



CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Who are we?

Roots of Empathy is an internationally acclaimed and award-winning children's charity, founded in 1996 by Founder/President, Mary Gordon; social entrepreneur, educator, parenting expert, child advocate and best-selling author. The organization and its Founder have received prestigious international and national awards for innovation, including the Governor General's Award for Social Innovation.

Roots of Empathy has received acknowledgements and awards recognizing our successes, most notably by HundrED, a global education non-profit based in Finland which, for the sixth consecutive year, selected Roots of Empathy as one of the top global impactful and scalable innovations in education. In fall 2022, we met even more challenging criteria from HundrED including demonstrating growth of impact and scalability over the last 5 years and showing evidence of being responsive to the current needs of education worldwide. As a result, we were honoured to be inducted as a permanent member of the [HundrED Hall of Fame](#).

Roots of Empathy develops empathy in children today so they can build the world that they deserve. We've reached over 1.2 million children globally with our elementary school-based programs and we have 2 decades of independent research to prove impact. Our flagship program, Roots of Empathy reduces violence, aggression, and bullying and increases pro-social behavior, while promoting resilience, well-being, and positive mental health in children. The organization also delivers a sister program to Roots of Empathy, called Seeds of Empathy, which is delivered to young children in child care centres in Canada, US, and UK.

Our mission is to build caring, peaceful, and civil societies through the development of empathy in children and adults. Our vision is to change the world, child by child. Headquartered in Toronto, Canada, the organization delivers its programs in all ten Canadian provinces and on three continents in multiple languages.

Roots of Empathy is committed to the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of our organization. We believe we are stronger when we not only celebrate our many differences, values, and voices, but also include them in practice. This means our organization will actively work to understand and remove barriers to equity and inclusion, be they systematic, physical, or otherwise for all employees including our Board of Directors.

Roots of Empathy is an equal opportunity employer and is fully compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

The Chief Operating Officer position reports directly to the **Founder/President CEO**

THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER ROLE

Based in downtown Toronto and reporting directly to the Founder/President/CEO, Mary Gordon, the Chief Operating Officer (“COO”) is responsible for the overall successful operational management of the organization. As a member of the Senior Management Team (“SMT”), the COO will contribute to developing and operationalizing the business strategy, upholding its values, ensuring Roots of Empathy remains a vital organization and maintaining its outstanding reputation with key stakeholders and the general community. The COO has direct reports with Director Finance and Administration, Director Canada and will oversee International Operations.

The mandate for the COO will be to support the Founder/President/CEO in building on the organization’s considerable strengths and executing on the organization’s mission. This will entail developing and driving the integration of processes and systems that will support the organizational strategy and projected growth objectives, financial goals, and overall deliverables. The COO will support in working internationally with 5 boards of directors.

The new COO will develop and maintain a deep knowledge of the organization’s finances and funding sources, core programs, operations and business plans. He/she will contribute to and implement the new strategic vision of the organization, will help develop and nurture key internal and external relationships and will be responsible for the management of: his/her direct reports and their staff and the overall functioning of fundraising, finance, communications, operations and infrastructure. The new COO will play an important role in maintaining a positive environment and structure to support the Founder/President/CEO in delivering against the goals and direction of the organization, and contributing to the organization’s long term sustainable growth and expansion of its role in Canada and globally.

Critical to success in this role will be the incumbent’s ability to work directly with the CEO in problem solving and planning and to be a masterful relationship builder who develops rapport both internally and externally, with ease. The COO will have proven experience in being highly successful and accountable in managing people and projects. The COO will be passionate about the Roots of Empathy mission and will be a values-driven, committed, and an empathic leader.

SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Support Canada and International organizational operations;
- Develop a strong working relationship with the Director of Finance and Administration.
- Under the direction of the Founder/President/CEO develop and help implement the business strategy and the long-term planning exercise;
- Work with the Founder/President/CEO in:
 - maintaining and building strong international relationships with our existing partners, being responsible for contracts and overseeing fundraising activities;
 - supporting the Board(s) as required;

- bringing recommendations and solutions for Issues and Risk Management.

KEY MANDATE AND DELIVERABLES:

1. Work with Finance and Administration to create and oversee the annual operating plan, budget and audits for all ROE entities;
2. Develop a deep understanding of the Roots of Empathy movement and programs and develop strong relationships across the organization.
3. Work with the CEO to diversify funding sources to go beyond provincial government funding in Canada to include federal funding, new private foundations, corporations and individual funders.
4. Overseeing prospecting, stewardship, proposal development and reporting;

IDEAL CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER CANDIDATE PROFILE:

The ideal COO candidate brings 10-15+ years of senior operational and/or service delivery leadership experience gained from working with multifaceted organizations in the not-for-profit and/or private sector. Knowledge of leadership and fundraising principles as they relate to not-for-profit/volunteer organizations. Additional language skills will also be considered an asset. Experience working in Indigenous contexts will also be considered an asset.

The ideal candidate for the position will:

- bring strong fundraising and proposal writing skills plus a track record of successful fundraising through foundations, governments, corporations and private funders;
- bring strong government relationships and a track record of obtaining government grants at the municipal/provincial/federal levels is a significant asset;
- bring an appreciation for how to successfully navigate and achieve results within a broad, complex children's charity. In this regard, he/she brings a proven ability of developing and maintaining positive and effective relationships and gaining credibility, trust and buy-in at all levels of the organization;
- have strong project management skills with a proven ability to meet tight deadlines while having superior attention to detail and ensuring a high standard quality of work;
- have business and financially savvy with budget management experience and solid judgment;
- experience with legal international dealings will also be considered an asset;
- be self-motivated and results driven individual who possesses outstanding interpersonal and communication skills with the ability to lead the team;
- bring a track record of identifying future opportunities, assessing options and recommending timely decisions in the organization's best interest;

The new COO brings a strong understanding, passion and belief in the mission, goals and values of Roots of Empathy and is personally committed to making a significant contribution to the organization. The role will lead by example and will be a proud and an enthusiastic ambassador for Roots of Empathy and the meaningful work it carries out.

HOW TO APPLY

If you are interested in exploring this exciting Chief Operating Officer role please send your resume and cover letter to Irena Trajkovska, Executive Assistant to Founder/President/CEO of Roots of Empathy at itrajkovska@rootsofempathy.org.