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Associate Director | Operations and Partnerships

The Associate Director, Operations and Partnerships is responsible for translating Pelsing's approved programme pipeline into disciplined execution. The role leads programme operations, partner coordination, delivery management, and execution troubleshooting across the Secretariat. The postholder ensures that programmes designed or validated by the Innovation Lab are executed on time, to standard, and in accordance with partner obligations, budget controls, and reporting requirements.

Reporting line

Reports to: Director, Secretariat

Supervises: Programme operations staff, partnerships staff, assigned officers and associates, and temporary delivery teams as required.

Role in Pelsing

Pelsing functions with a 2-engine structure, the Innovation Lab for innovation and ventures and the Secretariat for daily functions and execution. This role sits in the Secretariat. The role does not originate institutional strategy or design programmes independently; it operationalises approved programmes and manages partner relationships required for delivery.

Key responsibilities

A. Programme operations

- Lead end-to-end execution of Pelsing programmes once they are approved for delivery.
- Convert programme concepts into operational delivery plans, timelines, staffing plans, partner workflows, and implementation calendars.
- Oversee cohort logistics, immersion operations, partner placements, deployment coordination, field execution, and issue resolution.
- Ensure that delivery is consistent with agreed quality standards, budget envelopes, and reporting requirements.
- Maintain programme dashboards tracking milestones, risks, budgets, and delivery bottlenecks.

B. Partnerships and external coordination



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- Manage day-to-day institutional relationships with implementation partners, host institutions, technical collaborators, and external stakeholders.
- Negotiate delivery arrangements, scopes of work, timelines, and partner responsibilities within approved mandates.
- Ensure partner follow-through and maintain written records of commitments, obligations, and deliverables.
- Support the Innovation Lab in identifying and securing external partners needed for programme implementation.

C. Delivery governance and controls

- Ensure that outsourced programme delivery arrangements are governed by clear performance, financial, and accountability terms.
- Monitor delivery risks and escalate material operational, financial, legal, or reputational issues through the delegation framework.
- Maintain compliance with approved procurement, budgeting, and programme management SOPs.
- Support preparation of programme reports for the Director, ED, and Board as required.

D. Team management

- Supervise officers and associates assigned to programme operations and partnerships work.
- Build disciplined delivery culture across the Secretariat, including planning, documentation, follow-up, and execution review.
- Allocate tasks across teams and ensure delivery staff are used effectively across multiple active programmes.

Decision rights

Within approved plans and budgets, the AD may:

- manage implementation planning and day-to-day execution;
- coordinate partners and approve routine operational adjustments;
- recommend outsourcing arrangements and delivery structures;
- escalate spend, risk, and contract issues in accordance with the approved delegation matrix.

The role does not have authority to:

- approve major unbudgeted commitments;



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- enter into material multi-year obligations;
- originate programmes outside the approved institutional thesis;
- approve policy exceptions.

Key performance indicators

- Percentage of programmes delivered on time and within approved budget
- Quality and timeliness of partner follow-through
- Number and severity of unresolved operational bottlenecks
- Delivery reporting discipline and dashboard quality
- Partner satisfaction and repeat collaboration rate
- Quality of operational handoff from Lab design to Secretariat delivery

Candidate profile

- Strong programme management and institutional coordination background
- Ability to manage complexity across multiple workstreams
- High execution discipline, follow-through, and operational judgement
- Strong written and verbal stakeholder management skills
- Comfortable working in high-accountability, evolving institutional settings

Ideal experience

- 5-8 years of working experience.
- Programme delivery, operations leadership, partnerships management, public-sector coordination, venture operations, or institutional programme management
- Experience managing cross-functional teams and external partners
- Familiarity with budget controls, implementation planning, and reporting systems