



# NASHVILLE PUBLIC RADIO

Chief Operating Officer | Position Announcement



# About Nashville Public Radio

Nashville Public Radio is a community-licensed public media organization serving Middle Tennessee with trusted, in-depth journalism, engaging music, and distinctive cultural programming. Through 90.3 FM WPLN News, 91.1 WNXP Nashville's Music Experience, Nashville Classical Radio, WPLN International, and [nashvillepublicradio.org](http://nashvillepublicradio.org), the organization reaches audiences across platforms with content that informs, inspires, and connects.

For more than 60 years, Nashville Public Radio has been a vital civic resource, supported by its community and grounded in editorial independence. Its programming sparks conversation and curiosity, elevates local voices, and reflects the creative energy and complexity of a rapidly growing region.

Guided by a clear aspiration to be the trusted local source for journalism and music discovery in Nashville, the organization is focused on innovation, sustainability, and deep community engagement as it continues to grow its impact in a rapidly evolving media landscape.





## Position Summary

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) is a senior leadership role responsible for building and leading the operational, financial, and organizational systems that will support Nashville Public Radio's next phase of growth. Reporting to CEO, Holly Kernan, the COO serves as a close thought partner and execution leader, translating ambition into disciplined planning, measurement, and results.

The COO oversees finance, human resources, operations, technology, engineering, compliance, and data-informed decision-making across a complex, multi-platform public media organization. This role is ideal for a strategic, data-driven operator with experience in media and music-adjacent businesses who can pair strong management practices with creativity, transparency, and a deep commitment to public service.



# Essential Functions

## Organizational Strategy & Leadership Partnership

- Serve as a close thought partner to the CEO, forming a highly aligned leadership team capable of driving ambitious, achievable growth.
- Lead and coordinate strategic planning with the Board and staff, beginning in 2026, and support ongoing strategy execution.
- Ensure leadership alignment, clear decision-making, and consistent communication across the organization.

## Operational & Financial Management

- Lead budgeting, planning, and KPI development, including monthly reporting to the CEO and all staff, and quarterly review with the Senior Leadership Team.
- Oversee finance and HR functions, ensuring strong fiscal controls, compliance, and best management practices.
- Manage core operations, including IT, engineering, facilities, and FCC compliance across broadcast and digital platforms.

## Data, Systems & Performance Management

- Manage metrics dashboards and reporting systems to support transparency, accountability, and data-informed decision-making.
- Strengthen operational planning, forecasting, and performance tracking across departments.
- Lead and evaluate process improvement and change management initiatives that support organizational maturity and scale.

## Revenue, Music & Growth Strategy Support

- Partner with the CEO and senior leaders to support revenue growth strategies, including public affairs, music discovery, and digital opportunities.
- Bring insight from music, media, or commercial revenue environments to grow revenue-producing aspects of the organization.
- Ensure operational alignment in support of digital growth, audience development, and innovation.

## People & Culture

- Foster a high-performing, inclusive culture grounded in professionalism, responsiveness, and mutual respect.
- Manage HR strategy and operations, including talent acquisition, development, performance management, and employee engagement.
- Break down silos and ensure effective collaboration across teams and platforms.

## Desired Attributes

- Proven senior operational leader with experience in media, music, or revenue-driven content organizations.
- Strategic thinker who is deeply data-driven and comfortable building dashboards, metrics, and accountability systems.
- Strong financial and operational acumen, with experience managing complexity and growth.
- Track record of leading organizational change, cultivating cohesive cultures, and implementing best management practices for diverse, creative professionals.
- Collaborative leader with experience partnering closely with a CEO and senior leadership team.
- Entrepreneurial mindset paired with operational discipline.
- Clear, confident communicator who values transparency and trust.
- Strong alignment with the mission and values of public media, journalism, music, and community service.





## The Opportunity

Nashville Public Radio is at a pivotal moment. With a new CEO, a deeply trusted brand, and a talented team, the organization has clear opportunities for growth and reinvention, including meaningful near-term wins alongside longer-term transformation.

This role offers the opportunity to help build a model public media organization for the future, demonstrating how journalism, music, and community service can thrive through innovation, disciplined operations, and creative growth. This is a rare chance to partner closely with an ambitious CEO and exceptional staff to shape what public media can become, in Nashville and beyond.



## COMPENSATION

Compensation for the Chief Operating Officer includes a base salary of \$135,000 - \$150,000 commensurate with experience and an excellent package of employee benefits.

## TO APPLY

Nashville Public Radio has partnered with ThinkingAhead Executive Search to lead this search. Interested candidates are invited to submit a resume and brief statement of interest by contacting Jonathan McIntosh: [jmcintosh@thinkingahead.com](mailto:jmcintosh@thinkingahead.com).

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Jonathan McIntosh  
Partner, ThinkingAhead Executive Search  
615-391-2650  
[jmcintosh@thinkingahead.com](mailto:jmcintosh@thinkingahead.com)

*Nashville Public Radio is an Equal Opportunity Employer and is committed to building a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace. We encourage candidates of all backgrounds, identities, and lived experiences to apply and believe that a broad range of perspectives strengthens our organization, our journalism, and our service to the community.*

*ThinkingAhead Executive Search is an Equal Opportunity Employer, committed to a work environment that supports, inspires and respects all individuals. Personnel processes are merit-based and applied without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, age, disability, national or ethnic ancestry, military service status, citizenship, or other protected characteristic. This applies to every aspect of employment including hiring, training, advancement and termination. The firm is committed to creating a just culture of diversity, equity and inclusion by practicing, within the company and the marketplace we serve, intentional strategies that serve marginalized individuals and groups.*

