



**SEAFOOD
ENGINE**
In New England

Chief Operating Officer

The National Science Foundation (NSF) Seafood Engine in New England (<https://seafoodengine.org>) is looking for an experienced, dynamic, and driven Chief Operating Officer (COO). Led by the Northeastern Regional Association of Coastal Ocean Observing Systems (NERACOOS), the Seafood Engine is an emerging innovation ecosystem and the only blue economy program with the NSF Regional Innovation Engines program. The Engine brings together premier R&D universities and educational institutions; industry, economic development, and community organizations; and government agencies to stimulate transformative technological innovation across the seafood supply chain. In doing so, the Engine aims to advance competitiveness, profitability, and workforce development jointly in the U.S. seafood industry and blue tech sector, regionally and nationally. The COO will drive operational excellence and robust financial management across a diverse portfolio of projects. The ideal candidate is a seasoned professional with a proven track record in financial management, operational leadership, strategic planning, and programmatic development within technology innovation. This position will report to the Engine CEO.

Core responsibilities include:

Operations Strategy & Management

- Lead operational strategy, working with the Engine CEO and Leadership Team to ensure alignment with the Engine's vision and goals.
- Lead the day-to-day operational responsibilities of the Engine including identification and development of operational tools and processes to streamline Engine reporting and enable data-driven and timely decision-making and execution.
- Work with the Engine's ecosystem driver co-leads and project managers to establish annual, quarterly, and monthly plans and ensure timely progress against these plans.
- Work with the Engine's staff and Leadership Team, NSF staff, and other partners on the development and implementation of Engine policies related to intellectual property, cybersecurity, external funding programs, and other issues.
- Oversee accurate and timely reporting to NSF, including strategic planning and implementation documents and quarterly and annual reporting.
- Work with the Engine's Evaluation Team on program assessment, evaluation, and sponsor reporting.
- Manage the Engine's administrative and financial staff and service contractors.
- Work with NERACOOS administrative and financial staff and contractors on annual financial audits, preparation of financial reports to the Board of Directors, review and revision of employee benefits plans, and other matters.

Budget & Grants Administration

- Drive financial modeling and budget planning, identifying specific opportunities to optimize budget, spend, and resource allocation to meet federal milestones and support the Engine's objectives.



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- Oversee regular and timely tracking and monitoring of Engine spend across all components and activities.
- Coordinate budget planning and spend management with leadership, program sponsor representatives, and external programmatic partners.
- Oversee accurate and timely federal reporting requirements, including all financial reporting requirements of the NSF.
- Participate in the grant writing and review process in response to requests for proposals to secure state, federal, and/or local funding to expand Engine programs.

Outreach, Communications & Engagement

- Support leaders of the Engine ecosystem drivers in outreach efforts to external industry stakeholders, government agencies, research institutions, and nonprofit organizations, and cultivate new partnerships through this outreach to grow the innovation ecosystem.
- Leverage an existing portfolio of relationships with major industry players, blue tech startups, government agencies, and research institutions to foster strategic alliances and investment opportunities.
- Engage with members of fellow NSF Regional Innovation Engines, agency staff, program advisors, and others to channel experiences and best practices from other regions into the Seafood Engine and ensure that the Seafood Engine is an active and constructive member of the national NSF Engines community.
- Serve as an ambassador for the Engine when needed with a variety of audiences in government, business, industry, academia, and others.

Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree in a relevant field such engineering, science, or business administration.
- Minimum of ten years of program or operational management experience within a complex organization, ideally one operating at the intersection of business and emerging technology.
- Strong background in strategic planning, process improvement, capital project management, and organizational development.
- Financial acumen with the ability to develop and manage multi-million-dollar budgets and optimize resource allocation.
- Experience building sustainable business models to maintain operations and deliver on organizational strategic goals.
- Strong communication skills and excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to collaborate effectively at all levels, including at the board and senior executive level.
- Demonstrated ability to work with a diverse coalition of academic, industry, government and non-profit organizations and public- and private-sector stakeholders, including startup companies and industry partners.
- Ability to work under pressure and collaborate effectively with the team, industry partners, and governance board to achieve the organization's mission.



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- Demonstrated ability to respond to rapidly changing environments.
- High level analytical skills, excellent judgement, and creative problem-solving skills.

Preferred:

- Masters of Business Administration (MBA) or Operations Management highly preferred.
- Corporate or entrepreneurial/startup experience in the seafood industry, tech sector, or related industries.
- Established network of strategic industry partners to advance Engine's programmatic and financial sustainability goals.
- Experience with technology transfer, regional economic development, or community development.

Additional Information:

Salary: This is a grant-funded position, with a budgeted salary up to \$175,000, commensurate with the experience and qualifications of the successful candidate. The initial appointment is subject to renewal of the Engine for its second award period commencing on, or around, September 1, 2027, with the potential for subsequent renewal up to a total program duration of ten years based on performance and availability of funds. The ideal candidate will be instrumental in driving the development and success of the organization, with the opportunity to transition into a longer-term role over the full ten-year duration of the Engine if key milestones are achieved.

Benefits: NERACOOS offers a benefits package that includes medical insurance and a health savings account, a simplified employee pension following three years of service, professional development opportunities, and flex work schedules.

Location: The successful candidate will be a NERACOOS employee and ideally be based close to the NERACOOS office in Portsmouth, NH. Other locations within the Engine region of service (Rhode Island to Maine) can be considered, contingent upon the ability to periodically travel to Portsmouth for face-to-face interactions with colleagues. Additional travel regionally, nationally (especially to Washington, DC), and possibly internationally will be required up to approximately 25% of work time.

To apply, please send a cover letter of no more than two pages describing interest and qualifications, along with a resume including names and contact information for three professional references to Seafood.Engine@neracoos.org. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until a suitable candidate is found.

Thinking about applying?

If you're reading this and you have some of the qualifications listed, we encourage you to apply! Let us know how your experience and passion make you the right person for this job.