the Financial Aid Office on a monthly basis.
- Manage Federal G6 system as the primary user and ensure Federal Funds bank account is segregated for G6 cash drawdowns only, including return of Title IV funds.
- Interface with counselors at the Department of Veterans Affairs to arrange receipt of veteran education benefits to appropriate student accounts.
- Manage refunds of payments to third party payers, including the VA and private lenders, and scholarship provided in accordance with NBSS and organization refund policies.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- 5+ years of progressively responsible finance and/or accounting experience in an educational setting or nonprofit with a similar finance structure.
- Exceptional knowledge of finance, accounting, budgeting, cost accounting and cost control principles, internal controls, and GAAP.
- Prior work with federal funding and reporting, or the willingness to learn and develop a skillset in Federal Student cycle and compliance and reporting requirements, specifically in the areas of Title IV cash management and disbursement.

- Analytical ability to develop and implement improvements or recommendations including experience implementing automated accounting systems.
- Detail-oriented with excellent project management skills, including the ability to handle multiple tasks and deadlines.
- Lives the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion with the ability to express these through day-to-day work.
- Ability to build sincere relationships with a variety of internal partners with whom no direct line supervision exists, as well as external individuals from board members to volunteers.
- Impeccable discretion in handling all matters of confidentiality.
- Bachelor's degree in finance, accounting, or business administration, or equivalent business experience. CPA or CMA is helpful.
- Experience with QuickBooks, Raiser's Edge, and Blackbaud is helpful.
- Gravitas paired with kindness and professional integrity to effectively represent and promote NBSS externally at the highest levels.
- An appreciation for trade and craft and an understanding of the unique nature and mission of North Bennet Street School.



ABOUT NORTH BENNET STREET SCHOOL

NBSS was founded in 1881 by Pauline Agassiz Shaw, an American philanthropist and social reformer, to help immigrants achieve self-sufficiency through vocational and life skills training. More than a century later, NBSS has evolved into an international leader in craft and vocational education, with 17 expert faculty, 60+ community education instructors, and 20 dedicated staff members. Learn more about NBSS, and tour its facility.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

NBSS values the ability to create access to educational and enriching experiences through its school and has a strategic plan in place to increase the diversity of those we reach, by expanding our offerings and the range of our partnerships; building the resources and operational strength needed to support faculty and staff to deliver on opportunities and fulfill the School's mission; and deepening faculty and student support to ensure the best educational experience.

Since its founding as a settlement house for immigrants in 1881, NBSS has trained individuals of all backgrounds. Our evolution as a School asks us to work toward social justice and equity in our communities. What we learn from our own history informs how NBSS can improve the ways we welcome, support, and celebrate diversities across race, ethnicity, gender, gender-identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic, and ability. As a craft and trade school, we believe that teaching people meaningful and useful skills empowers them with their own agency. This work transcends discipline and gets to the heart of our educational philosophy. We are actively engaged in making an impact—at all levels of our School, in ways large and small, and with the optimism and conviction that are the hallmarks of our community.

NBSS DEI STATEMENT

In keeping with North Bennet Street School's mission and history and as leaders and stewards in craft and trade education, NBSS dedicates itself to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusivity throughout our school, community, and in the fields we serve. To engage the whole person, we must support the whole person.

We are committed to continuously cultivating and maintaining a welcoming and inclusive community where individual differences are expected, supported, respected, and valued. We embrace our obligation to improve our institution's culture, strengthen our partnerships, and positively impact the future of the industries for which we train.

This work is necessary for the School to advance trade and craft traditions and contribute to the change we hope to see in our communities. Therefore, it is our responsibility to eliminate barriers to access and inclusion, and to expand opportunities to pursue a livelihood free from disrespectful behavior, harassment, and discrimination. We recognize that structural social barriers are a part of all organizations, and only through work by everyone, will greater change be made. [Learn more](#) about the School's work to advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

To express interest in the position, please submit application materials consisting of a resume and letter of interest to nbss-df@pearlstreetcollective.com.

[Pearl Street Collective](#), the search firm with purpose, has been exclusively retained for this engagement. Adele Mezher, Maeve Clifford, Kiratiana Freelon, and Jiberly Sandoval are leading the search. Pearl Street is an award-winning, retained executive search and talent strategy firm serving the nonprofit, education, and healthcare sectors. Women-owned and led by a diverse group of talented professionals who are deeply committed to equity in search, Pearl Street disrupts traditional search dynamics by practicing radical empathy; listening and learning from others' unique perspectives, lived experiences, and identities; and committing to transparency for all stakeholders. This purposeful approach informs every facet of Pearl Street's comprehensive search process that identifies exceptional talent, builds real relationships, and delivers an unparalleled, values-driven service that honors the whole person. For three consecutive years, Women of Color in Fundraising & Philanthropy (WOC) has named Pearl Street one of the Top Search Firms for Women of Color and Hunt Scanlon has included the firm in their 2024 shortlists of top recruiters for nonprofits and higher education. [Follow Pearl Street](#).

The Director of Finance role is a full-time, exempt, hybrid position offering a competitive salary commensurate with experience. NBSS offers a comprehensive and competitive benefits package including health and life insurance, STD, LTD, retirement plan and more.

Applicants, as well as position incumbents, who become disabled as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act must be able to perform the essential job functions (as listed) either unaided or with the assistance of a reasonable accommodation to be determined by management on a case-by-case basis.

NBSS is committed to continuously cultivating and maintaining a welcoming and inclusive community where individual differences are expected, supported, respected, and valued. We embrace our obligation to improve our institution's culture, strengthen our partnerships, and positively impact the future of the industries for which we train. An equal opportunity employer, NBSS encourages applications from a diverse group of people. Applicants for employment and employees are reviewed on their individual qualifications for a position. Under no circumstances will NBSS discriminate against qualified persons based on race, color, religious creed, retaliation, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender, disability, mental illness, genetics, marital status, age, veteran status, or any other basis prohibited under applicable law.