



Fresh Energy

Chief Financial & Operations Officer

COMPENSATION

\$140,000 - \$160,000 depending on qualifications

Applications will be accepted until July 3, 2026.
All applicants must [apply online here](#).

PRESENTED BY:

ballinger | leafblad

Fresh Energy

Chief Financial & Operations Officer

Ballinger | Leafblad is honored to partner with Fresh Energy on the search for its next Chief Financial and Operations Officer. This leader will oversee the organization's core administrative functions - including Finance, Human Resources, Technology, Security, Facilities, and Administrative Support - ensuring strong systems, sound financial stewardship, and operational excellence across the enterprise. Working closely with the CEO and executive leadership team, the CFOO will help guide the organization through its next chapter by strengthening infrastructure, supporting strategic decision-making, and aligning internal operations to best serve a vibrant and growing community.



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OVERVIEW

Founded in 1992, Fresh Energy was one of the first state-based nonprofits working to speed the transition to a clean energy economy. The organization has built an impeccable reputation as ambitious, equity-centered, data-driven changemakers and has a strong team of policy analysts, advocates, educators, and communicators working at the state legislature, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, and out in the community to power progress.

Fresh Energy has a staff of 30 full-time employees and several part-time contractors in a hybrid office environment and an annual budget of \$6 million contributed primarily from individuals and private foundation grants. The organization has \$6.5M in total assets.

With a new CEO on board since 2025 and an office move to take place in August 2026, Fresh Energy is in the process of refining and bringing more financial systems in-house. Fresh Energy seeks a highly experienced nonprofit Chief Financial and Operations Officer to provide leadership in this exciting new chapter.

MISSION

Fresh Energy shapes and drives bold policy solutions to achieve equitable carbon-neutral economies.

A 2024 strategic planning process refined Fresh Energy's programmatic goals in Vision 2030 and there is a strong organization-wide commitment to its Guiding Principles and four CORE Values: Courage, Optimism, Responsibility, and Equity.

Learn more at <https://fresh-energy.org/>.



PROGRAMS

Fresh Energy recognizes the need to act swiftly and ambitiously to ensure an affordable and resilient future. Together with a network of partners, Fresh Energy is driving change in these major program areas:

SECTORS

Electricity

- Build out a resilient energy system capable of powering our economy with clean electricity, with infrastructure and customer programs aligned to create a grid that is affordable, flexible, and reliable.

Buildings

- Achieve high performing healthy housing, commercial buildings, campuses, and neighborhoods that can be affordably heated and cooled with renewable electricity instead of fossil fuel.

Transportation

- Decarbonize the movement of people and goods, prioritizing affordable, accessible zero-emissions technologies and infrastructure with precise deployment of low-carbon fuels.

Agriculture

- Evaluate and advance sustainable technologies, fuels, and cropping systems to reduce carbon emissions from agricultural processes and products through co-created local opportunities.

Heavy Industry

- Create and leverage opportunities to decarbonize the production of goods and materials in a way that grows jobs and economic benefits for Minnesotans.

STRATEGIES

Policy Solutions

- Drive government action through policy design, research, and advocacy.

Implementation

- Advance regulatory decisions, agency actions, market transformation, and scalable proof-of-concept initiatives.

Communications

- Inspire, equip, and engage the public with solutions-based stories and opportunities.

Public policy, implementation of clean energy laws, and communications are key tenets of Fresh Energy's work, and a commitment to equity underlies every aspect of the organization.



CHIEF FINANCIAL & OPERATIONS OFFICER



POSITION SUMMARY

The CFOO serves as a key member of the Executive Leadership Team and the organization's primary finance and operations leader. This role carries active responsibility for the financial integrity, reporting, and long-term fiscal health of the organization, while also providing strategic oversight of operations and human resources. The CFOO serves as a trusted thought partner to the CEO and engages regularly with the Board of Directors on financial strategy and organizational sustainability. The CFOO is also responsible for upholding the organization's culture, managing and mentoring a sophisticated team, and supporting fundraising staff in fund tracking and budget management across their departments.

While Fresh Energy is in a strong position organizationally, it is moving out of a period of change and there is a meaningful opportunity to strengthen systems, improve integration, and bring greater consistency across functions. This role is well-suited for a leader who is energized by both building and leading, who is comfortable with ambiguity and can take ownership for bringing improved clarity and structure. Success will be reflected in an environment where finance and operations systems are efficient, trusted, well communicated, and in line with the organization's values and culture.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

This position reports to the CEO. Direct reports include:

- Executive operations/finance-focused role
- Seasoned HR leader
- Office administrator

Fresh Energy is currently contracting with an outsourced accounting services provider.

The new CFOO will bring the finance and accounting functions in-house to be conducted by internal staff.

ESSENTIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

- As a member of the Executive Leadership Team, work collaboratively to shape the future of the organization in making decisions that drive mission fulfillment and long-term impact.
- Serve as a strategic thought partner to the CEO by providing data, counsel, and leadership with respect to aligning financial, business, and operational strategies to the future performance of the organization.
- Lead the cross-department Business Management Working Group to address key organization wide issues.
- Influence organizational culture by developing systems and modelling and reinforcing values that promote transparency and an equitable, inclusive culture.

FINANCE & ACCOUNTING

- Serve as the organization's chief financial strategist, leading long-range financial planning, multi-year forecasting, and scenario analysis.
- Oversee preparation and presentation of financial statements, dashboards, and budget-to-actual analyses to senior leadership and the Board.
- Lead the annual budgeting process in partnership with the CEO and program leadership.
- Ensure compliance with GAAP, nonprofit accounting standards, and all applicable regulatory and funder requirements.
- Own the annual audit process, serving as the primary relationship manager with external auditors.
- Oversee systems for effective revenue projections and tracking including grant financial management, restricted fund accounting, unrestricted and individual funding streams, and funder financial reporting.
- Manage banking relationships, cash flow, operating reserves, and investment accounts per board policy.
- Set accounting policies and serve as the technical accounting resource and escalation point for other finance team members.
- Oversee Form 990 preparation, working with an external CPA as appropriate.
- Lead and manage the successful transition from outsourced accounting to an in-house finance and accounting function by overseeing planning, project management, and the mentoring, training, and development of staff.
- Supervise the Director, Executive Operations, whose work supports the organization's finance and accounting-related activities.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Provide strategic direction on compensation philosophy, total rewards, goal setting and reporting systems, performance review systems, hiring and retention practices, and organizational culture.
- Lead benefits strategy and make final decisions on benefits renewals and plan design in coordination with HR staff and CEO.
- Ensure organizational compliance with federal and state employment law.

QUALIFICATIONS

HUMAN RESOURCES, CONTINUED

- Serve as a resource and senior escalation point for the HR Manager on complex employee relations matters, policy questions, and hiring decisions.
- Serve as staff lead for board-level matters related to executive compensation and HR policy.
- Supervise the Senior Associate, Human Resources, who conducts substantive work in HR and related areas.

OPERATIONS

- Oversee facilities, vendor contracts, and office management.
- Own organizational technology decisions, including software systems, IT infrastructure, and data security.
- Manage organizational risk, including insurance coverage and business continuity planning.
- Negotiate and manage key organizational contracts.
- Drive cross-functional operational improvements that support program delivery and organizational effectiveness.
- Supervise the Senior Associate, Office Administration, who conducts the substantive work in administration and day-to-day administrative activities as well as special projects.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree in accounting, finance, business, or related field required; CPA strongly preferred.
- Minimum 7+ years of progressive financial leadership experience; nonprofit accounting experience is required.
- Deep, hands-on expertise in nonprofit financial reporting, fund accounting, budgeting, and audit management.
- Experience with nonprofit revenue management including familiarity with grant compliance and restricted fund management.
- Demonstrated experience supervising operational and administrative departments.
- Strong management skills with an interest in mentoring more junior finance staff and helping the broader staff understand financial systems at Fresh Energy.
- Excellent communication skills — able to explain complex financial topics to both finance and non-finance stakeholders.
- Strong organizational and strategic thinking skills with a bias for action.
- Willingness to transform the organization through use of new solutions.
- Knowledge of HR practices and employment law sufficient to provide strategic oversight and sound judgment on people matters.
- Demonstrated ability to function as a strategic partner to executive leadership.
- Comfortable operating in a mission-driven, community-focused, and values-based environment.

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

The ideal candidate will demonstrate the following:

Strategic financial leadership

You bring deep experience as a nonprofit CFO or senior finance leader, with confidence in managing budgets, forecasting, audit, risk, and long-term financial planning.

Analytical decision-making

You use financial and operational data to guide decisions and evaluate performance.

Integrated systems and organizational design

You understand the big picture, draw connections, identify interdependencies across the organization, and design effective processes that improve workflow and efficiency.

Enterprise and operational leadership

You are a competent operational generalist who effectively manages cross-functional teams and drives high performance across multiple disciplines.

Ownership and accountability

You take responsibility for outcomes and operate with a strong sense of ownership and accountability.

Change Leadership

You lead enterprise-wide change effectively by demonstrating empathy, building buy-in, communicating clearly, and executing with intention.

Decisiveness and initiative

You are confident in making decisions and move work forward with urgency and clarity.

Entrepreneurial mindset

You proactively identify growth strategies, as well as opportunities to enhance systems, streamline processes, and improve outcomes.

Communication, influence, and engagement

You communicate clearly and effectively, building trust while collaborating, coaching, and influencing stakeholders at all levels.

A passion for Fresh Energy's mission and people

You care about the organization's work and the people who do it and will be an effective standard-bearer of Fresh Energy's culture.



Compensation & Benefits

Annual Salary: \$140,000 - \$160,000

- A 36-hour work week where every Friday is a half-day.
- 15 Holidays which includes a winter break from December 24 – January 1.
- Excellent benefit plans with Fresh Energy paying 90% of employee's medical and 100% of dental as well as 50% for employee's dependent in the same plan.
- FSA or HSA with employer contribution.
- Fresh Energy contributes 5% towards an employee's retirement plan; also matches 100% of employee's contribution up to 3%. Employer contributions are fully vested on day 1.
- Professional development budget.
- 6 weeks of fully paid Family Medical Leave.

WHERE THE WORK HAPPENS

Fresh Energy's current office is located in downtown St. Paul, MN. It's office will be moving in early fall 2026 to 81 E. Seventh Street, Suite 200, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101. Fresh Energy has a hybrid work policy where most staff work in the office 2-3 days a week, with Wednesdays being required.

As an executive leader overseeing operations, the CFOO needs to reside in the Twin Cities metro area and be flexible/willing to work in the office, as needed, throughout the week.

Learn more about working at Fresh Energy here: <https://fresh-energy.org/our-team/working-at-fresh-energy>.

Fresh Energy provides equal opportunity to employees and applicants for employment in accordance with applicable laws. Personnel decisions are made based on merit and the needs of the organization.

To Apply

All applicants **must apply online here**.

To apply, a resume and cover letter are required for consideration.

We strive for a transparent and supportive process, starting with an initial review of applications, followed by exploratory conversations with qualified candidates, in-depth interviews, and open communication throughout. There will be an immediate and ongoing review of candidates, so we encourage and appreciate early applications.

All inquiries will be handled with strict confidentiality, subject to standard recruiting practices and any applicable legal disclosure obligations. Inquiries may be directed to Jen Hanlon Ash, jen@ballingerleafblad.com.

Applications will be accepted through July 3, 2026, or until the position is filled.

Ballinger | Leafblad Search Team

Our collaborative search model is led by partners who bring deep expertise in executive recruitment, stakeholder engagement, strategic communications, and search execution. With a disciplined, relationship-centered approach and strong operational rigor, we ensure a seamless process and a successful outcome for every search.



Lars Leafblad

Co-Founder & Partner



Jamie Millard

Managing Partner



Jen Hanlon Ash

Partner



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ABOUT BALLINGER | LEAFBLAD

Founded in 2014, Ballinger | Leafblad is a civic-focused executive search firm driven by a passion for strengthening leadership in mission-driven organizations. Rooted in partnership and a deep connection to the communities we serve, we specialize in matching organizations with exceptional leaders who align with their values and vision. Our approach is relationship-centered and designed to foster meaningful, long-term impact.

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