



MERIDIAN
INSTITUTE®

POSITION PROFILE

Chief Operating Officer Meridian Institute

Remote; Dillon, CO or Washington, DC preferred



OPPORTUNITY OVERVIEW

For over twenty years, Meridian Institute has helped partners solve challenging problems facing our global community. As a trusted third party, Meridian produces results by convening the right people, asking the right questions, making the right connections, and creating a shared path forward. Meridian is a key changemaker addressing the world's most pressing issues.

This is an opportunity to lead a growing and impactful nonprofit consultancy's operations and systems. The Chief Operating Officer (COO), as part of the senior leadership team of Meridian Institute will provide leadership, management, and vision for the organization as a whole. This leader will be responsible for ensuring that the organization has the proper operational controls, administrative and reporting procedures, and people systems in place to deliver excellent results to funders and partners, grow the organization, cultivate a caring and supportive organizational culture, and ensure operational efficiency.

The COO will oversee a \$13 million budget in partnership with a talented and committed leadership team, about **50 dedicated staff**, and an impressive **Board of Directors** comprised of leaders in agricultural development, environmental policy and management, philanthropy, politics, and business. This leader will have the unique opportunity to shape the next chapter of the organization.

Meridian Institute is a fast-paced organization that operates at the national and international level with a strong culture of collegiality and connection. Strong candidates will be team players with flexibility, a sense of humor and camaraderie, and the belief that great people and systems not only create a positive work environment, but help organizations achieve their missions.



ABOUT MERIDIAN INSTITUTE

Meridian builds understanding, guides collaboration, and drives action to address the world's complex challenges.

Meridian Institute recognizes that today's interconnected world is becoming more complex every day. Key questions rarely have straightforward answers, and the challenges that shape the future often involve people and organizations who approach problems from different perspectives.

That's where Meridian comes in. As a mission-driven, nonprofit consultancy, Meridian has helped clients and partners develop and implement solutions to complicated, often controversial problems—big and small, global and local—for over two decades. Meridian does this with an innovative approach that brings together three elements: a deep understanding of the issues at hand, including the people, politics, and power dynamics that surround them; a dedicated, expert team; and an ability to foster constructive discussions, manage decisions, and support actions that shape the world for the better.

More than facilitators, Meridian staff are experienced guides who help partners navigate the complex questions, context, and implications surrounding the challenges at hand. Regardless of subject area, they recognize tensions, understand layers of meaning, and hold multiple viewpoints in mind as they lead people to common ground.

As problem solvers, Meridian focuses on five key services: collaboration, strategy, research, implementation, and philanthropic support. The organization mindfully brings tools and processes to bear that best fit the needs of clients and partners; they also draw from an international network of skilled staff, senior fellows, and affiliates, assembling a tailored, adaptable team to meet each challenge.

Meridian does not use one-size-fits-all approaches, and they don't pursue predetermined outcomes. They embrace the hard work of bringing multiple stakeholders to shared understanding and decisions. Meridian stays engaged, considers every detail, and adjusts plans as needed when changes arise. Meridian staff see themselves as co-creators of an environment that brings solutions to light, working hand-in-hand with each participant to ensure that all voices are heard.

Meridian Institute's customized services are supported by deep knowledge of the subject at hand—and the key players who shape the field. The team's expertise includes environment & natural resources, climate change, agriculture & food systems, forests, health, oceans & coasts,

ABOUT MERIDIAN INSTITUTE

resilience, science & technology, and water. Our staff have cultivated a trusted network of relationships within and between these fields over decades; Meridian knows who to bring together for any given issue. Because these experts stay up-to-date on the latest developments within these interrelated areas and the people who shape them, Meridian is able to offer insight that complements the wisdom of participants. The team thrives on understanding the nuances and knows that the dynamic nature of today's world can shift the context of a particular issue in crucial ways at any time.

Meridian creates positive change by helping people grapple with complex problems: establishing and strengthening trust, driving collaborative decision-making, and supporting implementation. The team's projects are designed not only to shape meaningful consensus and action in the near term, but also to build partners' capacity for cooperation that often continues for years, even decades. Across issues, boundaries, and systems, Meridian's work is a catalyst for powerful impact.

IMPACT

For over twenty years, Meridian has been connecting people to solve problems. The team has convened thousands of people to make decisions and forge agreements that shape a better world.

Meridian's five key services—collaboration, strategy, research, implementation, and philanthropic support—naturally complement each other, and they often intersect within a given engagement. Meridian takes a fresh approach to each new project, bringing customized support to the table in order to best serve partners and the problems they want to solve.

24+

Coalition for Policy Reform & Implementation

We guide coalitions as they form, develop goals and objectives, set milestones, and get to work!

13

Commodity Supply Chains

We help supply chain companies and civil society organizations work together to increase their impact, including to reduce deforestation in agricultural supply chains.

100+

Strategic Planning Efforts

We help organizations develop strategic plans to chart a productive path forward.

11

New Institutions

We help fledgling organizations develop a business plan, write articles of incorporation, and hire staff. We stay involved until the organization is ready to stand on its own.

IMPACT

Meridian's focus areas include:

Agriculture and Food Systems

In partnership with farmers, companies, NGOs, and other experts, Meridian accelerates solutions that advance agriculture and food systems.

Climate Change

Meridian helps leaders identify practical ways to mitigate the causes of climate change and adapt to its impacts.

Environment and Natural Resources

In the face of competing uses for natural resources, Meridian brings people together to find solutions that support healthy lands, waters, and wildlife in concert with healthy economies and communities.

Forests

Forest and trees are vital to people and the planet. Meridian brings diverse groups together to make decisions that ensure the wellbeing of our world's forests and forest peoples.

Health

Meridian brings together advocates and experts from all sides of healthcare issues in order to pursue common goals: creating healthier communities and improving access to quality care.

Oceans and Coasts

The world's oceans are a shared—and critical—resource. Meridian specializes in developing policies and partnerships that advance sustainable ocean and coastal management.

Resilience

Across communities and regions, Meridian drives innovative partnerships that build resilience in the face of uncertainty.

Science and Technology

Meridian helps scientists, policymakers, and private sector and civil society leaders assess ways to best use emerging technology and innovation for the greater good.

Water

Meridian convenes thought leaders, innovators, and early adopters to advance cutting-edge water management solutions.

[Learn More](#)

merid.org

MERIDIAN'S COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

At Meridian, we pride ourselves on our ability to design and deliver collaboration that brings people together—specifically, a wide range of individuals who understand the issues from different angles and have a shared stake in their resolution. Diverse perspectives are foundational to our work, organization, and field. We bring integrity, inclusiveness, and respect for differences to every project we undertake.

We are working to ensure that Meridian possesses the expertise needed to partner with—and build trust among—marginalized and disenfranchised communities, while advancing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) within our organization and in our project work. Our JEDI team leads internal discussions on unconscious bias, micro-aggressions, white privilege, culturally sensitive communication approaches, and other related topics. While we are making progress, we have made a long-term commitment to a process of ongoing learning.

At Meridian, we welcome people from all backgrounds. However, we have work to do in building a team that is representative of the diverse communities we serve. Our goal is to build a culture that attracts, nurtures, and retains staff with a broad range of experiences and perspectives, making our work stronger and more impactful.



THE OPPORTUNITY

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) will lead a growing and impactful consultancy's operations and systems. The COO will provide leadership, management, and vision for the organization as a whole and will be responsible for ensuring that the organization has the proper operational controls, administrative and reporting procedures, and people systems in place to deliver excellent results to funders and partners, grow the organization, cultivate a caring and supportive organizational culture, and ensure operational efficiency.

Reporting to the CEO, the COO will oversee at least three direct reports and four functional areas of responsibility, including: human resources, legal, information technology, and operational system functions. The COO will work closely with the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to ensure that the management of the business operations and systems is closely aligned and integrated with the financial management of the organization.

The COO is responsible for Meridian Institute's operations and systems. This includes overseeing the requirements for any affiliated organizations. The COO is responsible for overseeing the implementation of Meridian's strategy including the integration of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion as fundamental underpinnings of the organizational strategy, human resources, knowledge management (organizational learning), and financial matters such as contracting.



THE OPPORTUNITY

The COO will have oversight over:

Organizational Strategy and Effectiveness

The COO will work with the CEO, CFO, and other members of the Leadership Group to develop and refine an effective organizational strategy to advance priority opportunities and overcome challenges. The COO will lead the design and implementation of business operations that increase efficiency and strengthen the ability to deliver excellent service. The COO will work with the CFO to track the performance metrics of the organization and work with the CEO and CFO to guide organizational strategy.

IT Systems

In collaboration with the IT Manager, who will report directly to the COO, the COO will ensure that Meridian has the IT systems and staff capacity necessary to conduct the project-based work of the organization as well as the human resources and financial management systems needed for operational effectiveness and continuous improvement.

Human Resources

In collaboration with the Human Resources (HR) Manager, who will report directly to the COO, the COO will ensure that Meridian is an excellent place to work. This goes beyond compliance with employment laws in the jurisdictions where Meridian operates and includes helping to strengthen organizational culture and ensure that Meridian policies and practices promote a working environment in keeping with Meridian's JEDI Principles and mindfulness practices. This responsibility includes the fair, efficient, and cost-effective provision of employment policies and procedures.

Knowledge Management & Internal Communications

The COO will help to strengthen organizational knowledge management and organizational learning. This includes basic things like bolstering virtual collaboration tools and associated skillsets and setting up systems to capture, store, organize, and disseminate knowledge – both about process design and project execution and substantive knowledge related to Meridian's focus areas and networks. It also includes managing internal staff communication, including supervising the staff who produce a twice monthly internal organizational newsletter.



THE OPPORTUNITY

Offices and Leases

The COO will be responsible for overseeing the negotiation and management of all leases associated with Meridian offices and the operation and maintenance of those properties. This includes procurement, insurance, ongoing maintenance contracts, and day to day operations and office norms. For the DC office, this includes oversight of meetings and events, in cooperation with the DC Office Manager and appropriate Practice staff. It also includes managing any subtenant(s).

Legal and Business Support

In collaboration with the General Counsel and HR Manager, the COO will manage the following legal and business compliance issues for all Meridian entities:

- Corporate insurance
- Governance risk and compliance, including maintenance of bylaws
- Business licenses and reporting for Colorado and Washington, DC
- Legal support, including trademark maintenance
- Organizational non-disclosure agreements and conflict of interest policies and procedures



CANDIDATE PROFILE

Meridian Institute is seeking a motivated and enthusiastic leader looking to apply exceptional organizational leadership to a mission-driven organization working to resolve the world's most pressing problems. While it is understood that no candidate will offer every desired skill and characteristic, the following offers a detailed, aspirational view of the ideal candidate profile.

Strategic Implementation and Execution

- A visionary leader who partners with other senior leadership team members to set ambitious goals, lead effective teams, and achieve results.
- A track record of delivering results against ambitious goals, particularly focused on ushering a strategic plan into action.
- Action-oriented with a natural inclination to take on challenges and drive toward solutions.
- The ability to effectively build organizational and staff capacity to develop a world-class workforce and processes that ensure organizational efficiency and excellence.
- Experience working hand-in-hand with a CEO and/or CFO to deliver organization-wide solutions and measure success over the short-, medium-, and long-term.

Communications and Relationship Building

- A strong leader, communicator, and collaborator who is skilled at listening to and learning from colleagues and constituents.
- Experience working effectively both within and across functional areas with a specific focus on team dynamics and conflict resolution.
- Strong emotional intelligence and a compassionate approach to working within the Meridian culture.
- Exceptional critical thinking and problem-solving skills, with excellent judgment and a strong ability to communicate in writing and verbally.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

People and Culture Management

- Proven ability to lead organizational change, with a keen sense for getting to an enduring result and through a process that strengthens trust and organizational relationships.
- Ability to make tough strategic and operational decisions when confronted with difficult choices and in highly complex situations and fast-moving environments.
- Experience developing an environment of collaboration, transparency, and respect by strengthening working relationships between functional areas as well as team members and helping to identify and resolve work conflicts.
- Capacity to build and sustain open, collaborative relationships with a diverse range of internal and external stakeholders by leading with compassion, respect, and professional maturity.

A Demonstrated Commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- A personal passion for and commitment to Meridian Institute's focus on transformative change: establishing and strengthening trust with a diversity of perspectives, driving collaborative decision-making, and supporting implementation.
- Unimpeachable integrity and moral compass, with refined discernment and emotional intelligence to ensure that internal organizational culture is consistent with highest ideals of equity.
- A high level of cultural competence and a commitment to building an environment that respects and values justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Operations Expertise

- An understanding that strong operations and people development are the foundation of organizational success and the skills and experiences required to instill policies and practices that lead to continued growth and impact.
- Demonstrated financial management skills; demonstrated success in business or program operations and experience implementing systems and structures designed to increase efficiency and effectiveness.
- Proven experience successfully leading the operations, administrative, and/or financial functions of a mid- to large-sized organization.

COMPENSATION

Salary Range: \$180,000 – \$210,000

We are dedicated to advancing our employees' professional growth, supporting the balance between work and personal life, and helping them meet their healthcare and retirement needs. Meridian employees receive competitive benefits including:

- A dynamic and inclusive work environment
- Structured professional development opportunities and mentoring
- Flexible work schedules and locations for proven high performers
- Medical/dental insurance with same sex spouse and domestic partner coverage
- Employer contributions to 401k retirement plan

COVID-19 POLICY

At Meridian Institute, we believe that we must do all that we can to protect the safety, health, and wellbeing of employees, clients, guests, our communities, and others with whom we interact. That's why all offers of employment in the U.S. where legally permitted are contingent on the candidate showing proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to pass the pre-employment requirements. Individuals with medical issues or religious beliefs or practices that prevent them from getting the vaccine may request an exemption from the vaccine requirement. If individuals are not vaccinated for COVID-19, then they will not be permitted to work in a Meridian office or travel on Meridian business.

CONTACT

Koya Partners, the executive search firm that specializes in mission-driven search, has been exclusively retained for this engagement. Kara Teising and Libby Cornelissen are leading this search. To make recommendations or to express interest in the role [please visit this website](#). All nominations, inquiries, and discussions will be considered strictly confidential.

Meridian recognizes that our work is made stronger and more impactful by the contributions of diverse people around the world. At Meridian, we welcome people from all backgrounds and do not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, color, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, national origin, creed, or ancestry.

About Koya Partners

Koya Partners, a member of the Diversified Search Group, is a leading executive search and strategic advising firm dedicated to connecting exceptionally talented people with mission-driven clients. Our founding philosophy—The Right Person in the Right Place Can Change the World—guides our work as we partner with nonprofits & NGOs, institutions of higher education, responsible businesses, and social enterprises in local communities and around the world.

Koya is an equal opportunity employer fully committed to creating an environment and team that represents a variety of backgrounds, perspectives, styles, and experiences. We encourage all to apply because we believe a diversity of voices leads to better discussions, decisions, and outcomes for everyone.

For more information about Koya Partners, visit www.koyapartners.com.