

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTION



Position Title: Chief Operating Officer

Location: Auckland or Wellington, New Zealand

Reporting to: Chief Executive Officer

About Invest New Zealand

Our purpose is to increase the flow of international investment to support New Zealand's long-term economic prosperity. This mandate is applied to securing large scale investments in sectors which have the greatest potential impact on productivity and growth, alongside the effective implementation of the investment component of the Active Investor Plus (AIP) Visa scheme. Invest New Zealand is an Autonomous Crown Entity with a culture of high-performance and collaboration.

Role Purpose

Responsible for leading the operational performance of Invest New Zealand (Invest NZ), ensuring the organisation delivers efficiently against its strategy while maintaining organisational integrity and performance. As a small organisation, this requires strong direction, close coordination across functions and effective leadership through the Strategy & Operations Manager and Programme Manager - AIP. The Chief Operating Officer (COO) plays a critical role in building a high-performing, well-governed, legally compliant organisation and enabling effective collaboration across government and the private sector to deliver measurable economic impact for New Zealand.

The COO is responsible for ensuring Invest NZ is a high-performing, well-governed Autonomous Crown Entity that effectively delivers on its mandate to attract and enable international investment.

This role sits at the intersection of operations, governance, legal integrity, and public accountability, ensuring that:

- the organisation performs efficiently and at scale
- statutory, audit, and regulatory obligations are met to a high standard
- investment programmes (including AIP) are delivered with integrity and credibility
- the Board, CEO, and Ministers have clear, accurate, and timely insight into performance

The COO plays a critical role in translating strategy into execution while maintaining the systems, controls, and organisational capacity required to support complex, high-value investment activity and cross-government coordination.

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Key Responsibilities

Enterprise Operations & Delivery

- Set direction for operational delivery across the organisation, ensuring alignment with investment attraction priorities and holding functional leaders accountable for delivery
- Lead through the Strategy & Operations Manager to ensure internal services, systems and processes enable efficient, high-quality organisational performance
- Enable a “one-door” investor experience, ensuring seamless coordination across functions and agencies
- Drive operational scalability to support increasing investor volumes and complex transactions
- Provide oversight of internal service functions, including finance, communications, systems, legal and reporting

Governance, Board & Ministerial Interface

- Lead enterprise governance systems and Board servicing
- Ensure high-quality Board papers, performance insights, and forward-looking analysis
- Support the Chief Executive in managing Board and Ministerial expectations
- Ensure compliance with Crown Entity governance obligations and public sector standards
- Attend and present at certain Ministerial and departmental meetings in support of the CEO and independently

Financial Stewardship & Public Accountability

- Oversee financial management, planning, and stewardship of public funds
- Lead development of performance frameworks aligned to economic impact
- Own statutory reporting, including Annual Report and accountability documents
- Ensure transparency and defensibility of all reported outcomes

Audit, Risk & Assurance

- Lead engagement with Audit New Zealand and external assurance providers
- Ensure strong internal control environment and audit readiness
- Oversee enterprise risk around investment and reputational risk, programme integrity risk (AIP) and regulatory risk
- Drive continuous improvement based on audit findings

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Legal & Regulatory Integrity

- Provide or oversee general counsel function including oversight of external legal providers
- Ensure compliance across immigration-linked investment frameworks (AIP), Crown entity legislation and commercial and contractual obligations.
- Manage legal risk associated with investment decisions, partnerships and investor engagement

Investment Programme Integrity (AIP and investment projects)

- Provide oversight of operational and AIP programme delivery and integrity, ensuring operational discipline and continuous improvement
- Ensure robust governance, assurance and escalation processes are in place for investment assessment, relevant approvals and investor engagement frameworks
- Maintain credibility of Invest NZ as a trusted gateway for international capital

People Leadership

- Lead, coach and develop the Strategy & Operations Manager and Programme Manager - AIP, ensuring clear priorities, accountabilities and delivery expectations
- Build leadership capability across the Operations and AIP functions, enabling effective delegation, escalation and decision-making
- Foster a high-performance, collaborative culture across functional teams, ensuring the organisation operates as one integrated system

Success is:

- Builds and leads a high-performing, scalable organisation aligned to strategic priorities, with strong leadership capability across the Operations and AIP functions.
- Leads effectively through others, empowering the Strategy & Operations Manager and Programme Manager - AIP while holding them accountable for delivery, risk management and continuous improvement.
- Drives efficient, coordinated delivery across functions and agencies, enabling a seamless investor experience.
- Ensures effective governance systems, Board engagement, and statutory compliance.
- Supports the Executive Leadership Team to achieve its investment objectives.
- Maintains alignment with other related agencies, regulators and government departments

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Key External Relationships

- Builds trusted relationships across government, regulators, and the private sector to improve investment pathways, remove barriers and ensure delivery as an Autonomous Crown Entity.
- Enable effective coordination across Immigration NZ, Treasury and MBIE, support alignment between policy, regulation, and delivery

Key Skills and Experience

- Brings a breadth of experience, proven ability to operate at the intersection of operations, legal/regulatory compliance, and organisational performance. Has demonstrated success in a leadership role, and exposure across public/ private sectors.
- Experience overseeing governance, Board servicing, and ministerial or executive stakeholder interfaces in a high-accountability environment.
- Demonstrated ownership of financial stewardship, performance frameworks, and organisational accountability in a public or regulated context.
- An understanding of investment products, capital markets, and international investment flows.
- Highly collaborative - can work across the team to deliver, can leverage relationships to create results.
- Is a strategic executor: Able to translate strategy into operational delivery while maintaining organisational integrity and performance.
- High-integrity leader with strong commitment to public accountability, transparency, and ethical decision-making. Great at coaching and motivating others and getting the best from individuals.
- Operational excellence mindset, with a focus on continuous improvement, efficiency and scalability.
- Influential communicator, capable of engaging effectively with Boards, Ministers, investors, and senior stakeholders, acting with tact and diplomacy to achieve planned outcomes.
- Resilient and adaptable, able to operate in complex, high-profile, and politically sensitive environments.
- Commercial acumen – experience maximising commercial outcomes, knowledge and expertise in finance, investment and operating effectively in complex environments.

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- Relevant tertiary qualification in business, finance, law, economics, or a related discipline. An advanced qualification (e.g. MBA, CFA, CA, or legal qualification) is desirable.