

Job Description: Group Operations and Programmes Manager

Employment Type: Full-time, permanent
Reporting to: Managing Director | Development
Job location: Berlin, Germany (on-site / hybrid)
Website: <https://www.thomsonfoundation.org/>

The organisation

Thomson Media is a German-registered non-profit gGmbH with its main base of operations in Berlin. It is part of the Thomson Group, which includes the Thomson Foundation, the world's oldest media development organisation, with over 60 years of experience supporting independent journalism worldwide. Thomson works across more than 100 countries, often in complex, fragile, and high-risk environments, to strengthen independent media, promote journalistic integrity, and support sustainable media ecosystems. Our work is non-political, donor-funded, and highly regulated, requiring robust operational, financial, and compliance systems.

Role purpose

The Group Operations and Programmes Manager ensures that Thomson's projects are delivered efficiently, remain fully compliant, and are aligned with agreed objectives and donor requirements. The role provides operational oversight across the project portfolio, with a strong focus on systems, performance management and continuous improvement.

The postholder leads the development and optimisation of project management and operational processes, provides line management and backstopping to project managers and coordinators, and supports teams in resolving delivery and compliance issues. They oversee project resources and budgets in relation to workplans and KPIs, contribute to budget development, and lead the preparation and negotiation of budget amendments in close coordination with programme and finance teams.

The role also ensures that operational frameworks including procurement, contracting, payment approvals, data management and reporting are efficient, compliant and consistently applied. In addition, the postholder supports proposal development through resource planning and budgeting, and ensures that project documentation, knowledge and references are systematically maintained and accessible for audits, reporting and future bids.

Main responsibilities

Operations and capacity management

- Ensure all projects operate in full compliance with donor requirements, contractual obligations, internal policies, and applicable regulations.
- Oversee project operations at a detailed level, monitoring timelines, anticipating bottlenecks and risks in close coordination with project managers.
- Monitor adherence to donor calendars, reporting deadlines, procurement rules, and contractual conditions across the project portfolio.
- Oversee the operational management of contractors, consultants, and project-based teams (not permanent staff), including recruitment processes, contracting, onboarding, evaluation, and contract closure.
- Monitor team capacity, workloads, and deployment across projects, proactively identifying bottlenecks, risks, and under-/over-allocation of resources.
- Work with programme leads to anticipate resourcing needs and ensure teams are structured efficiently and compliantly.

Systems, processes and continuous improvement

- Review existing operational, administrative, and project management systems and propose improved, streamlined, and compliant alternatives.
- Design, document, and embed standard operating procedures (SOPs) for project delivery, compliance, documentation, and internal controls.

- Ensure that new systems are practical, adopted by teams, and consistently applied across the organisation.

Knowledge management and bid readiness

- Lead knowledge management processes, ensuring that project documentation, references, methodologies, lessons learned, and evidence of impact are systematically stored and easily retrievable.
- Maintain and continuously update organisational references, templates, compliance documentation, and administrative annexes required for bids and tenders.
- Support proposal development by ensuring accurate resource planning, costings, compliance checks, and availability of institutional documentation.

Coordination and internal collaboration

- Work closely with finance, administration, and programme teams to ensure alignment between operational practice, donor compliance, and strategic objectives.
- Provide guidance and backstopping to project managers and coordinators on compliance, operational procedures, and problem-solving.
- Participate in organisational planning and coordination meetings, contributing an operational and risk-aware perspective.

Other duties

Carry out additional responsibilities as required by senior management in response to organisational needs.

Skills and experience

- Significant experience in programme and operations management within donor-funded organisations, ideally in media development, international development, or a comparable regulated environment.
- Experience working with EU, UK, and other institutional and/or philanthropic donors.
- Strong, hands-on experience with donor compliance, particularly budget management, cost eligibility and allocation, audits, procurement, and reporting.
- Proven experience managing contractors and project teams, including recruitment, contracting, workload management, and performance evaluation.
- Demonstrated ability to analyse systems and workflows, identify inefficiencies or risks, and design improved, compliant processes.
- Strong organisational and analytical skills, with the ability to manage complex information, multiple projects, and competing priorities.
- High level of attention to detail combined with the ability to maintain a strategic, organisation-wide perspective.
- Fluency in English and German, additional languages are an asset.
- High level of integrity and discretion when handling sensitive information.
- Proactive, structured, and solutions-oriented working style.
- Pragmatic, delivery-oriented approach, with the ability to translate donor and regulatory requirements into workable operational practice.
- Strong digital skills, including Microsoft Office and its suite of collaborative project management tools.

How to apply

Please send your CV and motivation letter to jobs@thomsonfoundation.org by the 15th February 2026, quoting the reference “Group Operations and Programmes Manager” and your name in the subject line.