



WE'RE HIRING!

Head of Operations – Maternity Cover

Location: Belgium-based, hybrid between home and our Brussels office

Duration: 6 months

Start and date: no later than 30 March until 9 October 2026

About us

Zero Waste Europe ([ZWE](#)) is the European network of communities, local leaders, experts, and change agents working towards a better use of resources and the elimination of waste in our society. We advocate for sustainable systems; for the redesign of our relationship with resources; and for a global shift towards environmental justice, accelerating a just transition towards zero waste for the benefit of people and the planet.

The [ZWE network](#) now includes 39 members and alliances across 30 European countries and works with topics across the whole chain. From the strategic use of resources and product design to reusability to end-of-pipe waste management solutions, from the phase-out of plastics to [municipal zero waste strategies](#), our scope has significantly expanded but our mission and vision remain the same – a zero waste, fairer, inclusive, circular Europe for all (and planet, too, while we're at it).

We are a successful and fast-growing independent NGO where personal development, fairness and inclusiveness are high on the agenda. We are the proud founders of the [Mission Zero Academy](#) (MiZA), through which we offer Zero Waste certifications to cities, municipalities, and small businesses; we are founding member of various movements and coalitions that are hosted under our entity (such as [Break Free From Plastic](#)), and are the European chapter of the [Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives](#) (GAIA).

Our ZWE Values

- We are **purpose-driven**, always putting forward a solution-oriented approach.
- We are **game-changing** – we challenge the status quo, explore emerging topics and create a safe space to succeed (and to recover from setbacks).
- We are **adaptable**, constantly striving towards learning and improving; open to change and taking agency.
- We believe acting with **integrity** is crucial to achieve impact and change, both inside and outside our network.
- We **care** deeply about our communities, the environment, and systemic changes that benefit society as a whole – while also looking after ourselves and our own well-being as a team and as individuals.

About the role

The Operations team is looking for a maternity cover to lead on its human resources, financial, legal, and organisational development. You will work closely with other senior staff and the Executive Director and will be supported by a team of 3 people, a team whom we'll trust you'll *interim-manage* with passion!

About you

You are a born problem-solver and strategic thinker, always looking to make people's lives easier. You enjoy leading organisational processes, designing and implementing what's needed for the smooth functioning of organisations. You excel at personal relations, are organised and attentive to details. You are proactive, flexible and embrace complexity. You can handle stress and uncertainty, and you are familiar with the zero waste philosophy.

If you have a hands-on attitude, with experience in developing internal policies and systems, and manage complex human resources and financial puzzles, do apply!

Required skills and competencies

- Relevant master's degree or equivalent experience.
- Strong interest in, and passion for, people management, development, and coaching.
- Strong analytical and financial reporting skills, ability to manage complex grant reporting.
- Solid understanding of fiscal/accounting rules, with an aptitude for accounting software, ideally Winbooks, or ability to learn autonomously. Affinity with Excel(/Google Sheets).
- Solid knowledge of HR management, including (Belgian) HR regulations and strategic people performance development.
- Strong interpersonal skills, able to bring people along in the strategy set forward.
- Strategic mindset, able to set long-term goals while tackling short-term priorities.

- Comfortable working autonomously, driving change and setting direction.
- Comfortable defining priorities and asking tough questions/challenging the status quo.
- Driven to find continuous improvement and automation in processes and methods through digital technologies and other means.
- Ability to work with the general Google Suite, Slack, Zoho, and other similar collaboration tools.
- Excellent knowledge of English **and** either French or Dutch.
- Interest in and passion for Zero Waste Europe's work and areas of focus.

About the role

Core responsibilities

- Take over the **line management** of the 3-people Operations team.
- Take over **the coordination and delivery of key strategic projects** (to be locked early 2026, but these may include updating our accounting set-up, and one key organisational/HR project) and overseeing the projects run by the Operations team.
- Ensure **regular reports on revenues and expenditures** of the organisation as well as fundraising forecasts, to report to the Board, Coordination and Management team, fundraising meetings, and to inform organisational decisions.
- Take over **grant reporting**, preparing financial updates, and the presentation of our 2025 accounts at the AGM, as well as supporting in preparing budgets for fundraising applications.
- Lead on the **ZWE organisational maturity** from a legal, human resource, and financial perspective.
- Uphold ZWE's values and lead on **organisational development sessions** where appropriate (e.g. September team retreat, monthly meetings).
- **Oversee** the efficient and effective day-to-day operations of the organisation, spotting blind spots, bottlenecks, and potential improvements, ensuring the smooth functioning of the operations (accounting, legal, hr, internal processes).
- Oversee the operations for our **hosted movements and coalitions** (BFFP/RPa, MiZA, GAIA UK).
- Ensure **compliance** with Belgian and EU financial legislation, in all areas of work.
- Support the coordination of our **fundraising meetings** and further tailoring of our fundraising efforts.

Disclaimer: we are well aware that a maternity leave replacement cannot fully cover the projects and activities of a well-established staff member. We are open and keen to adjust the maternity cover depending on the profiles.

Equal employment opportunity

We are committed to the principle of Equal Employment Opportunity for all employees, regardless of sex, gender, marital status, nationality, religion, age, sexual orientation and any other characteristics unrelated to the performance of the job.

We also realise that not all individuals have the same opportunities to engage in paid work or studies and are open to receiving applications from those who may not fulfil all the required skills but have the interest, passion, (cap)abilities and drive to fulfil the role. In this respect, we encourage people from a diverse intersection of backgrounds to apply.

Location, compensation and work environment

We offer a competitive NGO salary (€4844-5451 range gross) plus benefits, including:

- Lunch vouchers (€8/day); 13th month (year-end bonus - if applicable);
- Double holiday pay (Belgian standard);
- Legal Holidays as per Belgian standards, plus 3 extra-legal holidays (6 for a full year);
- Hospitalisation, ambulatory and Dental Insurance (DKV);
- Travel insurance; home working and other allowances (€200 net/month);
- Reimbursement of public transport costs for local commuting (max €32.00 net/month) upon show of receipts; and full reimbursement of train transportation commuting costs within Belgium;
- Flexible working hours/times.

Candidates must already have a valid working permit for Belgium - please note that ZWE is not able to provide working permit sponsorships.

Deadline to apply: applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis with a final deadline on **5 January 2026, at 23:59 CEST**.

Ideal starting date: no later than 30 March 2026.

To apply:

Please send your CV and motivation letter in English with two references (all merged into a single PDF document) through the appropriate form on the ZWE website ("[Work With Us](#)" page). Only applications sent via this form will be considered. We can only guarantee that short-listed candidates will be contacted.

Our 2-round interview process will take place in the week of 5 January 2026 and include:

- A 30-minute introduction and screening interview with our Head of Operations – on 8 or 9 January 2026.
- A 1-hour interview with our Head of Operations and Executive Director on 12 or 13 January, focussing on cases and team culture. A short assignment of 30 minutes may be provided between the two interviews.

We aim to have a 2-way conversation and to get to know each other during the interview, so please be truthful and ask your questions, and we will do the same!