

PROGRAMS & OPERATIONS LEAD

Contract position | Kootenay region, British Columbia

CONTRACT TERM September 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027	COMMITMENT Average 32-37 hours per week	COMPENSATION \$33-\$37 per hour; maximum \$60,000
LOCATION Primarily remote within the Kootenays	REPORTS TO Executive Director & CEO	DIRECT REPORTS None

About KAST

The Kootenay Association for Science and Technology (KAST) is the regional technology and innovation organization serving the Kootenays. We help entrepreneurs, businesses and communities access the knowledge, connections and tools they need to grow, innovate and adapt.

KAST is entering an exciting period of growth, with major initiatives in entrepreneurship, AI and digital adoption, investment readiness and regional ecosystem development. We are looking for a practical, highly organized manager who can help turn that direction into well-run programs, projects and experiences.

The Opportunity

The Programs & Operations lead is responsible for translating KAST's approved strategy into coordinated, professional and measurable delivery.

Working directly with the Executive Director & CEO, this person will lead the day-to-day implementation of KAST's major programs and projects. They will manage workplans, timelines, budgets, contractors, participant experiences, risks, reporting requirements and the systems that keep delivery on track.

This is a hands-on role for someone who enjoys bringing structure to complexity. The right person will be equally comfortable building a project plan, coordinating an advisor or contractor, improving a process, supporting an entrepreneur, and following through on funder commitments.

Initial Priorities

During the initial contract, the role will focus primarily on:

TechEdge - coordinating implementation of KAST's regional AI and digital adoption initiative, including business assessments, project coordination, stakeholder engagement, and achievement of grant deliverables.

KAST Tech Summit - leading the project planning and cross-functional coordination required to deliver the May 2027 Summit.

As capacity permits, the successful candidate may also support other KAST initiatives, including the Venture Acceleration Program (VAP), Investor Connect, and future grant-funded projects.

Additional KAST initiatives will be assigned according to organizational priorities and available capacity. The role is not expected to absorb every new project without corresponding changes to scope, timeline, or resources.

Key Responsibilities

Program and Project Delivery - 40%

- Lead assigned programs and projects from planning through delivery, evaluation and close-out.
- Develop and maintain clear workplans, timelines, milestones, budgets and responsibility assignments.
- Coordinate contractors, mentors, facilitators, speakers and other delivery partners.
- Monitor progress, dependencies and risks; raise issues early and recommend practical solutions.
- Ensure work is delivered on time, within approved budgets and in alignment with funding agreements.
- Create and improve participant resources, guides, templates and standardized delivery processes.

Business and Participant Experience - 15%

- Coordinate participant intake, onboarding, communications and follow-up.
- Support standardized business and digital-readiness assessments with KAST advisors and subject-matter experts.
- Match businesses with appropriate mentors, consultants and resources.
- Maintain a consistent, welcoming and professional experience across KAST programs.
- Track participation, progress, outcomes, satisfaction and client stories.

Operations and Systems - 20%

- Build practical systems that improve visibility, coordination and follow-through across KAST's work.
- Maintain program records, project files, CRM information, operating procedures and reporting dashboards.
- Document repeatable workflows and identify opportunities to simplify or improve them.
- Coordinate routine website and program-information updates with the NiC, Community & Communications Coordinator.
- Support effective use of digital tools for project management, collaboration and reporting.

Events and Cross-Functional Coordination - 15%

- Lead project planning for assigned workshops, pitch events, partner sessions and the KAST Tech Summit.
- Coordinate venues, suppliers, speakers, registration requirements, volunteers and event timelines.
- Provide clear briefs, approved program information and realistic deadlines for communications and marketing support.
- Coordinate closely with KAST team members while respecting each person's area of responsibility and workload.

Funding Accountability - 10%

- Maintain accurate program data and collect required performance metrics.
- Monitor project deliverables against funding agreements.
- Prepare the non-financial portions of funder reports and supporting documentation.
- Work with the Fractional CFO & Strategic Partner on budgets, expense tracking, contracts and financial reporting.
- Support grant applications and project scoping when requested.

What Success Looks Like

Within the first six to nine months:

- TechEdge and the KAST Tech Summit have clear plans, owners, timelines, budgets and reporting processes.
- Programs and funder deliverables are consistently completed on time.
- Risks, dependencies and decisions are visible early rather than becoming last-minute issues.
- Participant intake, assessment and outcome-tracking processes are consistent and documented.
- CRM, project files and core operational procedures are current and usable.
- Contractors, advisors, partners and participants receive clear and timely communication.

- KAST leadership spends materially less time coordinating logistics and chasing operational details.

About You

You are a builder-operator: someone who enjoys taking an idea, creating a workable plan and following it through to completion. You bring calm, sound judgment and strong follow-through to a small organization managing multiple priorities.

- Three or more years of relevant experience in program delivery, project management, operations, events or a related area.
- Demonstrated ability to manage multiple projects, deadlines, budgets and stakeholders.
- Strong written communication, documentation, and relationship management skills.
- Confidence using project-management platforms, spreadsheets, CRM systems and virtual collaboration tools.
- Ability to work independently, make routine delivery decisions and escalate appropriately.
- Comfort working with entrepreneurs, businesses, mentors, funders, contractors and community partners.
- Experience with nonprofit, economic-development, entrepreneurship, technology or grant-funded programming is an asset.
- Event or conference delivery experience is an asset.
- Formal project-management training or certification is welcomed but not required.

You'll know you're successful when projects move forward, partners stay informed, and programs are delivered on time and with excellence.

Location and Work Environment

This is a primarily remote contract open to candidates residing within the Kootenay region of British Columbia. The contractor will maintain a professional home office with reliable high-speed internet and their own computer and equipment.

Regular virtual collaboration is expected. Periodic in-person meetings, workshops and events will take place throughout the region, including Nelson, Invermere, Cranbrook, Castlegar, Trail and other Kootenay communities. Some evening or weekend availability may be required for events.

Approved regional travel expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with KAST policies. Travel expectations, billable travel time and required availability will be confirmed in the contract.

Contract and Compensation

- Independent contractor rate: \$33-\$37 per hour, depending on experience.
- Anticipated commitment: an average of approximately 32-37 hours per week, with occasional peak periods approved in advance.
- Contract term: September 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027.
- Maximum contract value: \$60,000, unless amended by mutual written agreement.
- Invoices may be submitted bi-weekly and must include hours worked and a concise summary of activities and deliverables.

Future Opportunity

Subject to funding, organizational needs, and mutual fit, KAST intends to explore growing this contract into a longer-term position.

How to Apply

Please submit a resume and brief cover letter explaining your interest in the role and KAST's work. Application email, deadline, and interview dates will be added before publication.

KAST welcomes applicants with diverse experiences and backgrounds.