

Finance Officer (Contract) Role and Responsibilities

(Revised September 18, 2026)

Note: Following a recent Board decision to align with the division of responsibilities outlined in our [Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU) with Member Institutions, the scope of this role has been revised. In summary, the fractional Finance Officer will no longer provide financial coaching to conference organizers or liaise directly with university finance offices. Please review the updated description below, which replaces the description in our August call for applicants.

Engagement Type: Independent Contractor (monthly invoicing with activity breakdown)

Contract Length: Annually renewable after 90 day probationary period

Commitment: Approx. 150-200 hours annually (capped at 225 hours in year one for onboarding); 12 month workflow with hour estimates and detailed activities is appended to this document

Annual Schedule: Seasonal; the successful candidate must be available at least weekly for August to mid-September each year

Hourly Rate and Budget: \$50.00–\$60.00/hour, depending on experience

Location: Remote with periodic required physical access to Halifax, NS (HRM)

Reports To: Executive Director

Approximate Start Date: October 1, 2026 or earlier

Science Atlantic is committed to being an equal opportunity organization recruiting a diverse team.

We encourage candidates to voluntarily self-identify on their application if they are members of traditionally underrepresented communities, including womxn, First Nations, Métis or Inuit persons, persons with disabilities, members of racialized communities, and 2SLGBTQIA+-identified persons.

Role Overview

Science Atlantic is seeking a skilled non-profit finance professional to manage day-to-day bookkeeping, financial administration, grant tracking, year-end audit/review prep, and occasional in-person bank deposits and operational tasks in HRM for a \$250,000 organization. The role also requires liaison with university, banking, and payroll contacts, funders, and donors.

As the primary financial lead, you will maintain clear internal controls and ensure audit-ready records to streamline oversight for the Executive Director. You will deliver accurate, timely reports and collaborate strategically to identify and address financial challenges.

In this largely virtual, independent contractor role, you must work independently, solve problems proactively, and consistently meet deadlines. The ideal candidate combines technical non-profit accounting expertise with strong interpersonal communication and a high degree of self-direction.

Key Responsibilities

Governance and Signing Authority Limit: This role excludes signing officer status. The contractor prepares, codes, and initiates payments, but all final disbursements, contracts, and filings require authorization from designated signing officers (Executive Director and/or Board Officers).

Financial Administration and Transaction Processing

- Review, code, and post all income and expenses in Sage Accounting Online
- Review/post bi-weekly payroll reports (payroll service provided by Dalhousie University)
- Complete monthly bank reconciliations and maintain digital ledgers to Review Engagement standards
- Set up e-transfers and online bank transfers for dual approval by signing officers
- Process charitable contributions, maintain donor records, and thank donors
- Follow up on outstanding invoices, manage accounts payable, process reimbursements
- Maintain digital documentation to support all transactions; scan all physical documents
- Manage operational logistics within HRM, including periodic retrieval of physical mail, logging physical cheques in a shared register prior to deposit, making bank deposits, coordinating in-person meetings with signing officers for cheque signing until online bank transfers are set up, and coordinating physical document archives

Membership, Conference and Stakeholder Support

- Issue, track, and collect annual membership fee invoices for 17 member institutions
- Issue floats as approved and invoice for surpluses for eight annual student conferences
- Maintain Fund Accounts for 10-12 Science Divisions and Special Project Accounts and report balances and policies to Division Chairs annually

Compliance, Grant, and Year-End Management

- Track grant deadlines, record grant expenditures, calculate employee cost allocations, and draft funder financial reports
- Complete semi-annual HST rebate filings and annual Corporations Canada filings; submit Board membership changes as needed
- Prepare year-end working papers for the external accounting firm conducting the annual Review Engagement and serve as the primary contact for the review
- Provide input to the Executive Director on financial policy, budget drafts, cash flow forecasting, and operational updates
- Promptly escalate unusual financial risks to the Executive Director
- Maintain an up-to-date, digital, financial policies and processes manual on Google Drive documenting standard operating procedures, schedules, and workflows

Qualifications and Experience

- Minimum 3-5 years of practical experience in Canadian non-profit or charity bookkeeping, including fund accounting, grant tracking, donor records, and HST rebate filings
- Demonstrated proficiency with Sage Accounting Online
- Proficiency with Google Workspace
- Strong written and oral communication skills, with a track record of liaising effectively with diverse stakeholders
- Highly organized and detail-oriented with strong digital file management skills
- Ability to work independently and maintain high reliability during peak periods (schedule on last page)
- **Assets:** Prior experience with university systems (e.g., Dalhousie University's Ellucian Banner), online business banking and government portals, non-profit review engagements, virtual collaboration tools (Slack, Notion, etc.)

Local Logistics

- **Work Location:** Remote with own equipment including camera and microphone suitable for video meetings, scanner, and high speed internet
- **Schedule:** Flexible; periodic virtual meetings with Executive Director
- **Travel:** Ability to perform periodic mail pickups, bank deposits, and meetings in HRM (4-6x/year)
- **Expenses:** Costs for mail and courier, incorporations filing; local travel and parking for banking, mail, and required meetings will be reimbursed upon submission of appropriate documentation. Other expenses require pre-approval from the Executive Director.

Application and Interview Process

Please send cover letter, resume, and contact information for at least two professional references to hr@scienceatlantic.ca.

Applications will be reviewed as they are received.

About Science Atlantic

Science Atlantic is a federally registered charity and incorporated non-profit association serving post-secondary science communities across Atlantic Canada. Founded in 1962, our mission is to advance science education and research in Atlantic Canada by fostering regional cooperation, supporting students and early-career scientists, and providing opportunities for academic networking and partnership. Learn more about our vision in our [2023–2028 Strategic Plan](#).

Appendix:

Annual Workflow, Activities with Detailed Scope, and Hour Estimates

(Revised September 18, 2026)

The following outlines approximate time commitment by month:

November-January: <5 hours/month

February-July, October: 10-15 hours/month

August-September*: Year end and membership renewal (25-35 hours/month)

***must be available at least weekly August to mid-September**

Activities Category and Scope

Annual Commitment

Onboarding, Systems Optimization, Banking Setup (*one time*)

15-20 hours*

- Participate in system handover with retiring Finance Officer, including policies and processes orientation
- Downgrade Sage Online account to match organizational needs
- Set up dual-authorization EFT/wire transfer structures to replace physical cheques

Routine Bookkeeping, Payroll Administration, Mail, Bank Deposits

50-70 hours

- Set up, post, and reconcile monthly transactions including e-transfers in Sage Online (10–30 transactions/month)
- Invoice conference hosts for surpluses or set up approved deficit transfers through the relevant Division Fund Account
- Maintain Fund Accounts for 10 Science Divisions and 1-2 Special Project Accounts as needed in Sage Online (5-30 transactions per account/year)
- Collect physical mail periodically (4-6 times/year)
- Deposit physical cheques; log details in online cheque registry
- Until EFT/wire system is set up, prepare cheques quarterly and arrange for signatures (20-30 cheques/year)

Membership Fee Invoicing and Stakeholder Relations

20-30 hours

- Issue annual membership invoices to 17 institutions each September
- Conduct personalized communication and follow-ups with senior university contacts to ensure fee collection
- Provide monthly updates to Executive Director and Treasurer of payments received/outstanding
- Provide annual Division Fund Reports to each Division Chair
- Prepare thank yous for donors

Financial Statements, Year-End Review Preparation, Grant Tracking

40-50 hours

- Prepare formal financial statements at 6 months, 9 months, and 11-month year-end projections for the Executive Director/Board
- Assemble comprehensive working papers for external accounting firm Review Engagement; year end is August 31
- Track employment grant milestones, calculate grant-funded employee hours, compile funder reports

Operational Consultation and General Communications

25-30 hours

- Consult with the Executive Director on financial workflow improvements, policy updates, budgeting and projections, and non-routine questions
- As needed, liaise with bank representatives, Dalhousie Faculty of Science and payroll contacts, granting bodies, and external stakeholders

ESTIMATED ANNUAL COMMITMENT*: 150-200 HOURS

*Includes one-time onboarding activities (15-20 hours)