CANDIDATE BRIEF

Chief Financial Officer

SUMMER 2023
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Dear candidate,

Thank you for expressing an interest in joining the University of Sussex as our next Chief Financial Officer. This is a hugely important role. You will be at the centre of University decision-making, strategy, and planning in a higher education environment in which high-quality financial management is increasingly important.

The distinctive ethos with which Sussex was established more than 60 years ago still animates our work today. From the start, Sussex challenged convention and fostered critical thinking. The University set out to disrupt traditional ways of creating and organising knowledge and, in doing so, developed its own distinctive identity which fostered a strong sense of community and purpose.

In our seventh decade, the early emphasis on innovation, interdisciplinarity, intellectual rigor, and internationalism continues to define Sussex. Our success as a world-leading university is built on these practices and is underpinned by the institutional values that we strive to enact – collaboration, courage, inclusion, integrity, and kindness – and by our foundational commitment to academic freedom and freedom of speech.

The higher education sector faces major challenges, but in an interdependent world that urgently needs new ways of thinking and bold interventions, Sussex’s future is extremely bright. As the University’s ninth Vice-Chancellor, it is my mission to direct the energy and resources of the University to realising the full potential of our ground-breaking research, thought leadership, and transformational education, in the service of the common good.

At the heart of this is a twin-track focus on advancing equality and creating an inclusive, supportive university community in which diversity in all its forms is embraced, so that everyone feels that Sussex is a place in which they can flourish. Alongside this, I want to ensure that the University is a leading player in the transition to a more equitable, environmentally sustainable, post-carbon future. An interdisciplinary and profoundly practical commitment to environmental sustainability and human flourishing will be woven into our educational offer, our research, our external engagement, and our institutional life, in the years to come.

As we navigate an ever-changing policy, economic, and cultural landscape, I look forward to welcoming a new Chief Financial Officer to work with me, the University Executive Team, and the whole Sussex community in developing our new strategy, and delivering outstanding financial management and planning to ensure that we realise our ambitions to contribute to making the world a better place.

Professor Sasha Roseneil FAcSS PFHEA
Vice-Chancellor and President
The University of Sussex received its Royal Charter in 1961 and immediately set about offering an alternative to the traditional higher-education landscape.

From the very start, Sussex was intended to be a new kind of university: challenging convention and fostering critical thinking. It set out to disrupt traditions, create new ‘interdisciplinary’ pathways, and redraw the map of learning. Today, our courses, research and culture aim to stimulate, excite and challenge. So, from scientific discovery to global policy, from student welfare to career development, Sussex innovates and takes a lead. And today, in every part of society and across the world, you will find someone from Sussex making an original and valuable contribution to positive social change.

Now in our 61st year, we have grown to more than 18,500 students, and we have established a global reputation, with twelve subjects rated in the top 20 in the UK in the QS World University Rankings (2023) and the same number in the global top 200, of which six are in the top 100. We are especially proud to be ranked 1st in the world for Development Studies for the seventh consecutive year in the QS World University Rankings (2023), reflecting the radically global orientation of our research and education, and the deep-rooted commitment of the University and our on-site partner, the Institute of Development Studies, to impactful research for global social justice.

More than 89 per cent of our research was recognised as world leading or internationally excellent in REF2021 and we are in the top 50 of universities globally delivering on the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals.

We particularly value our strong sense of campus community, as demonstrated by our outstanding record for student retention, and we nurture our students to give them the best life chances beyond university.

We also maintain fantastic connections with our alumni from more than 150 countries, who are proudly associated with the University and who frequently tell us how their time at Sussex fundamentally shaped their lives and careers, giving them the courage to stand up for their beliefs.

Their continuing support enables us to provide bursaries and scholarships for a wide range of disadvantaged students, as well as networking and mentoring opportunities.

Looking to the future, we aim to build on our strengths and remain committed to Sussex providing high-quality education, excellence in academic research, and fruitful engagement with our international partners and local communities.
Our financial performance

The 2021-22 financial year presented challenges for the University and Higher Education sector. Yet at the same time it brought with it a sense of renewal and recovery, with the full resumption of face-to-face teaching on campus, and year-on-year improvements in student recruitment, indicating an upward trajectory in the volume of future tuition fee income. Greater student presence on campus at Sussex also led to a recovery in residential and commercial income similar to pre-pandemic levels.

The University of Sussex Group consolidated income and expenditure (including our share of joint venture income and expenditure, since the Brighton and Sussex Medical School, which is a joint venture between the Universities of Sussex and Brighton, is a core part of our academic activities) and surplus/(deficit) retained in the Group for the year ended 31 July 2022 and the previous three years are summarised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2021/22</th>
<th>2020/21</th>
<th>2019/20</th>
<th>2018/19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>346.2</td>
<td>316.1</td>
<td>320.5</td>
<td>323.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure</td>
<td>377.3</td>
<td>294.8</td>
<td>282.5</td>
<td>344.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus/(Deficit) for the year</td>
<td>(43.0)</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>(19.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Represented by:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Controlling Interest</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Deficit)/Surplus retained within the Group</td>
<td>(43.9)</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>(19.8)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The University group recorded a deficit in 2021–22 of (£43.0m) compared to a surplus of £22.6m for 2020–21. These results include adjustments to recognise the University’s funding obligations to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS). This generated a £62.1m charge in the current year as the obligation was remeasured under the existing valuation basis. A smaller credit of £1.6m was recognised in the prior year.

Other comprehensive income includes the £20.0m actuarial gain in respect of the USPAS pension scheme and an £11.9m mark-to-market loss in investments. These are unrealised gains/losses and subject to significant volatility year-on-year, therefore are excluded from analysis of the performance of the University’s core activities.

Since the Surplus/Deficit retained in the group is affected by volatile periodic improvements in pension valuations, the University considers net operating cashflow a more reliable ongoing measure of financial performance. Actual surpluses and net operating cash are shown below, demonstrating that cash performance has been positive and consistently so in contrast to accounting surpluses, which are subject to one-off non-cash expenditure as a result of the technical accounting treatment of pensions. The University group recorded positive net operating cash of £57.2m in 2021–22 (£41.3m in 2020–21) and expects continuing positive cash generation in the next financial year.

The University’s current and past financial statements are available at: sussex.ac.uk/finance/statements.
Teaching, learning and the wider student experience

We recognise the value that human interaction brings to education, and we are deeply committed to face-to-face teaching.

Our goal of delivering a transformative learning experience to our students, as set out in our Sussex 2025 strategic framework, incorporates new ways to make learning and teaching exciting and contemporary.

Across our on-site and online programmes, we continue to pioneer and integrate innovations in educational pedagogy, learning methods and digital technologies. We want our curriculum to challenge our students with rigorous, research-led content, to inspire them to be critical thinkers, and to encourage disruptive, entrepreneurial imagination to meet future global challenges.

Enhancing the student experience beyond the classroom

Our new Student Centre is fundamental to an ambitious transformation in how our students access friendly, consistent, expert, and personalised services across campus and digitally.

We want to create a strong sense of belonging and community for all students, creating spaces to build relationships, be creative and share ideas.

Developing a new Student Centre is just one of a range of initiatives to transform the Sussex student experience. We are also proud to have launched both The Spirit of Sussex Award, which celebrates students’ extracurricular achievements, and The Connector Programme, through which staff and students work together to improve the student experience at Sussex.

- More than 18,500 students, of whom 76 per cent are undergraduates, and 24 per cent are postgraduates.
- University of the Year for Student Retention in The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2022.
A research-intensive university

With our highly cited researchers, five Nobel Laureates, and a founding commitment to interdisciplinarity, Sussex is respected for innovative, high-quality research.

We received excellent REF2021 results. We are ranked by Times Higher Education (THE) as 27th in the UK for research power and market share, up from 34th in 2014, and we are placed 32nd for research impact. 89 per cent of our research is ‘world leading’ or ‘internationally excellent’. 93 per cent of our research impact was assessed to be ‘outstanding’ or ‘very considerable’ – up from 80.7 per cent in 2014.

We have an exceptionally strong international profile to our research, being ranked first in the world for Development Studies in the QS World University Rankings (2023) for the seventh year running. We are also proud to have been named among the top 50 universities in the world for delivering on the UN Sustainable Development Goals in research, teaching, stewardship, and outreach in the (THE) World Rankings 2022, and 35th globally in the QS World University Rankings (2024) for sustainability. We are also ranked 218th overall as a University in the QS World University Rankings (2024).

We have longstanding strengths in artificial intelligence, anthropology, biosciences, economics, English, gender and sexuality studies, geography, history, media and communication studies, physics, politics and international relations, psychology, science policy and social policy, sociology, and sustainability research. These established areas of excellence are joined by emerging and consolidating strengths in business and management, digital humanities, law, and medicine. Our Business School received the highest research grant income of any Business School in the UK in 2022.

We have a number of Research Programmes and Centres of Excellence that highlight our commitment to interdisciplinary research, and which provide creative opportunities to solve some of our most pressing research challenges in new ways, such as the Sussex Centre for Research on Kindness. We also have several active doctoral training partnerships, including a £17m AHRC grant, funding around 75 studentships, which collectively promote excellence in research, knowledge exchange and postgraduate training.

From questioning the ethics of artificial intelligence to challenging policies that cause poverty and inequality, our researchers are at the forefront of translating research into positive change. Our focus continues to be on how we can advance knowledge to create a better world.

Research facts and figures

- 681 research bids = £213m, 230 new awards = £42.9m
- Research grant and contract portfolio = £271m over 976 separate awards.
- KE income rose to £28.4m, in 2021/22, £6m on the previous five-year average to 2018/19.
- Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) and related requirements delivered; supporting > £4.32m in HEIF income per annum.

Centres of Excellence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre for Quantum Technologies</th>
<th>Sussex Neuroscience</th>
<th>Sussex Sustainability</th>
<th>Sussex Centre for Migration Research</th>
<th>Sussex Centre for Consciousness Science</th>
<th>Sussex Humanities Lab</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sussex Artificial Intelligence</td>
<td>Centre for International Education</td>
<td>Genome Damage and Stability Centre</td>
<td>Centre for Global Health Research</td>
<td>UKTPO</td>
<td>Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Global engagement and impact

Sussex is proudly international. From the first Mandela scholarships in the 1970s, to our pioneering role in the establishment of Erasmus, Sussex has been internationally minded from its inception.

The University hosts 4,500 students from over 130 countries annually and welcomes one of the largest UK communities of prestigious Chevening Scholars. Our network of global alumni reflects our long history of internationalisation.

With over 330 academic partners in 60 countries, we have established mutually beneficial relationships with outstanding global partners that underpin our initiatives for student and staff mobility, research collaboration and international teaching programmes.

We were ranked 8th in the world for international student exchange mobility by the World’s Universities with Real Impact (WURI) 2022.

We have aligned our engagement priorities with global grand challenges and deliver impact-led projects world-wide. We display empathy and compassion to develop a strong international focus and awareness in our staff, students and in all that we do.

In 2020, the University of Sussex was one of the first 15 universities to be awarded the title of ‘University of Sanctuary’ in recognition of its efforts to welcome and support forced migrants. Also in 2020, the University of Sussex and Zhejiang Gongshang University established a Joint Institute in Artificial Intelligence in Hangzhou, the first of its kind in China.

We take pride in giving our international students the best possible support and experience, preparing them to thrive in, and contribute to, an increasingly interdependent world.

Facts and figures

- 1st in the world for Development Studies in the QS World University Rankings 2023
- Joint 15th in the world in the Times Higher Education “Golden Age” ranking 2020 (for universities established between 1945 and 1967)
Knowledge exchange and business engagement

We are committed to developing new knowledge that challenges conventions and offers inspiring and creative ways to address global and local issues.

Our priorities in knowledge exchange over the last two years have been to:

**Invigorate research-led business engagement**

We have stimulated a more entrepreneurial approach to research through supporting new channels of commercialisation. The pace of our spinouts has increased sixfold in the last four years, the number of patents held has doubled, and the number of new software product licenses has more than doubled. Sussex’s portfolio of nearly 115 graduate and staff businesses enjoyed a combined turnover of over £34m in 2021/22 – almost double turnover levels from m four years ago. Together, these businesses attracted external investment of over £28m and supported over 600 jobs.

**Promote and support enterprising students and staff**

We have substantially increased our capability to embed entrepreneurial learning, engage students in extra-curricular entrepreneurship programmes, and enable graduate interns and student-led consultancies to create scalable opportunities to address real-world challenges.

**Strengthen Sussex’s contribution to the economic, social and environmental vitality of our region.**

We have focused on making an active contribution to driving the civic and economic fortunes of our region, working closely with partners to manage common challenges and co-create new, innovation-focused economic opportunities.

Our goal is to be an ‘anchor’ institution in the city region, making a difference to business vitality, civic leadership and social wellbeing locally, as well as on a global stage, and to this end we have just appointed the University’s first Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global & Civic Engagement).

For more information, visit [www.sussex.ac.uk/collaborate](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/collaborate)

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**Our economic impact**

- The University contributes nearly half a billion pounds each year to the UK economy.
- We support over 7,800 jobs across the UK (7,250 in the local region).
- Our investment in research and innovation is estimated to boost the national economy by £31 million by 2030.

[www.sussex.ac.uk/about/facts/economic-impact](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/about/facts/economic-impact)
Achieving equality, diversity and inclusion is fundamental to the success of the University of Sussex. We aspire not just to reduce inequalities in outcomes for individuals, but to use our expertise, commitment, and courage to challenge the status quo and address chronic issues of under-representation and disadvantage.

We are taking bold action to transform the campus into one that is experienced as inclusive by all our communities. This includes understanding and addressing power relations and the intersecting inequalities that many members of our community experience. Our goal is to create a culture where everyone thrives, making Sussex a beacon in the sector nationally and internationally.

We have much to be proud of in building an equal, diverse, and fair community at Sussex. In terms of gender equality, our percentage of women professors is seen as excellent for the sector, and our Widening Participation program of engagement and support has significantly reduced the awarding gap for our ‘first generation scholars’. But we know from our data, research, and consultations that we have much more to do to make the University truly equal and inclusive; for example, by closing the gender pay gap, improving the representation and experience of black and minority ethnic staff, closing the awarding and employment gaps between different groups of students, and making our campus fully accessible.

‘Inclusive Sussex’ is the University’s equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) strategy. Our vision is for all members of our community to have equal access to opportunities, and to experience the University as one that enables them to fully meet their potential and supports them to make a full contribution to the University. Reducing inequalities, and promoting and celebrating diversity of background, identity, thought, and belief allow us all to thrive. We can achieve more together than we can apart.

The University of Sussex values inclusivity, courage, kindness, integrity, and collaboration in all that we do. We are committed to promoting academic freedom and freedom of speech through providing an environment for the peaceful exchange of diverse viewpoints that can be scrutinised and explored rigorously and with civility.

For further information on the University’s commitment and approach to EDI, please see https://www.sussex.ac.uk/equalities/
Alumni and fundraising

With a network of alumni in more than 150 countries around the world, Sussex graduates are our best ambassadors and the embodiment of what makes Sussex truly special.

Our alumni support the University in many ways. They enhance the student experience through acting as mentors, giving career talks, and sharing their expertise in advisory boards across the University. They act as consuls around the world, supporting our student recruitment efforts, and growing alumni networks locally.

They also generously support our students through the Sussex Fund, contributing towards scholarship and hardship bursaries that benefit the most disadvantaged students. It was particularly heartwarming to see a generous response to support students through the pandemic in 2020/21.

Philanthropic support from alumni and friends of the University also enables Sussex to advance research with societal impact in areas where we are genuinely world leading, such as sustainability, cancer science, quantum technologies, and kindness.

Having recently celebrated the University’s 60th anniversary, the University has ambitious plans for growing the number of Sussex alumni giving back to the University, either financially or through volunteering.

For more information, visit www.sussex.ac.uk/alumni
Our ambition is simple and clear – to be one of the most sustainable universities in the world.

From our aims to reach net zero by 2035 and to embed sustainability across the curriculum and beyond, to our wide-ranging research, our commitment to sustainability permeates everything we do.

We already have sector-leading performance in key issues of sustainability, such as our own renewable energy farm with 3,000 solar panels and being the first UK university to introduce an aerobic digester for food waste. We scored 100 per cent in three areas of the 2022/23 People & Planet University League Table. Building on this, we have recently published our ambitious and comprehensive sustainability strategy, setting out a roadmap for Sussex. What is remarkable about ‘Sustainable Sussex’ is its breadth. We are addressing all 17 of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals.

Our key aims include:
- Reach net zero by 2035 – including both direct and indirect carbon emissions via decarbonised infrastructure and ethical procurement activity.
- Embed sustainability into all aspects of student learning and experience.
- Recycle 50 per cent of waste by 2025 – and reduce the waste produced per student by 10 per cent by 2025.
- Create the UK’s most biodiverse campus – setting aside up to half of the site for nature.
- Have more staff and students volunteering in their local community – including through a new charity partnership with Surfers Against Sewage.

Our strategy is grounded upon consultation and collaboration at every level. It has been co-created with the University’s students, staff, partners and stakeholders.

Our academics have also been doing tremendous work to protect and restore the environment. For example, Sussex biologists are involved in conservation projects across the globe, including joining a local initiative to protect and restore the Sussex coast’s kelp fields that have been depleted by trawling, and we have a new Industrial Decarbonisation Research and Innovation Centre, which received £20m from UK Research and Innovation.

All these sustainability efforts, and more, have earned us praise and recognition. The University was named among the world’s top 50 for delivering on the UN SDGs in research, teaching, stewardship and outreach in the Times Higher Education (THE) World Impact Rankings 2023 and 35th globally in QS World University Rankings (2024) for sustainability.
Our location

Sussex campus

The University of Sussex is home to more than 18,500 students who are based on one of the most beautiful campus locations in Britain.

Situated in rolling parkland on the edge of the lively city of Brighton & Hove, the campus combines award-winning architecture with green open spaces.

Designed by Sir Basil Spence, the buildings that make up the heart of the campus were given listed-building status in 1993. Falmer House is one of only two post-war educational buildings in the UK to be Grade 1 listed in recognition of its exceptional interest.

The campus is undergoing sustained investment and development to support Sussex’s academic mission with new teaching buildings, new student residences, refurbishment of several teaching buildings and the Library, and the Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts.

The campus is located at Falmer, on the outskirts of Brighton & Hove, and is just 55 miles (90 km) from London. Frequent trains from central London take as little as 50 minutes to Brighton, with a quick nine-minute connection to Falmer to reach campus. London Gatwick airport is only 30 minutes from Brighton, and London Heathrow is just over an hour’s drive.

Brighton and the wider community

The city of Brighton & Hove has much to offer to both staff and students, and offers a quality of life for families and single people that is hard to match.

With a fabulous variety of shops, restaurants and pubs, the city also has a range of good schools and a very tolerant, relaxed atmosphere. The South Downs National Park, historic sites such as the Royal Pavilion, and the beautiful South Coast are within easy reach of the campus, and there is also plenty on offer for nature and history lovers alike.

Brighton has a truly diverse cultural scene, with a wealth of theatres, cinemas and galleries. From pre-West End premieres at the Theatre Royal to the variety of experimental fringe productions staged throughout the year, and the Brighton Festival every May, there is plenty on offer. Both Glyndebourne and Chichester, with their own distinctive cultural offerings, are easily accessible.

The historic market town of Lewes is also close to campus, and many members of staff choose to live there because of its wide choice of housing and excellent schools.
The role of Chief Financial Officer

Job title: Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
Division: Finance
Reports to: Vice-Chancellor and President
Grade: Executive

Main purpose of the job

Reporting to the Vice Chancellor and President (Chief Executive), and as a member of the University Executive Team, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) is the visible senior leader responsible for developing and executing the University’s financial strategy, and by delivering plans to generate surplus cash from operations and maintaining a strong balance sheet, for ensuring the financial sustainability of the University.

The CFO is responsible for the financial stewardship of the University, ensuring the provision of financial information, guidance, analysis and advice to enable the University to deliver its strategic plan.

The CFO provides leadership to the operational and developmental activities of the Finance Division, supporting budget-holders in their responsibilities and successful delivery of financial and non-financial outcomes.

As a member of the University Executive Team the CFO also plays a key role in ensuring the continued success of Sussex, sharing collective responsibility for the achievement of the University’s strategic priorities and associated delivery plans.

Key duties & responsibilities

- Advise and support the Vice-Chancellor, as Chief Executive and Accountable Officer, Senate and Council on the financial viability and sustainability of the University and Group entities, as defined and required as Condition D of registration of the University by the Office for Students. Produce the evidence base to demonstrate the University’s short- and medium-term viability which is essential in giving confidence in the University to internal and external stakeholders, including Council, University management, staff, students, customers and suppliers, including lenders.

- Develop and maintain the University’s financial strategy, in support of the University’s strategic objectives. Make recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor, Finance and Resources Committee, Strategy and Performance Committee, and Council and gain consensus and adherence to accounting surplus levels, cash targets for generation of maintenance of minimum levels, borrowing policy and capital investment.

- Manage the current and future financial health of the University and any subsidiary activities, including budgeting, forecasting and reporting on income and expenditure, long term capital planning and funding.

- Own and develop the system of financial internal controls, including maintaining and developing the Financial Regulations and associated policies and procedures guidance, across the University Group.

- Lead and promote value for money across all the University’s activities including embedding in day to day and major decision making, with the aim of demonstrating appropriate use of resources and meeting public interest guidance requirement on demonstrating value for money to students and to the tax payer.

- Balance effectiveness and cost-efficiency in the management of the budget of the Finance Division, demonstrating compliance with Value for Money and Return on Investment principles and benchmarking the division’s performance against key metrics from similar organisations.

- Professional ownership and development of the financial systems for the University, including driving improvement of processes, systems, reporting and user experience within a robust system of financial control.

- Act as University Project Executive/Senior Responsible Officer as required on major projects to secure agreed deliverables within scope, time, and budget.
Represent University of Sussex interests on: SEF LLP Senior Management Board (chair); East Slope Residencies LLP; University representative on minority stake in East Slope Residences project entities; sole director of non-trading subsidiaries. Ensure delivery of financial and non-financial objectives of these important parts of University group activities.

Contribute to developing and implementing the Estates Strategy from a financial perspective and support the management team in ensuring that the property portfolio is adequately funded such that it can be well maintained and utilised. Develop a strong understanding of the University’s financial risks, particularly those relating to large capital-intensive projects, and ensure that appropriate mitigation is in place. Input financial perspectives into the development of the Estates Strategy, ensuring that the property portfolio is adequately funded.

Represent the University in HE sector bodies, acting as an ambassador for, and advocate of, the University across local stakeholder bodies (including Brighton and Hove City Council in major planning applications).

Actively role model the University’s expected leadership values and behaviours, progressing the University’s equality, diversity and inclusion objectives, both as a member of the Executive and within the Finance Division.

Lead and manage the Finance Division (over 80 FTE staff), including Procurement and Insurance sections. Lead professional guidance and training for budget-holders and School and PS Divisional Finance staff. Ensure staff are motivated and deliver to a high standard on support of the University’s financial plans.

Lead development and implementation of appropriate financial systems and delivering high-quality user experience.
Job context

- The CFO is a key source of advice and guidance for the Vice-Chancellor, Executive and Council, defining and analysing the University’s strategic and operational drivers during a period of significant opportunity and challenge for the global higher education sector.

- The post holder reports directly to the Vice-Chancellor, but enjoys a high level of autonomy and responsibility to enable the post holder to manage their own work – and that of their Division – to achieve the strategic and operational goals of the University, Professional Services, their Division and their personal objectives. The post holder is expected to work collaboratively with fellow Directors and other key stakeholders to deliver single team working that efficiently and effectively supports the achievement of those goals and objectives.

- The post reports directly to the Vice-Chancellor to give independence from all other budget holders in the University. The role challenges both the Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost (who line manages Heads of Academic Schools) and the Chief Operating Officer (who line manages Directors of Professional Services). (Challenge on the Finance budget is provided by the COO)

- The post-holder must be capable of blending pragmatism and specific financial outcomes with a firm objective of delivery of the organisational strategy and what is best for the University in delivering excellent teaching and research. The role holder needs professional and personal credibility to influence and increase joint working to deliver academic and non-academic sustainability.

- Balancing strategy and operations, the CFO will provide strong leadership to the Finance function, developing and sustaining a culture of high performance, accountability, and customer service with clearly articulated and agreed goals. The CFO is expected to challenge the status quo in the planning and delivery of services, driving improvement and introducing new ways of working.

- The CFO will ensure the Division's compliance with all applicable statutory and regulatory compliance obligations, including (but not limited to): UKVI, Health & Safety, the Prevent Duty, data protection, Competition and Markets Authority requirements, Office for Students, and equalities legislation. Additionally, they will promote good practice in relation to University policy, procedure and guidance in relation to those compliance matters in respect of students, staff and other relevant parties.
Person specification

- Evidence of success as an experienced CFO or FD, or a highly competent ambitious deputy in an appropriately complex organisation with multiple revenue streams.
- Successfully led a significant business change programme, establishing a high performing finance team and corresponding culture.
- Played a proactive role in identifying and developing strategic options and plans which has allowed a business/organisation to maximise its revenue and growth opportunities.
- Qualified chartered accountant (ACA, ACMA and CIMA preferred, with other CCAB qualifications also considered).
- Deep empathy with the academic ethos and values of the University, and a willingness to engage with the academic community.
- Successfully contributed to the delivery of major projects, with an excellent appreciation of ROI.
- Strong operational focus and experience of delivering organisational change both within finance and the business; able to ‘see the wood for the trees’ to simplify processes and activities.
- Reputation for leading a customer focused finance team, instilling and sustaining teamwork that is responsive, proactive and agile.
- Sophisticated understanding of financial process and control with a record of establishing a robust and responsive financial management culture.
- Understanding of financing capital projects through a range of instruments, and with knowledge of procurement legislation.
- Professional standing to engage with and influence the University’s Council and Executive.
- An operating style which is pragmatic, transparent, and open, working with candour and integrity.
Adaptable and resilient, with an ability to respond successfully to change. Flexible in approach to business issues seeing them from both a strategic and operational perspective.

Ability to constructively challenge ideas, balance opportunities and threats, think creatively when identifying solutions and devise and integrate new services and ways of working.

An appreciation of the external environment in which Sussex operates.

Maintains big picture awareness and thinks strategically when problem solving.

Recognises individuals and groups for their achievements. Enthusiastically promotes team successes, crediting the whole group and building a spirit of delivery through teamwork. Inspires and motivates with positive energy and leads by setting an outstanding example as a leader and motivator.

Able to constructively challenge ideas, balance opportunities and threats, think creatively when identifying solutions and devise and integrate new services and ways of working.

The job description set out above is current at the time of writing and may change as circumstances change. It is expected to be an organic document and the person appointed will be expected to embrace reasonable change as appropriate.
Appointment process

The University of Sussex has engaged the services of Odgers Berndtson, to whom applications should be sent by the closing date of Tuesday 29th August 2023.

To apply, please submit a curriculum vitae along with a covering letter briefly setting out your interest in the role and details of how you match the required criteria. Please include in a separate document, the names and addresses of three referees. Referees will not be approached until the final stages and not without prior permission from candidates.

The preferred method of application is via the Odgers Berndtson website at www.odgers.com/89484.

If you are unable to apply via the Odgers Berndtson online portal, please email your application to 89484@odgersberndtson.com

All applications will receive an automated response.

All candidates are also requested to complete an online Diversity Monitoring Form which will be found at the end of the application process. This will assist the university in monitoring selection decisions to assess whether equality of opportunity is being achieved. Information collated from these forms will not be used as part of the selection process and will be treated as strictly confidential.

Key dates

Following a longlist meeting of the selection panel, successful candidates will be invited to informal engagements with key stakeholders at the University on Wednesday 4th October. Final-stage interviews at the University will take place on Wednesday 25th October.

It would be advantageous to hold these dates where possible and please let us know if you are unavailable on any of these dates.

For a conversation in confidence please contact:

Alex Acland
Managing Partner, Education Practice alex.acland@odgersberndtson.com

Edwina Purcell
Consultant, Education Practice edwina.purcell@odgersberndtson.com

We are committed to ensuring everyone can access our website and application processes. This includes people with sight loss, hearing, mobility and cognitive impairments.

Should you require access to these documents in alternative formats, please contact natasha.wood@odgersberndtson.com.

Also, if you have any comments and/or suggestions about improving access to our application processes please don’t hesitate to contact us at response.manager@odgersberndtson.com.

Personal data

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children/family members or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and/or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information.