

VIEWCREST ADVISORS

Executive Vice President & Chief
Operating Officer

Position Description, Autumn 2021

The logo for Fountain House, consisting of the words "FOUNTAIN" and "HOUSE" stacked vertically in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters, centered within a solid blue rectangular background.

FOUNTAIN
HOUSE

FOUNTAIN HOUSE

Fountain House is a national mental health nonprofit fighting to improve health, increase opportunity, and end social and economic isolation for people living with severe mental illness.

Fountain House takes a public health approach to severe mental illness, addressing both the health and social needs of their members in their mental health clubhouses. Fountain House's therapeutic model, based in social work and human-centered design, uses intentional community and the social environment to help people recover from mental illness and avoid institutionalization, hospitalization, and marginalization. Through structured work, expert observation, and engagement in the community, people come to Fountain House to break the extreme social and economic isolation and loneliness that is often associated with severe mental illness, and that leads to preventable suffering, loss of opportunity, and premature death and poor quality of life. Members take steps in reclaiming their agency and dignity, with access to clinical support, housing, and care management. Fountain House's College Re-Entry and young adult programming focuses on early intervention and prevention of isolation and its health, social and economic effects. Its policy and advocacy work are shaping a national mental health policy agenda, from the response to mental health emergencies, to addressing systemic barriers that people with severe mental illness face every day.

Fountain House's core mental health clubhouse model works for members, the majority of whom are BIPOC and are disproportionately affected by racism and systemic/structural barriers. Members are hospitalized and experience crisis significantly less than others with severe mental illness, resulting in 21% lower Medicaid costs. Of the 40% of members experiencing homelessness or unstable housing upon arrival at Fountain House, 99% are stably housed within a year. Of the 24% of Fountain House members with a history of incarceration and justice involvement, rates of recidivism are less than 5%. Members complete their education, find paid work, and achieve health and wellness goals at significantly higher rates than people living with severe mental illness who don't have access to its programs. The growing and intersecting crises of homelessness, police involvement and incarceration, and rising mental health needs – especially in the wake of COVID-19 -- demand that programs like Fountain House be widely available, and that we change the underlying conditions and risk factors in communities for people living with severe mental illness.

FOUNTAIN HOUSE'S STRATEGY

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Fountain House was forced to close its physical space for the first time in its 73-year history; in partnership with members, it transitioned to a virtual setting, allowing Fountain House to learn how to create community in both traditional and innovative ways. The organization's passionate and committed team of more than 200 aims to fundamentally transform the structures and systems that impact the lives of people living with severe mental illness everywhere, as the only national organization that simultaneously advocates for better policies *and* leads direct service programming.

Fountain House's strategic growth plan is grounded in evidence-based models of direct, holistic community services, combined with public health, public policy, and political change. In the words of Fountain House's CEO, Ashwin Vasan, M.D. MPH, the plan, "*recognizes the power of the people and communities we serve, and of our model, as the core of our work; one that rises up to a challenge to address unmet needs for the 13 million Americans living with severe mental illness, many of whom are languishing in our jails, prisons, streets, and hospitals; and how these intersect with the broader public health, public policy, and social justice agenda. We*

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will work for and with our members and staff across the country to build a movement that will change the conversation about mental illness to center on better access to care and supports, civil rights, civic inclusion, and public health.”

Key components of the strategic plan include the start-up and scaling of two initiatives, supported by two key enablers:

Initiatives:

Policy & Advocacy: Fountain House is establishing itself as an advocacy and policy leader, creating a platform to share our community-based work to change the narrative around mental health and severe mental illness. The goal is to fundamentally transform mental health infrastructure, especially for people living with severe mental illness, through statutory and legislative changes, and through dramatic new investments at the federal, state, and local levels. Fountain House’s team knows that they will not be successful unless they *also* change hearts and minds, combat stigma and discrimination, and demand civil rights and civic inclusion for people living with severe mental illness. Fountain House seeks to lead a social movement with and for them, to promote reforms that have a direct impact on their lives. The organization is already leading national advocacy campaigns to that effect around mental health crisis response, and is building a policy and public affairs department, as well as a 501(c)4 political advocacy arm, under the leadership of Mary Crowley, Senior Vice President and Chief External Affairs Officer, formerly of the Vera Institute of Justice.

Programs & Innovation: Fountain House is working to expand access to mental health care, and specifically to its clubhouse and related programs, by continuing to develop and scale partnerships with healthcare and with public administration (care management, housing, criminal justice, education etc.) to drive further investment into the model. Fountain House will expand its work on value-based payment and with managed care organizations, as well as work to unlock federal and state grant funding to support its programs, along with expanded role for private philanthropy and corporate partners supporting innovative programming. Fountain House will continue its tradition of innovation by developing *new* programs that extend its impact beyond its clubhouse programs and into critical new spaces and populations, especially supporting young adults and college students with mental illness through early identification and intervention strategies, and developing and delivering low-cost models to people who don’t have access to a physical clubhouses, such as those in jails, shelters and street outreach, and in emergency rooms and hospitals. This will be achieved through the expansion of existing pilot programs, the creation of new in-person services, and expansion of Fountain House’s Virtual Clubhouse platform.

Enablers:

Research and Knowledge: Fountain House is building a comprehensive research and knowledge program, supported by a sophisticated data and analytical infrastructure to evaluate the success of its programs, and its impact throughout the country, to aid in program expansion as well as broader policy change. Fountain House’s research principles are grounded in rigorous evaluation as well as community-based participatory research, ensuring that members are driving the research agenda along with the organization’s programmatic and policy goals. Fountain House recently secured a \$3M in seed capital to build this department, under the leadership of Dr Joshua Seidman, Vice President & Chief Research and Knowledge Officer, a health policy expert, health services researcher, and former Obama Administration health official.

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National Network: Fountain House New York currently operates direct service programs in Manhattan, the Bronx and across the five New York City boroughs. It is growing into Fountain House America (*working name, rebrand underway*), a shared program and practice network for developing and scaling innovations, leveraging and sharing resources, and coming together as a unified platform for advocacy. The Fountain House America Network is a formal affiliation opportunity for the 200+ clubhouse programs modeled after Fountain House across the United States; it aims to support a national federation of community-based mental health providers for people with severe mental illness. In addition to the direct services programs Fountain House operates in New York, current national affiliates (*under signed MOU*) are located in: Ann Arbor (MI), Seattle (WA), Contra Costa County (CA), Cleveland (OH), Phoenix (AZ), San Antonio (TX), and Sarasota (FL). In parallel, Fountain House is actively exploring a Los Angeles replica of its flagship New York direct service operations.

The organization currently operates with a \$33M budget and anticipates annual double-digit growth for each of the next five years. For more information, please visit: www.fountainhouse.org

THE OPPORTUNITY

As Fountain House's team embarks on the implementation of its strategic plan, the organization is seeking its first Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer (COO). In close partnership with the President & CEO, you will be charged with: facilitating change and growth across Fountain House; and nurturing an aligned, integrated and accountable culture. You will drive investments in efficient, integrated systems (management, people, technology, etc.) and processes that support the diverse mission delivery needs of Fountain House.

You will drive significant social impact by:

- Partnering with the President & CEO on strategy refinement for the two initiatives (Policy and Programs) and overall organizational strategy;
- Leading the growth and impact of two large-scale programs: direct service (currently Fountain House New York) as well as the Fountain House America Network of clubhouses; and
- Delivering the operational infrastructure required for committed staff and members to thrive as Fountain House transforms itself. This includes co-designing, with functional teams, structures in -- and priorities for -- investments in human capital, finance, technology and legal/contracting/risk/compliance.
- Enabling the President & CEO's delivery on fundraising as well as the indirect impact activities including: external affairs and the future, a 501(c)4 political advocacy arm; research and knowledge; and innovation.

With a deep commitment to the Fountain House's mission, vision and goals, you must be a collaborative builder of trust, culture and bridges who brings outstanding leadership, hands-on management, communication, and relationship-building skills. You ideally have a proven track record translating strategic plans into reality through thoughtful investments in people and systems in a complex (multi-unit/program), mission-driven organization.

Reports to: President & Chief Executive Officer

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Direct Reports: Vice President & Chief People Officer;
Vice President & Chief Financial Officer (shared reporting with CEO);
Executive Director, Fountain House, New York (direct services);
Legal Counsel (outsourced currently);
Managing Director, Network Strategy (to be hired).

Location: New York City, New York (open to hybrid or off-site)

Detailed Responsibilities:

- Collaborate as a thought partner with the President & CEO, board, direct reports and other colleagues to set and articulate organizational vision as well as short-, medium- and long-term objectives.
- Translate Fountain House's strategy into clear organization-wide goals and operating plans; partner with departments to cascade their goals, creating consistency and alignment.
- Co-design robust resource allocation, operational and financial processes that support Fountain House New York and Fountain House America's budgeting, forecasting and reporting needs.
- Partner with the President & CEO, and Chief People Officer to attract and retain a passionate, high-performance team;
- Promote an organizational culture of inclusion, excellence, adaptability, efficiency, continuous improvement, effective decision-making and innovation.
- Oversee legal, contractual, insurance and risk efforts, initially with external partners and counsel;
- Establish and lead execution of a multi-year technology infrastructure strategy, partnering to evaluate, select, (re)design, test, and implement scalable technologies and systems.
- Establish and oversee equitable facilities operating policies and procedures.
- Adhere to organizational, federal, state, and local business requirements, enforcing compliance and taking action when necessary.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Significant operational leadership experience within a complex, multi-site and mission-driven business, healthcare, social enterprise or nonprofit, ideally with relevant program/regulatory understanding.
- A track record of achievement and learning that combines many of the following:
 - o Translating an ambitious growth strategy into disciplined operating plans, goals and metrics/KPIs (ideally with multiple program levers such as direct service, advocacy, etc.);
 - o Setting clear priorities as well as guiding investments in people, processes and systems;
 - o Mentoring and leading a high-performing team comprised of both program and functional experts (finance, human capital, technology, legal);
 - o Developing disciplined analysis and decision-making to serve multiple departments, programs or entities;
 - o Resolving operational challenges while anticipating, and building, the functional and analytical infrastructure needed for growth;
 - o Managing and communicating change, and driving accountability, in ways that honor an organization's rich history and builds adaptive approaches for the future; and
 - o Nurturing a culture of belonging and inclusion.

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Knowledge, Skills and Attributes:

- Passion for Fountain House's mission and goals.
- Exceptional written, oral, and interpersonal skills, able to engage people at all levels of an organization, program participants and external stakeholders/partners.
- A collaborative, authentic partnership style, able to ensure diverse perspectives are heard and ideas from all levels of an organization are championed.
- Sound judgment, confidence and humility as both a thought-partner and hands-on decision-maker.
- Resolve, focus, kindness, integrity and discipline.
- Ability to travel 20%.

Please share nominations or submit a resume and cover letter, in MS Word format, to Viewcrest Advisors at: FountainHouseCOO@viewcrestadvisors.com

Fountain House is committed to Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI). An Equal Opportunity Employer, Fountain House encourages applicants of diverse backgrounds, cultures, genders, experiences, abilities, and perspectives to apply. We actively work to increase the diversity of experience and perspectives on our team, and we want to hear from you. Remember, no one comes with the entire complement of skills, and no one is the perfect candidate, so do not let a lack of experience/skill in one specific area deter you from applying. Fountain House is committed to being a diverse and inclusive workplace. We are building our REDI Initiatives to identify inequities within our organization and develop policies and practices that advance race equity principles in our workplace and work.

Viewcrest Advisors is committed to social justice and access to opportunity. We actively cultivate relationships with leaders who have varied life experiences as well as the skills needed to lead strong, innovative organizations. We are also committed to your privacy and to protecting your personal data. To view our privacy policy, please visit our website www.viewcrestadvisors.com.