

Director of UK Operations (UK-2025-Ops) *Call for Applications*

[Topos Institute](#) is searching for a **Director of UK Operations**, based in **Oxford, UK**.

Summary

- **Job Title:** *Director of Operations / Chief Operating Officer*
- **Salary Range:** £70,000–85,000 per annum
- **Position:** *Permanent, full-time*
- **Location:** *Oxford, UK (in-person, with some flexibility)*
- **Working Hours:** *Standard working hours with required flexibility to accommodate differing time zones*
- **Visa Sponsorship:** *Available for exceptional candidates*
- **Deadline:** *17 October 2025*

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About Topos Research UK and Topos Institute

[Topos Research UK](#) is an entrepreneurial, dynamic charity start-up in the UK (inc. 2024) with a parent charity start-up, [Topos Institute](#) in the US (inc. 2019). We are a non-profit research institute dedicated to realising a world where the systems that surround us benefit us all, so that society can better cooperate on critical issues — the climate crisis, pandemic responses, agricultural modelling, global access to education, and more — through interconnected systems that consider holistic impacts. We develop new tools for collective inquiry and modelling, enabled by a combination of novel foundational mathematics, open-source software engineering, and meaningful collaboration with domain specialists.

The Opportunity

We seek a strategic Operations Director to lead the successful scaling of our rapidly growing UK operation. This is a pivotal, creative leadership role reporting directly to our Board of Trustees, with day-to-day collaboration with board representative Brendan Fong (Topos UK Trustee and Topos USA CEO).

Current State:

This job advert is dated the 18th of September, 2025

- 1-year-old entity with £500k annual revenue
- 6 talented staff (research scientists, software engineers, postdocs)
- 3 planned new staff members within the next 6 months
- Two major grants: £600k (1-year) and £1.2M (2.25-year)
- Projected FY26 revenue: £1M

The Challenge: You'll be our first senior operations hire, responsible for establishing the systems and culture that will enable Topos UK (and Topos as a whole) to thrive as we scale from startup to established institution, collaborating between the UK and US offices, and pioneering a new style of technology-oriented research organisation keenly focussed on improving lives.

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Key Responsibilities

Operations & Finance Leadership

- Lead operations and finance for a projected £1M+ annual budget from research grants
- Support grant solicitation, budgeting, procurement, monitoring, and reporting
- Collaborate with financial consultants on organizational strategies, budgets, treasury, and tax affairs
- Coordinate with US-based Topos Institute on governance, consolidated reporting, and shared contracts

Strategic Planning & Culture Building

- Partner with the Board of Trustees and Topos Institute USA to develop and implement strategic plans aligned with our institutional mission
- Champion the critical role of operations and administration in achieving our research mission
- Establish and nurture an organizational culture that:
 - Integrates diverse perspectives and lived experiences
 - Views uncertainty as opportunity for innovation
 - Balances operational efficiency with academic freedom
 - Embodies public purpose, intellectual rigor, and collaboration

Team Leadership & Development

- Nurture and mentor our growing team of 6+ researchers and engineers
- Support individual career aspirations while building collective capacity
- Work with HR consultants to develop talent management systems and support organizational human resources needs

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- Foster an environment where exceptional people can do their best work

Systems & Infrastructure

- Design and implement policies, internal controls, and procedures for sustainable growth
- Oversee operational functions including inventory management and facilities
- Oversee compliance, risk management, and organizational governance
- Manage physical space requirements, including future lease negotiations
- Coordinate legal affairs with Board of Trustees, sourcing expertise as needed

Stakeholder Management

- Serve as operational interface with funders, partners, and collaborators
- Represent Topos UK's capabilities and needs to external stakeholders
- Support business development for future grant and contract opportunities
- Assume additional responsibilities as organizational needs evolve

What We're Looking For

Essential Experience

- 5+ years in senior operations/finance roles at mission-driven organizations
- Proven ability to build systems and culture from the ground up
- Experience with research institutions, nonprofits, or technology startups
- Track record managing complex budgets and grant funding
- Track record of successfully impacting both strategic and tactical finance and administration initiatives

Leadership Qualities

- Collaborative, supportive management style with focus on team development
- Skilled at building consensus in a complex organisation and able to achieve results through influence and partnership
- Ability to foster inclusive environments where diverse perspectives thrive
- Experience mediating differences and supporting individual team member success
- Ability to communicate clearly and collaboratively, both internally and externally
- Creative problem-solving approach with strong analytical skills

Cultural Fit

- Intellectually curious with appreciation for technical research

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- Mission-first orientation with commitment to public benefit
- Comfortable with complexity, ambiguity, and rapid change; sees challenges as opportunities for growth
- Committed to building inclusive, supportive team environments
- Values-driven leader who can balance efficiency with academic freedom
- Motivated by meaningful work that contributes to helping solve global-scale challenges
- Values continuous learning, diverse perspectives, and collaborative problem-solving
- Ability to periodically travel to the head office in Berkeley, California, or other locations as needed
- Flexibility with working hours, to accommodate for collaboration across global time zones
- Energetic, flexible, collaborative, and proactive; a team leader who can positively and productively impact both strategic and tactical finance and administration initiatives

Preferred Qualifications

- Advanced degree in relevant field (business, nonprofit management, etc.)
- Experience with international organizations or multi-entity coordination
- Familiarity with academic research environments
- Technical literacy sufficient to engage with mathematical/computational work

Why Topos UK

Exceptional Team: Collaborate with world-leading researchers and high calibre funding agencies.

Inclusive Environment: Be part of building a diverse team where different perspectives are valued and everyone can contribute their best work.

Meaningful Impact: Your operational excellence directly enables breakthrough research on humanity's most pressing challenges—from climate change to public health to collaborative open science.

Technical Innovation: Support the development of genuinely novel technologies that could transform how humanity approaches complex, collaborative decision-making.

Supportive Culture: Join a caring, inquiry-driven community that values both intellectual rigor and personal wellbeing, with a strong focus on in-person office culture but flexibility to support work-life balance.

Growth Opportunity: Shape the foundational systems of an organization poised for significant expansion and impact.

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Apply

Topos Research UK is committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion. There is evidence to suggest that women and people of color are less likely to apply for jobs unless they believe they meet every one of the qualifications as described in the job description. No matter who you are, if this role speaks to you, we encourage you to apply, even if you don't believe you tick all the boxes. We'd especially like to encourage people from underrepresented backgrounds to apply.

If you require any adjustments to the application process, such as accessibility accommodations, additional preparation time, or other, please contact uk-2025-ops@topos.institute. We're happy to support your needs and adjust the application process.

Next Steps: This role offers the rare opportunity to be the operational backbone behind important research that contributes to how humanity tackles global challenges. If you're energized by building meaningful institutions and enabling exceptional people to do transformative work, we'd love to hear from you.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. We expect the process to include initial screening, work assessments, team interviews, and references.

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