



Director of Finance & Operations

Norman Bird Sanctuary • Middletown, Rhode Island

About Norman Bird Sanctuary

Norman Bird Sanctuary sits in the heart of historic Paradise Valley on Aquidneck Island, minutes from Newport. 300 acres of forest, meadow, grassland, and dramatic ridgeline are highlighted by six miles of trails and sweeping views of Sachuest Point and Second Beach. The property, anchored by an eighteenth-century farmhouse and historic barn, was left to the community in 1949 by artist and naturalist Mabel Norman Cerio. Today, NBS' mission is to spark people's curiosity to explore, steward, and find peace and joy in nature. NBS is a heart-filled organization entering a period of thoughtful growth — strengthening the systems, financial rigor, and internal capacity that will enable its mission to thrive. This role is central to that work.

The Role

NBS seeks a warm, highly organized, mission-driven leader to serve as Director of Finance & Operations — a senior leadership position and the primary internal operating partner to the Executive Director.

The Executive Director leads NBS's external-facing work: major donor relationships, board engagement, partnerships, public presence, and institutional vision. The Director of Finance & Operations leads the internal side of the organization — ensuring that NBS's people, finances, systems, operations, and daily rhythms are healthy, professional, and aligned with the mission.

This role suits someone who pairs operational excellence with emotional intelligence: a leader who can support staff, sharpen systems, communicate clearly, and keep the organization moving forward. The person will move fluidly between strategy and execution, shaping and leading the finance and operations function. A defining part of the work will be building durable systems and distributing institutional knowledge — improvements that will strengthen NBS for years beyond any single season or hire.

Key Responsibilities

Organizational Leadership and Internal Management

- Serve as the senior internal leader of NBS and the Executive Director's key operating partner.
- Lead the internal operating rhythm — priorities, responsibilities, deadlines, and decision-making — and run regular planning and accountability meetings that keep projects moving and cross-department issues resolved.
- Foster a respectful, communicative, accountable staff culture consistent with the heart and mission of NBS.
- Support department leaders in strengthening their own management, communication, planning, and follow-through.
- Identify gaps in systems, staffing, and workflows, and either solve them directly or manage the consultants and vendors who will.

Finance, Administration, and Compliance

- Oversee NBS's finance and accounting functions in partnership with outsourced accounting support and administrative staff, including payroll, check runs, deposits, payables, reimbursements, W-9s/1099s, tax filings, budgeting, reporting, and internal controls.
- Own the organization-wide compliance calendar, including required reports, licenses, permits, registrations, insurance renewals, certificates of insurance, and related filings.
- Ensure deposits, in-kind gifts, and related records are properly coordinated between finance and development systems.
- Work with the Executive Director, Finance Committee, outsourced accounting support, and administrative staff to strengthen financial reporting, controls, budgeting, and audit readiness.

People Operations and HR

- Oversee HR operations, including onboarding, employee documentation, background checks, benefits renewals, enrollments, personnel records, and compliance.
- Support managers with hiring, supervision, performance conversations, documentation, and staff development.
- Help build a workplace where expectations are clear, communication is direct and respectful, and people feel supported.
- Coordinate required staff trainings, including camp-related CPR and abuse-prevention certification.

Operations, Visitor Services, Rentals, and Cross-Department Coordination

- Oversee reception and visitor services, office systems, staff coverage and scheduling, and the routing of general inquiries to the right team.
- Own the rental operation end to end — special-use and photo permits, private hikes, inquiries, calendars, insurance documentation, setup, and staffing — in close coordination with Development, Properties, and program staff.
- Oversee the administrative infrastructure for summer camp, including registration software, rosters, scholarships, training compliance, and parent communication workflows.
- Coordinate Conservation, Education, Events, Marketing, Development, Rentals, and Visitor Services to ensure clear and smooth operations across the property.
- Work with outside IT contractors to keep NBS' technology secure, reliable, efficient, and audit-compliant.

Who We're Looking For

We welcome candidates from a range of mission-driven settings — nonprofits, schools, camps, museums, cultural institutions, environmental organizations, and small businesses. No candidate will check every box; strong candidates will bring many of the following:

- Significant experience in operations, administration, nonprofit management, finance oversight, HR, and organizational leadership.
- Financial literacy and comfort overseeing accounting, budgeting, payroll, payables, reporting, and internal controls alongside accounting professionals.
- Experience with HR processes, including onboarding, training, benefits, documentation, and employee relations.
- A track record of improving systems, workflows, and internal communication.
- The ability to manage people with warmth, clarity, fairness, and accountability.

- Comfort working with vendors, consultants, outsourced accounting, IT contractors, and insurance providers.
- Ease in a small organization, where senior leaders handle hands-on tasks.
- Strong judgment, discretion, and professionalism.
- Commitment to NBS' mission and a real appreciation for conservation, education, community, and the natural world.

The person who thrives here will be warm, direct, and trustworthy, organized and calm under pressure, and a clear communicator who can hold people accountable while treating them with respect. They will be practical, flexible, and willing to pitch in, able to hold both the big picture and the operational detail, and entrepreneurial enough to build better systems where they're needed. Above all, they will be genuinely respectful of NBS' history, culture, staff, volunteers, members, donors, and community.

Compensation and Benefits

This is a full-time exempt and at-will salaried position based at NBS in Middletown, Rhode Island. The Director of Finance & Operations reports to the Executive Director. The salary for this position is commensurate with experience. NBS offers health insurance contributions, dental and vision insurance, PTO, and a beautiful place to work.

How to Apply

Please upload your resume and complete the application online:

<https://recruiting.paylocity.com/recruiting/jobs/All/6b76f84d-e3a2-4f91-a145-797ac3a3b81b/The-Norman-Bird-Sanctuary-Trust>. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. No phone calls please.

Norman Bird Sanctuary is an equal opportunity employer and encourages applications from candidates who share our commitment to conservation, education, community, and organizational excellence.