



Chief Operating Officer
CommonWealth Kitchen
Dorchester, MA
March 2021

Join CommonWealth Kitchen as their first Chief Operating Officer and help lead this dynamic organization through its next phase of growth and impact. This exciting and challenging opportunity will require organizational, financial, and people management skills, plus a passion to create a food economy that is racially, socially, and economically just.

About CommonWealth Kitchen

CommonWealth Kitchen (CWK) is a nonprofit social enterprise, based in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston, on a mission to build a new food economy grounded in racial, social, and economic justice. The organization has experienced substantial growth over the last 6 years, increasing from a team of 3.5 and a budget of \$250,000 to a staff of 20+ and an annual budget of \$3.7M, collecting numerous awards and accolades along the way, including being named a Game-Changer by the *Boston Globe* and Best Incubator by *Boston Magazine*.

CWK uses a systems-based approach to build the capacity of diverse entrepreneurs to start and grow food companies, and connects them with the education, training, and industry networks essential for success. To complement its direct services and Programs, CWK advocates for policies and forges strategic industry connections essential to building a just, equitable, sustainable food economy where everyone can participate and prosper.

CWK's Work

CWK operates Greater Boston's only non-profit shared-use commercial kitchen, providing hourly rental to 50+ start-up and early-stage food companies annually, over 80% BIPOC-owned. To complement the shared kitchens, CWK offers a wide range of business education and training, and coordinated market access to more than 100 diverse food companies annually. CWK also operates its own small-batch food manufacturing operation, providing outsourced processing to help emerging food businesses scale, while bringing manufacturing jobs to one of Boston's lowest-income neighborhoods. CWK's manufacturing operation also provides fee-for-service production to restaurants, farms, and other food businesses as a source of earned revenue to support operations.

Even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, CWK's impact has continued to grow as it pivoted to respond to food insecurity and the devastating toll on its extended community of food entrepreneurs. One of those efforts is CommonTable, which mobilizes CWK's resources and businesses community to produce delicious, culturally diverse, prepared meals to families in need. More than 46 partners have together cooked over 135,000 meals. Additionally, CWK just launched a Restaurant Recovery Initiative to provide advisory services to diverse restaurant owners as they navigate economic recovery.

CommonWealth Kitchen's model has been attracting increasing recognition for supporting entrepreneurs who have the passion and great recipes to be successful food entrepreneurs, but have

historically been shut out of the capital, networks, and production capacity necessary to succeed. With years of rapid growth and a successful pivot to pandemic-response, the organization has come to an inflection point where its startup culture and entrepreneurial roots need the steady hand and guidance of a senior leader who can formalize systems and oversee the strategic choices that will allow CWK to move to its next phase of growth.

The Position

Partnering with Commonwealth Kitchen CEO Jen Faigel, the Chief Operating Officer will help build out and lead a dynamic team to ensure CWK has critical systems and infrastructure, measures its return on investment, and delivers both mission impact for its core business lines (the shared and co-manufacturing kitchens), and a vibrant education and support program for its diverse community of food entrepreneurs.

This position is one for candidates who enjoy getting ‘stuff’ done. Commonwealth Kitchen has run as a collaborative operation since its beginning, which enabled innovation and rapid growth. As the organization has grown, that culture now must be paired with the structures, systems, data collection and evaluation, decision making processes, and people and cultural development to solidify the foundation upon which long-term, sustainable impact can be built. Successful candidates will establish cultural norms and workflow processes to bring each operational function—IT, human resources, finance, business operations, data management and impact measurement, and facilities management—into partnership with the mission-oriented teams that support entrepreneurs and their products or services. The position supervises approximately 3 to 4 senior team members, with 10 to 15 staff reporting indirectly.

Serious candidates should review CWK’s [website](#) and bring an understanding of some area of the food industry or a demonstrated commitment to the equity issues CWK seeks to address.

Responsibilities

Organizational Leadership and Strategy

- Lead organizational planning and budgeting processes, working directly with senior managers to implement the plans, meet desired goals and impacts, manage to budgets, and evaluate against key performance indicators.
- Work with the Executive Director and others to assess and implement new programs, initiatives, and strategies, and evaluate and adjust existing efforts, in service to CWK’s mission.
- Develop, oversee, and update organizational policies to ensure the community of staff, stakeholders, and entrepreneurs is both supported and meets clear expectations to each other and to CWK and upholds CWK’s core values.
- Assess current people management and human resources practices and implement strategies that promote effective inter-organization communications, professional development, and career growth for the entire team.
- Establish planning practices, with the Executive Director and the Board, that serve as shared guidance for assessing new opportunities or expansion pressures.

- Serve as a key liaison to the CWK Board of Directors, collaborating with the Treasurer as well as the entire Board on planning, effective meetings, committees and task forces, and long-term priorities.

People Management

- Foster and lead a collaborative, respectful, inclusive, high-impact, data-driven culture consistent with CWK's core values and reflecting CWK's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Manage all organizational and staff development, including working with managers to ensure all staff have professional development plans and regular performance reviews.
- Oversee all hiring and HR functions, ensuring compliance with all applicable law and best practices and building a culture of learning.

Operations

- Oversee all core administrative functions and risk management activities, including insurance, regulatory compliance, administrative filings, contract review, licensing and permitting.
- Manage oversight of physical space, including serving as lead with CWK's landlord in the short term, then oversee the transfer of all building operations to CWK in late 2021 as part of CWK's planned acquisition of this multi-tenant food production center.
- Supervise CWK's Director of Facilities, who manages operations of CWK's kitchens.
- Establish and maintain excellent systems for record keeping including contracts, human resource files, and financial records.
- Maintain all data management systems, ensuring accurate and complete collection of information into Salesforce and/or other tracking systems, development and circulation of reports, and review of reports and dashboards against established metrics.

Organizational Finance

- Oversee contractor for outsourced finance function and lead development and management of budgets, cash flow, financial projections, and project or grant writing budgeting.
- Coordinate with Executive Director and senior staff to assess, develop and implement strategies for earned revenue from operations, including developing revenue-sharing models with member businesses.
- Assist staff in developing financial models and assessing return on investment for new programs and initiatives.
- Maintain up-to-date systems and policies for all internal controls and accounting standards to ensure regulatory compliance.
- Manage annual third-party financial audit and tax filings.

Qualifications and Qualities

While no candidate will bring every ideal experience, expertise, and personal quality, the successful candidate will demonstrate most of the following, coupled with evidence of a passion for

CommonWealth Kitchen’s mission and proof of likely success in a growing nonprofit. CommonWealth Kitchen itself succeeds only with leaders who embrace the energy and the challenge of an entrepreneurial culture, alongside colleagues who are motivated by bringing equity and justice to the food industry.

- A minimum of 8 to 10 years of exceptional operational, finance, and/or people leadership in a growing nonprofit, social enterprise, B Corps, or similar double bottom line organization.
- Proven leadership and team-building skills—the capacity for managing and leading people across diverse areas of work; experience building and scaling social enterprise organizations and managing complexity; ability to develop and empower leaders and build strengths-based teams.
- A breadth of general management experience—a thorough understanding of finance, information systems, and HR; knowledge and direct experience with a full range of business functions and systems, including strategic planning, budgeting, business analysis, finance, human resources, and strategic communications.
- A proven track record of high performance managing to goals and budgets- and excellent problem solving and project management skills.
- Strategic vision and agility—the ability to think strategically, anticipate and assess future consequences and trends, and incorporate them into the organizational plan.
- An action-oriented mind set—someone who enjoys working hard and looks for challenges; able to act and react as necessary and juggle projects; not afraid to take charge of a situation, with an entrepreneurial spirit.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office, Google docs, QuickBooks, and Salesforce required.
- An undergraduate degree or equivalent with preference for additional related education such as an MBA.

Salary, Benefits, Working Conditions

This is a new position without previous salary history. CWK anticipates the salary range to be \$110,000 and \$150,000. CWK offers generous paid time off as well as group health insurance.

While due to the COVID-19 pandemic many CommonWealth Kitchen team members are working remotely, when it is safe to do so, the COO will work full-time at CWK’s 196 Quincy Street facility in Boston. Until then, while largely working from home, the COO should expect to periodically attend meetings and facilitate operational needs in-person at CWK’s campus.

To Apply

CommonWealth Kitchen is partnering with Carolyn O’Brien Consulting, LLC for this search. All candidates must submit a resume and detailed cover letter that matches their experience to CommonWealth Kitchen’s requirements. Help your candidacy by explaining what evidence you can demonstrate about your commitment to a just and equitable food economy; and tell us about how you made strategic decisions that consider ROI and mission. Title a pdf version of your resume and cover

letter with your last name and cover or resume and email to CWK@carolynobrien.org. Please include your LinkedIn profile as well.

CommonWealth Kitchen is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees knowing its centrality to our mission. We aspire to build a diverse staff team and community, including groups that are traditionally underrepresented among our sector leadership. Please indicate if you would like special accommodations during the interview process.