



STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY: CFO TINA MAHARAJ ON MODERN FINANCIAL LEADERSHIP AT THE NLC

In an era where public institutions face increasing scrutiny and expectations of ethical conduct, the National Lotteries Commission (NLC) continues to reinforce its commitment to governance, accountability, and integrity. At the centre of this transformation is Chief Financial Officer Tina Maharaj, whose role reflects how financial leadership has evolved far beyond traditional bookkeeping and compliance.



Maharaj emphasises that today's CFO is no longer confined to financial oversight but is a strategic partner in organisational transformation. "CFOs are no longer just custodians of numbers or compliance officers," she explains. "Today's CFO is a strategic leader, responsible for embedding governance, accountability, and integrity across the organisation." At the NLC, this expanded view of financial leadership is visible in the way financial decisions are aligned with ethical practices, regulatory compliance, and long-term sustainability. Maharaj's office plays a pivotal role in shaping strategy, strengthening risk management, integrating technology into financial systems, and nurturing an organisational culture rooted in transparency.

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The modern responsibilities of the CFO require a seamless connection between financial stewardship and broader institutional strategy. For Maharaj, this includes strengthening internal controls, ensuring transparent and fair allocation of funds, improving decision-making through data and analytics, and driving operational efficiency across the organisation. She highlights that the NLC's credibility depends on a balanced approach—maintaining rigorous compliance while also encouraging innovation that delivers public value.

Her leadership philosophy is anchored in three foundational pillars: governance, accountability, and integrity. She notes that good governance relies on clear financial frameworks that are consistently applied and regularly reviewed. Accountability, she says, demands that every decision is traceable, justified, and aligned with the organisation's mandate, with transparent reporting that reinforces internal trust.

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Integrity remains the bedrock, where ethical conduct is expected at every level and supported by strong oversight and a culture that rewards transparency. “These pillars create trust internally and externally,” Maharaj says, “and reinforce the NLC’s credibility.”

Maharaj also reflects openly on her own leadership journey, having worked in both the private and public sectors. Often one of the few women present in senior decision-making spaces, she describes her leadership approach as a balance between “Heart and Head” — the heart representing people, culture, and purpose, and the head representing systems, governance, and execution. She believes that representation matters, noting that women bring empathy, strength, and clarity to leadership and help inspire future generations.

Her role also directly influences the communities the NLC serves. Through strengthened due-diligence processes, improved project monitoring, strict adherence to funding guidelines, and continuous evaluation of project impact, Maharaj ensures that resources reach beneficiaries responsibly and equitably. “Strong financial governance ensures that funding creates measurable social and economic benefits,” she explains.

For Maharaj, leadership at the NLC is rooted in ethical conviction. Accountability and integrity, she says, are not merely compliance exercises but cultural commitments that shape how the organisation operates. Her focus remains on upholding ethical decision-making, maintaining transparency in financial management, and promoting sustainability across all NLC programmes. “These principles strengthen the organisation, safeguard public trust, and ensure the NLC fulfils its mandate with credibility and purpose,” she emphasises.

