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Interview Guide – Finance Officer / Chief Financial Officer

Position: Finance Officer / Chief Financial Officer

Organisation: [Insert ACCHS Name]

Panel Chair: [Name]

Panel Members: [Names]

Date: [Insert date]

Applicant: [Name]

1. Introduction (for the Interview Panel to read aloud)

Thank you for coming in today. Before we start, we would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

This interview is for the position of Finance Officer / Chief Financial Officer with [ACCHS Name]. The purpose of today's conversation is to better understand your financial leadership experience, governance capability, understanding of compliance obligations, and your approach to ensuring culturally respectful, transparent, and accountable financial stewardship within a community-controlled organisation.

We'll ask questions about your experience in financial management, budgeting, grant oversight, auditing, compliance, strategic financial planning, risk management, systems development, and your understanding of the ACCHS model. Please take your time when responding, we may take notes during your answers.

Do you have any questions before we start?

2. Interview Panel Instructions

- Ensure at least one Aboriginal panel member is present.
- Use yarning-style, conversational questioning where appropriate.
- Avoid interrupting or rushing responses — allow silence and reflection.
- Focus on strength-based assessment (what they bring, not just what's missing).
- Note examples and assess responses using the rating scale.

3. Rating Scale (Example)

Score	Description
5 – Excellent	Exceeds expectations, provides strong, relevant examples.
4 – Very Good	Meets expectations, gives clear and thoughtful responses.
3 – Satisfactory	Adequate response, limited examples but some understanding.
2 – Limited	Superficial or incomplete understanding.
1 – Unsatisfactory	No relevant experience or understanding shown.

4. Core Interview Questions

1. Can you tell us about yourself, your financial background, and any connection you have to Aboriginal health or community?

- *Prompt:* What values guide your leadership in financial stewardship?
- *Indicators:* Values-led leadership, integrity, understanding of ACCHS principles, cultural humility, community accountability.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

2. What does “financial accountability in a community-controlled organisation” mean to you?

- *Prompt:* Can you share an example where you ensured transparency or strengthened financial governance?
- *Indicators:* Understanding of ACCHS governance, financial transparency, community accountability, internal controls, ethics.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

3. Please describe your experience preparing and managing budgets, including working with managers or program leads?

- *Prompt:* How do you ensure budgets align with organisational goals and funding requirements?
- *Indicators:* Budgeting, forecasting, financial modelling, communication with managers, strategic alignment.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

4. Tell us about your experience managing grant funding, acquittals, and financial reporting to funding bodies.

- *Prompt:* What processes do you use to track expenditure against deliverables?
- *Indicators:* Grant management, contract compliance, acquittal systems, monitoring tools, reporting accuracy.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

5. Please describe your experience overseeing or preparing financial audits.

- *Prompt:* How do you ensure the organisation is audit-ready throughout the year, not just at audit time?
- *Indicators:* Audit coordination, documentation systems, internal controls, year-round compliance.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

6. How do you ensure compliance with tax obligations, payroll legislation, and financial regulations?

- *Prompt:* Can you give an example of a compliance risk you identified and addressed?
- *Indicators:* Payroll compliance, BAS/PAYG/FBT/GST knowledge, risk management, legislation awareness.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

7. What experience do you have improving financial systems, processes, or internal controls?

- *Prompt:* Describe a time you implemented or improved a financial system.
- *Indicators:* Process improvement, digital systems, financial software, internal controls, efficiency.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

8. Describe your experience advising a CEO or Board on financial risks, sustainability, or strategy.

- *Prompt:* How do you ensure financial information is accessible and meaningful for non-financial decision-makers?
- *Indicators:* Strategic thinking, financial literacy support, reporting clarity, risk analysis.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

9. Please tell us about your experience managing and supporting a finance team or working within a finance unit.

- *Prompt:* What is your approach to supervision, capability building, and ensuring accurate work?
- *Indicators:* Team leadership, quality assurance, mentoring, workload planning, relationship skills.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

10. How do you integrate cultural safety and community accountability into financial systems or processes?

- *Prompt:* How do you ensure financial systems support Aboriginal community control?
- *Indicators:* Cultural safety awareness, respect for community governance, accessible communication, ethical decision-making.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

11. Why do you want to work with us?

12. What aspects of financial leadership give you the most satisfaction?

13. Where do you see yourself professionally in the next few years?

5. Optional Scenario Questions

Scenario 1 – Audit and Compliance

An external auditor identifies several inconsistencies in grant acquittals and requests urgent corrective action.

How would you respond?

Scenario 2 – Budget Overruns

A program manager reports that their program is significantly overspending.

What steps would you take to manage both the immediate issue and prevent recurrence?

Scenario 3 – Cultural Safety Concerns

Staff report that financial reporting processes feel rigid and difficult for Aboriginal staff or community members to understand.

How would you address this?

Do you have any questions for us?

HR POST-INTERVIEW CHECKS

Item	Notes
References (x2)	
Working with Children Check	
National Police Check	
Start Date Availability	
Confirmation of Role (Fulltime, part time etc)	
Disclose of any health conditions that may affect duties	

5. Scoring

/ 50

Comments and Interview Reflection

6. Panel Summary and Recommendation

Strengths	Development Areas	Recommendation
		[Appoint / Consider / Not Suitable]