

Charity Challenge

Operations Manager

POSITION: Operations Manager

DEPARTMENT: Operations Team

REPORTING TO: Head of Operations

DIRECT REPORTS: None

LOCATION: Finchley Central, North London

DATE UPDATED: August 2019

Who we are: Charity Challenge is a multi-award winning adventure travel operator best known for organising the celebrity based BT Red Nose Day Kilimanjaro climb.

We aim to deliver memorable, dynamic and safe challenge expeditions in both popular and off the beaten track destinations, creating tailor-made events for charity and corporate clients whilst providing personalised, friendly and excellent customer service, advice and support. Our brand is based on values of professionalism, transparency, excellence, safety and passion in all that we do.

What we are looking for: An experienced, passionate, and commercially minded Operations Manager to join our highly driven, ambitious and dynamic operations team. With your primary focus being on safety and risk management as well as improving and maintaining excellent standards of quality and customer experience, you will manage multiple itineraries and departures within a designated geographical region. This is a busy, varied role that requires huge amounts of organisational skill, and a passion for what you do. You will work within a growing operations team and reporting to the Head of Operations.

The role

- **Pre-challenge:**
 - Reviewing and updating all safety documentation for your challenge portfolio.
 - Booking new departure dates in cooperation with the sales/flights teams
 - Researching and assisting in the setting up of new itineraries
 - Monitoring participant numbers, ensuring/monitoring profitability in liaison with the finance team
 - Liaising with ground handlers to ensure all operational details are correct, that any ad hoc changes or difference to exclusive itineraries have been organised and accounted for and any extra costs passed to the sales team.
 - Managing the ground handlers and negotiating rates.
 - Dealing with queries from clients regarding all elements of the challenges and briefing leaders and doctors
 - Liaison with the flights team to ensure group flight schedules are all uploaded, leaders' and doctors' flights are booked, extensions, add-ons and special requests are all in order
- **During-challenge:**
 - Effectively handling emergencies / crises (on call duty including evenings and weekends on a rota basis).
 - Ensuring any other arising operational issues are resolved and the challenge is running smoothly
 - Occasionally travelling to experience a challenge, conduct safety inspections and familiarise yourself with the product.
- **Post-challenge:**
 - Gathering as much feedback as possible (from clients, doctors and challenge leaders) in order to continually improve safety and quality
 - Liaising with ground handlers with a view to implementing changes to avoid re-occurrence of problems.
 - Responding to passenger complaints and feedback
- **General:**
 - Ensuring ground handlers in each country are working within their contract with Charity Challenge.
 - Taking responsibility for the maintenance and improvement of the quality and most importantly, the safety of your challenges – including training and ongoing appraisal of both UK and local leaders.
 - Assisting with the recruitment and training of both UK and local leaders as required

- Liaising with the flights department regarding airlines and fares to ensure the correct flights are booked for all your challenges and that the agreed fares are within budget.
- Liaising with clients: helping them prepare for their challenge, sending out visa application info, vaccinations, kit list etc, joining instructions, updates to their itineraries and flight details etc. Collate challenge feedback and respond where necessary to problems. Assisting clients with insurance claims on their return etc.
- Contracting challenge leaders, doctors and ensuring challenge leaders and doctors are prepared for their challenge with briefings, manual and relevant documents.
- Organising and conducting a debrief post-challenge and detailed information fed back to the ground handler.
- Prepare and ensure all customer facing documents are up to date and accurate on the website - Q&A / trip notes / itinerary / kit list
- Attending WTM and other trade exhibitions as appropriate / required
- Cross checking invoices from ground handlers and ensuring payment is made promptly
- Assessing current GH costs and seeing where cost reductions could be made. Acquiring shadow quotes and negotiating with ground handlers to reduce costs if appropriate
- Product Development – help with developing new challenges in liaison with the Operations and/or Sales team
- Bespoke challenges – assisting in tailor making exclusive group challenges: sourcing ground handler, devising itinerary to client specifications, liaison with GH and negotiating cost.
- Management of and responsibility for operations-based projects as per requirements
- Assess levels of in country branding on your challenges and make recommendations to the marketing team
- Blog writing or sourcing blogs for challenges within your area.
- Product and sales webinars and presentations.

Core competencies

- We are of course looking for someone with the relevant group/charity tour operation and adventure travel experience who has a sound knowledge of principles of safety and risk management.
- Good broad adventure travel knowledge is essential.
- Experience of managing America's product would be beneficial.
- Experience of leading adventure travel groups, working in remote destinations and/or work in the charity sector is desirable but not a pre-requisite.
- You should be a self-starter who can manage your own time efficiently, and who is not fazed by balancing a workload of wide-ranging tasks. You should be able to competently project manage many tasks, with a high level of care to everything at the same time.
- We are looking for someone who is happy and competent doing high volume and routine administrative tasks efficiently.
- Specifically, excellent attention to detail, a good level of spoken and written English and a focus on organisation and following processes is key.
- We are looking for someone with a lot of get-up-and-go, who will take the initiative with their own portfolio of challenges and be a confident and competent communicator with clients and overseas ground handlers.
- Excellent use of Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook is essential. Experience of using databases is essential.

What you can expect from us

- We are a small, friendly business in North London, full of people with passion for what we are doing. It is a lively and busy environment. This is a chance to do something special and work not only in the travel but also the charity sector.
- The job may also include experiencing the challenges and/or conducting familiarisation trips, so may include some international travel as dictated by the needs of the business, including over weekends.
- Salary is from £26-30k depending on experience.
- Mon-Fri 0900-1730hrs including 1 hour lunch break. 37.5 hrs a week. One week in four will be spent on 24 hour emergency duty but occasionally you could be required to be on duty more frequently than this.
- 24 days holiday a year, plus one extra day each year up to a maximum of 27 days after three years continuous service

To apply please email your CV together with a Covering Letter outlining your relevant experience, qualifications, skills and abilities which match the requirements of the role to katherine@charitychallenge.com

You can be part of our unique organisation helping to change people's lives and raise millions for charity!