



Operations Director - SteelWatch

Opportunity!

Are you an experienced Operations Director or COO who relishes a new challenge in a young growing organisation, contributing to climate action? This is an exciting opportunity for someone who has experience in developing a young organisation and navigating the challenges that come with managing an internationally-spread team. In SteelWatch you can deploy those skills with a multi-country, collaborative and ambitious team that is challenging the global steel sector to decarbonise. We need someone with deep experience, we offer a stimulating rewarding role.

The role

We seek an Operations Director to join the Leadership Team at SteelWatch. The role is both strategic and operational: strategically steering our progression across staff, operations and budgets, while being hands-on in delivery. You will manage our Operations team and related consultants, and take direct responsibility for delivering all aspects of human resources management. This is a new role, and will be the third Director at SteelWatch, alongside the Executive Director and Campaigns Director.

This role is for Europe/EMEA timezone and we particularly welcome candidates that are Netherlands-based (where SteelWatch is registered), and candidates that speak Dutch.

The organisation

SteelWatch is an international climate campaign organisation, driving corporate accountability and action in the steel sector. Steelmaking drives 11% of CO₂ emissions but most people don't even know that. Our vision is a steel sector that underpins a thriving zero emissions economy and gets on track for a 1.5 degree warming trajectory this side of 2030. We registered in the Netherlands in 2023 and have rapidly grown our team and a visible presence in both the civil society ecosystem and with the steel sector.



We run corporate campaigns and challenge the global industry to replace complacency with urgent action. We complement the work of other civil society change-makers bringing a vigilant voice and corporate scrutiny. We currently focus on OECD countries, and specifically across Europe and Japan, with team members in Europe/Africa and Asia-Pacific timezones. As a young organisation, we are evolving, testing, and learning. We seek team members who will enjoy breaking new ground with us.

Within 2 years, we have grown quickly to a 2.4 million EUR organisation with a core team of around 16 people. As a start-up we have successfully developed and implemented the necessary operational processes. Now we need to strengthen the organisational foundations and steer the next phase of organisational development and stabilisation.

The Role

The Operations Director will lead our Operations team and steer our organisational development. 'Operations' covers wide areas of responsibility including recruitment, human resources management, contracting, accounting, finance management, operational processes, risk management, IT systems and security, governance, development or updating of organisational policies, and organisational culture and teamworking. The major focus of this role will be (1) to future-proof the organisation and (2) to develop and manage human resources policy and processes. This means taking direct responsibility for delivery of all aspects of human resources management, covering recruitment, contracting, promotion and retention across geographies.

The Operations Director will line- or task- manage a team of 3-4 people who are responsible for funder management, finance, board management, and a range of operational processes. The role reports to the Executive Director and sits in the Leadership Team. The postholder (after probation) will be registered as a member of the Management Board of the registered Stichting.



Responsibilities

1. Lead the development of an organisational strategy for growth, stability and longevity and build future-fit foundations that will enable its delivery:

- Develop the foundations needed to support the right balance of growth, stability and longevity across all operational processes.
- Oversee and lead where needed on development or updating of organisational policies in light of the strategic priorities of the organisation.
- Be a pro-active member of the Leadership Team taking decisions on SteelWatch priorities and adapting as needed to deliver our goals in a changing context. Bring an operational and organisational lens to decisions on the pace and direction of growth of SteelWatch.
- Support the Executive Director in the development of SteelWatch business plan for the coming years.

2. Lead human resources management

- Lead, develop and implement strategies for recruitment, contracting, onboarding, retention, professional development, promotion, appraisal, and performance management of team members, including employees and consultants.
- Further develop the overall staffing, grading and remuneration structure and HR policies and services, bringing in good practice and lessons from other internationally-spread organisations, aligned with the organisation's overall team and strategy.
- Manage staff and consultancy contracts and remuneration, including liaison with Employer of Record providers, other service providers facilitating payroll and employment contract provisions, managing direct employment (so far in the Netherlands and Japan), and identifying the appropriate routes for contracting as the team evolves.
- Monitor, update, and advise staff and managers on HR policies and procedures, ensuring that they are adhered to and effectively communicated across the organisation.
- Provide or secure timely and accurate HR advice to managers on employee relations, performance management, and disciplinary cases and lead in more complex employee performance or disciplinary matters.

3. Oversee finances and financial management



- Oversee the work of the Operations Lead and Finance and Accounting Manager to ensure robust financial management and funder management.
- Ensure our budgets, scenarios, and financial management provide the information needed for strategic decisions making on spending and growth.
- Strategically plan and develop financial strategies that align with SteelWatch growth path.

4. Lead and oversee IT systems and security,

- Develop and improve IT systems to ensure digital security and underpin smooth ways of working within the team and with external collaborators.

5. Ensure good governance and sound identification and management of risk

- Ensure legal compliance.
- Ensure strong governance processes within and between the Management Board and the Supervisory Board;
- Improve and manage the risk framework and processes for risk mitigation.

6. Manage the Operations Team

- Oversee the work, priorities and delivery of the Operations team, including the Operations Lead, the Finance Manager, the Executive Assistant, and other operational roles.
- Develop the Operations team as needed to meet the needs of the organisation and ensure effective cross-team collaboration with other teams in SteelWatch.

Essential skills and experience

- At least fifteen years' experience: this should include five years' proven record of operational management covering organisational development, HR, risk management, policy development and process improvement, including three years at director level.
- Experience running work operations in an organisation that works in multiple jurisdictions, managing contracts, salaries, benefits and culture across geographies.
- Proven capabilities in overseeing all aspects of human resources management.



- A sound understanding of financial processes (including budgeting, forecasting) and business analysis.
- Demonstrable experience in growing an organisation, navigating challenges of growth, and ability to deploy skills in an organisation that is young, growing, and emerging from start-up phase.
- Experience in the non-profit or wider social purpose sector.

Desired skills and experience

- Experience establishing and improving processes in organisations that rely mainly on remote working
- Experience in designing and implementing HR policies and systems from scratch
- Experience in a grant-funded or grant-funding organisation.
- Experience in climate and/or campaigning organisations.

Competencies and aptitude

- Willingness and ability to be both operational and strategic. To be clear, however senior you are, you must be willing to roll up the sleeves and get stuff done. We also need your ability to see the big picture and identify the questions that we may not even be asking yet.
- Excellent people skills and ability to work well with team members with very diverse experience and backgrounds.
- Ability to navigate uncertainty and ambiguity.
- Flexibility to work early or late hours on some days to overlap with other time zones and to travel 2-4 times per year.
- Proven track record as a team player, able to work well with colleagues across cultures and geographies

Language requirements

- Ability to work in English at a professional level is a requirement. Additional language in Dutch is strongly preferred.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Country location

This role is open to candidates in:

- The Netherlands is the preferred location.
- Other European countries or non-European countries in EMEA time zone where a fixed term contract is possible (via Employer of Record). European locations are preferred to maximise options for face to face time while minimising flights.

Location and remote working and travel

- Location: work location is remote from your home base. Staff members work remotely and online on a daily basis.
- Travel to an annual full team retreat is essential - this happens once a year and may be in Asia, Europe or other. If you are constrained in your ability or permissions to travel, please discuss this before investing in an application.
- Additional travel and face to face time is expected within Europe, particularly with Management Team members, or other Europe-based or Europe-visiting colleagues. This is likely 2-3 times a year.
- While we offer flexibility for you to work away from home base, this will need to be coordinated with times when face to face time with colleagues is not expected, may depend on timezone changes and/or be limited by legal contracting constraints.

Timezones and hours

- Timezone: For this role, we prefer a candidate based in EMEA time zones (one hour either side of CET).
- Working hours are flexible. You will need to have flexibility to work early or late across different time zones straddling Asia/Pacific/ Europe&Africa /UK. This is essential at least 2 days a week, ideally more. You also have the opportunity to build in some flexibility around your own non-work commitments, so long as core collaboration time works smoothly.



- Full time 5 days/week, 8 hours/day. For this role we will also consider 4 days a week. If you prefer part time please indicate this at time of application.

Working conditions and benefits

- The initial contract period will likely be for 24 months with a possibility to renew, depending on country regulations. Type of contract will depend on the location. As an organisation, our intent is to start moving to permanent staffing contracts and expect this role to shift to a permanent contract in due course.
- You must have a valid work permit in the country where you plan to be employed. SteelWatch is not in a position to support a visa process.
- Remuneration is according to SteelWatch norms, level of experience and location of employment. This role in the Director band, for which a Netherlands-based salary is in range 82,000 - 103,000EUR. Salaries are adjusted by location.
- Our leave policy, unless varied by national regulation, provides 34 days in total combining public holidays and paid leave in all countries, plus birthday and inspiration time.

Ethics: we are a values-based organisation. Every staff member and consultant is asked to sign our Ethics statement and help us as an organisation live up to our values.

Equal opportunities: we strive to be an equal opportunities employer. We actively welcome applications from candidates from historically underrepresented groups in the climate change movement. If you require any adaptation or assistance during the application process, please be sure to let us know.

How to apply:



- Send a cover letter (2 pages max), and a CV (3 pages max) addressed to Caroline at **opportunities@steelwatch.org**. CVs submitted without a cover letter will not be reviewed. CVs submitted to a personal email address will not be included in the process. Please ensure the filename of the documents submitted contains your own name and is not called 'SteelWatch application'.
- Please do not submit CVs via the LinkedIn automatic application. These will not be reviewed.
- Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. The latest deadline to submit your application is Tuesday 13th May - at 12:00 CEST.
- In your cover letter, please help us understand why this role excites you and which elements suit your specific skills. We usually receive many generic applications which appear to be written by AI, but we will be looking for your personal take on the role and opportunity.
- Please specify in your cover letter the country you will be working from and if you have worker rights or a valid working visa for that country. Please also indicate any salary expectation and availability to start in the role.

Recruitment process

First round interviews will be between 02 - 06 June. A second round of interviews is anticipated approximately two weeks later.

At least one task will be requested during the process and quite possibly two.

References will be taken up, verbally, as part of the final decision. So apologies to those that get screened out, and for those who get screened in, expect many questions and we look forward to yours.