



 ISLE OF HARRIS  
DISTILLERS LTD.

Position Profile  
Financial Controller



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IHD began with a simple idea.

Over the decades Harris has suffered a long term decline in population with community numbers halving over the last 50 years. IHD was created as a way to help stem this tide and boost employment on the island for future generations. Beginning its' journey in 2015, the Distillery now employs 50 permanent staff on an island with only 2000 inhabitants. The Isle of Harris Distillery's mission is to *create a sustainable, commercially successful long-term venture which provides multi-generational employment on the island of Harris & investor reward.*

As a catalyst for positive change within the community, the Distillery continues to work with purpose, bringing new life to the island and supporting its aspirations to survive and thrive as they move forward together. The Distillery, known as the Social Distillery, was built to help create sustainable local employment and offer long-term careers for those who wish to stay and set down roots in their island home. From distilling and blending, to marketing and hospitality - there are a wide variety of skillsets and development opportunities available to local people as they create two beautiful Outer Hebridean spirits and bring them to the world.

These spirits - Isle of Harris Gin, launched in 2015 and The Hearach Single Malt Whisky, the distillery's primary product, launched in 2023 - are recognized by commentators, the trade and consumers as products of the highest quality. IHD has, since its commercial launch in September 2015, successfully grown its business - key highlights including:

- Sales - £7m in 2023, targeting £9m in 2024;
- Isle of Harris Gin - multi-award winning gin, distributed in 25+ markets;
- The Hearach Malt Whisky - launched to acclaim in September 2023;
- Distillery Visitors - a must visit destination in the Western Isles which attracts at least 70,000 plus visitors per annum;
- Infrastructure - aside from investing in products & markets, IHD has invested £4.5m+ in a Maturation Warehouse complex to ensure its spirit benefits from the distinctive island climate;
- Business Model - an evolving business model, reflective of IHD's growth progression;
- People - 50+ people are now employed, the majority of whom are island based and have developed progressively into more challenging roles
- Locations - a Glasgow office now supports the core Harris operation.

IHD regularly offer placements and internships for young people to help them explore potential career paths and has developed the current distilling team through formal apprenticeships and training. Together with other like-minded island enterprises it seeks to act as a catalyst of change and a symbol of promise for this generation and those still to come.



## Background to Current Opportunity

IHD, having now launched its primary product, The Hearach Malt Whisky, is seeking to reinforce the capabilities of its team to support further growth with the appointment of a Financial Controller. The September launch of another expression – The Hearach Oloroso – reflects IHD's growth ambitions.

IHD currently has a relatively small finance team in place for the size of the business and there is an opportunity to further develop the team in support of 3 key areas; development of the ERP system to fully utilise its' capabilities and provide more insightful management reporting, sharpening the commercial focus of the team and supporting an increasing level of governance as the business scales.





## Key Activities and Responsibilities

### Financial Management

- A key contributor to the decision making process in a growth orientated company, ensuring all key decisions reflect a full assessment of commercial, financial & other key factors

### Financial Stewardship

Maintaining a high standard of stewardship in an evolving, growth orientated business, including:

- Key Business Controls – definition & operation – transaction & other
- Cash Flow Management – systematic cash flow & liquidity forecasting
- Management Accounts – systematic, accurate & relevant reporting
- Statutory Accounts – efficient & compliant audit process
- Tax – efficient, accurate returns & value added planning

### Commercial Reporting & Support

Demonstrating commercial insight via:

- Commercial Reporting – commercially relevant profit/cost centre & KPI reporting across key business functions/processes
- Commercial Support – sales/procurement deal support, project VFM assessment & other ad hoc support
- Financial Planning
- Budgets - structuring the annual budget process to develop commercially relevant, challenging budgets with responsible manager “buy-in”
- Forecasts – updating forecasts, in conjunction with managers, to ensure opportunities are supported and key risks effectively managed
- Long Term Scenarios – supporting the CFO in the development of long term planning scenarios

### Risk Management

- Managing bank covenant compliance via effective planning
- Managing insurance cover, ensuring it remains relevant in an evolving business
- Reviewing, on an ongoing basis, company wide risk management effectiveness
- Stakeholder Relationships
- Developing & managing or overseeing relationships with banks, HMRC, auditors, insurers & others as required



## Thoughts on Preferred Candidate

The successful candidate will be a fully qualified accountant with appropriate post qualification experience who has a good understanding of transaction processing and controls and is able to lead a small team in utilising an ERP system to best effect. The appointed candidate will exploit the relevant capabilities of the ERP system to provide more insightful information to support the business as it continues to develop and grow. A logical thinker with strong commercial acumen, the appointed candidate, will also help develop the wider IHD team to ensure IHD operates at a standard appropriate for a commercial, growth orientated venture with high governance standards & key stakeholder scrutiny.

## Qualifications and Experience

### Competencies

- Financial Management – qualified accountant used to working to a high standard with leading edge software including ERP systems, database software & superior financial models
- Management – effective, supportive manager who inspires colleagues to achieve & maintain high standards – within Finance & across the business
- Management Reporting – creating & refining commercially relevant reporting which enables informed decision making across the business
- Commercial Reporting – understands how to provide commercially relevant insights & encourage fully considered commercial decisions
- Planning – modelling dexterity in support of an engaging, change orientated annual budget/forecasting process & long term scenario planning
- Risk Management – demonstrable knowledge of risk management including financial stewardship, key business controls, risk assessment & insurance

### Experience

- Essential - leading a small, energetic finance function in a growth orientated business with high governance standards
- Essential – a perceptive understanding of cultural implications for operational standards & change initiatives
- Preferable – experience, in an appropriate role, of the Scotch Whisky industry
- Preferable – key stakeholder relationship management, including banks, auditors, legal advisers, insurance brokers & others
- Preferable – leading change projects, including system initiatives



<b>Salary:</b>	An attractive salary and wider financial package is on offer commensurate with skills and experience
<b>Benefits:</b>	Other benefits include a discretionary bonus, 35 days annual leave, defined contribution pension scheme
<b>Location:</b>	Glasgow based with travel to Harris



**Hazel Wynn, CFO Services**  
T: 07498 944 280  
E: [hazelwynn@rutherfordcross.com](mailto:hazelwynn@rutherfordcross.com)

## The Recruitment Process

- Initial interviews are with our retained advisors at Rutherford Cross
- Next stage interviews are with Ron Maceachran, Executive Chairman and CFO
- Final stage interviews will be with members of the Management Team
- Applications should be sent to Hazel Wynn at Rutherford Cross:

[hazelwynn@rutherfordcross.com](mailto:hazelwynn@rutherfordcross.com)