



Operations Specialist

Full Position Description

A key member of the Stanley Center for Peace and Security's team, the operations specialist is responsible for logistical elements of the center's events, ensuring they are professional and high-touch, and support content-driven goals. The operations specialist works collaboratively across departments to plan and implement successful events in keeping with our core values and in service of [our vision, mission, and goals](#). The role of the operations specialist is particularly focused on organizing successful virtual, in-person, and hybrid events. This includes learning and employing innovative tools and technologies.

The operations specialist is part of the operations team, reporting directly to the director of operations.

Primary Responsibilities

Event Logistics: Because programming events are a significant part of how the Stanley Center furthers its vision, mission, and goals, the operations specialist plans, coordinates, and implements event logistics to help ensure our programming events are successful.

To fulfill this responsibility, the operations specialist does the following:

- Internal event coordination, working collaboratively within and across teams to plan for center programming events.
- External event coordination, working with vendors (venue, hotel, etc.) and other external parties involved in event logistics, including those at external partner organizations.
- Participant relations, including:
 - Managing the invitation and event registration process using appropriate technology and methods to verify invitee contact information, sending invitations, collecting responses, and tracking response rates.
 - Producing and distributing agendas, participant lists, event details, and other logistics documents as needed.
 - Answering participants' logistics questions and providing thorough logistical details in support of the participant experience.
- Vendor relations, including managing and negotiating with vendors/suppliers (e.g., ground transportation, meeting venues, catering, A/V, virtual platforms) and ensuring the quality of delivered services. When possible, seeking out diverse vendors whose business practices correspond with the center's vision, mission, goals, and policies.
- Travel coordination, including making domestic and international travel arrangements for participants through our travel management company or directly with participants.

- Working with the Communications Department to ensure brand compliance with event materials (invitation letter, participant list, conference details, RSVP form, agenda, signage, nametags, supplies and/or virtual platform).
- Event management, especially managing the participant logistics experience, liaising with vendors, and ensuring that the logistic quality of the event meets expectations (smooth check-in process, organized ground transportation, special needs accommodated, etc.). This includes travel in the United States and abroad as required.
- Creating budgets, tracking expenses, and ensuring all event costs are optimized. Preparing vendor invoices and participant expense reimbursements for payment.

Learning and Innovation: Because the Stanley Center is a learning organization and because the center looks to be innovative in its approaches to its work, the operations specialist is expected to:

- Work closely with programming staff to understand the substance and goals of programming activities so as to be able to advise on event logistics.
- Use an innovative attitude and think creatively to provide the team with ideas on event logistics. This includes conducting venue or platform research and providing recommendations to assist with team decision-making around event logistics.
- Contribute to event debriefs with logistics successes and lessons learned.
- Develop and implement (as appropriate) environmentally responsible practices.
- Develop and implement (as appropriate) practices to increase inclusivity and accessibility of events, such as interpretation, captions, website accessibility features, etc.

Team Contribution: Because the Stanley Center values teamwork and collaboration, we expect the operations specialist to:

- Collaborate across departments in all phases of programming event development and implementation.
- Use open, respectful, and inclusive communication. Communicate needs and expectations early and often. Practice the art of humble inquiry by listening to understand and choosing curiosity over assumptions.
- Meet deadlines agreed on with others. Communicate with those affected as soon as it is known or suspected a deadline is in jeopardy of not being met.
- Contribute, as part of the larger staff team, to internal reporting mechanisms, meetings, and processes as requested.
- Confront difficult situations early. Call out, as close to the moment as possible, statements and behaviors that seem contrary to the kind of workplace we want to create.
- Celebrate success and show appreciation to others who contributed to the success.
- Keep an open mind and be willing to hear others' ideas. Be willing to learn, including from others' past relevant experiences, and consider different approaches to achieving success or excellence. Brainstorm, problem solve, and share information within and across departments.
- Use a "we" instead of a "me" approach to your work every day.

Other assigned or voluntary responsibilities. The operations specialist may also be asked or voluntarily choose to be part of meetings, processes, or organizational committees focused on tasks outside of their primary responsibilities.

Qualifications

The ideal candidate will possess:

- High school degree or equivalent and approximately two to four years of prior experience in meeting or event planning.
- Strong relationship-building skills, especially with respect to vendor, venue, and other stakeholder relationships necessary for crafting and implementing creative, successful events, including the ability to navigate cultural and other differences with humility and respect.
- Strong ability to pay attention to detail.
- Strong financial accountability skills, including budgeting, cost allocations, and project cost estimating.
- Excellent communication and active listening skills, including the ability to present your own ideas and other information effectively and to provide and accept appropriate feedback.
- Demonstrated organizational skills, including the ability to track details and manage multidirectional information flows across multiple ongoing activities and plan, schedule, and organize work in a way that allows for a high degree of quality productivity.
- Project management experience, including a proven capacity to set goals and meet deadlines and schedules.
- Strong problem-solving skills.
- Demonstrated collaborative skills on behalf of shared goals in a team setting, including the ability to establish trust and maintain openness/transparency with others across the organization and adopt work habits that contribute to a positive work environment.
- A working knowledge of Microsoft Office.

Additional desirable traits include:

- Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) designation.
- Proficiency with registration software (Cvent, etc.).
- Experience in running virtual and/or hybrid meetings.
- Ability to speak, read, and/or write in languages in addition to English.

Applicants must be legally authorized to work in the United States. The frequency of required travel for this position varies based on planned programming activity but could be as frequent as once or twice a month.

Location

This position is located at the Stanley Center office in [Muscatine, Iowa](#), a unique community of 23,000 people with affordable housing and a variety of recreational

opportunities on the Mississippi River. [From its founding](#) in 1956, the center has been intentionally based in Muscatine. Our location provides a valuable vantage point from which to conduct global operations while also continuing the Stanley family's commitment to fostering inclusive dialogue, celebrating diverse perspectives, and promoting equity locally. We have recently renovated the former public library to be our new home and have transformed the space into one of the most environmentally friendly and ecologically sustainable buildings in the world.

Within commuting distance of Muscatine are [Iowa City](#) (population 70,000)—a UNESCO City of Literature and home of the University of Iowa, the renowned Iowa Writers Workshop, and nationally recognized University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics—and the [Quad Cities](#) area, comprising Davenport and Bettendorf, Iowa, and Moline and Rock Island, Illinois, with a combined population of about 350,000.

While on-site work at the center's office in Muscatine is mandatory, we offer flexible work hours and allow some remote work each week.

Application Directions

Please send a letter of interest, résumé, and references to the attention of:

Patty Papke (she, her, hers)
Director of Operations
Stanley Center for Peace and Security
304 Iowa Avenue
Muscatine, IA 52761
Phone: 563-264-6869
E-mail: careers@stanleycenter.org

Deadline for application: This position will remain open until filled.

The Stanley Center is an equal opportunity employer; people of color, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ candidates are strongly encouraged to apply. We are committed to building a team that represents a variety of backgrounds, cultures, and experiences, knowing that diverse perspectives lead to new and better ideas. We cultivate an organizational culture that reflects our vision for freedom, justice, and dignity for all people—one that is antiracist and in which all employees are valued and respected.

For more information about working at the Stanley Center and applying for this position, please visit our [Careers](#) page and read our [Career FAQs](#).