

(This search was completed in August, 2001, with the appointment of Kathleen Enright, Group Director for Marketing and Communications at the National Center for Nonprofit Boards in Washington, DC.)

Job Announcement
Grantmakers for Effective Organizations
Executive Director
(Posted: June 21, 2001)

Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO) is looking for its first executive director to lead this young, fast-growing organization that will likely be based in Washington, DC. This is an exceptional opportunity for an individual with vision who believes deeply that foundations and other grantmakers should support efforts that strengthen nonprofit organizations' management and governance. Applications will be accepted until this position is filled.

The Organization

Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO) is an association of foundations, corporate giving programs, and other grantmakers that believe that their programmatic objectives can best be realized if the nonprofit organizations they fund are healthy, vibrant, and effective organizations, i.e. have strong management and governance, and focus their actions on measurable results. This focus on organizational effectiveness is a response to many foundations' long-held preference for program or project support, with little funding available for general operating support, overhead, or specific activities dedicated to improving an organization's management or governance such as supporting a strategic planning process, hiring a fundraising or marketing consultant, or financing a board self-assessment process.

Launched in 1997, GEO has organized two national conferences and carried out a number of other activities led by its volunteer steering committee and coordinated by a part-time consultant who has provided administrative and logistical support. The response to GEO's mission and initial activities has been so enthusiastic that GEO's membership has increased to about 350 individuals at 240 grantmaking organizations throughout the country.

GEO's operating budget for the current year is \$285,000, and is expected to increase to \$410,000 in 2002. GEO is currently financed from grants from foundations and by financial sponsorships from many of its members. Major donors to date have included the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The budget for future years will be based on GEO's ability to implement programs that meet members' needs.

GEO is led by a 16-person steering committee that functions like a board of directors. (GEO currently is an operating program of the Tides Center, a nonprofit organization that provides

accounting support and serves as the fiscal agent to many nascent organizations. As GEO grows, it may choose to become an autonomous, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.) The current steering committee chair is MaryAnn Holohean, Program Director of the Nonprofit Sector Advancement Fund at the Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation in Washington, DC.

For more information about GEO, go to <http://www.GEOFunders.org>.

Principal Responsibilities of the Executive Director

As a result of GEO's initial success and rapid growth, it is now ready to make the transition from an all-volunteer led organization to one that is led by a paid senior executive working in close partnership with founding and other deeply committed steering committee members who will continue to be actively involved. An initial major responsibility for the Executive Director is to implement GEO's new strategic plan, which can be found at: <http://www.geofunders.org/main/aboutus/strategicplan.htm>.

Key activities of the Executive Director will include:

1. Develop and implement programs and services that support GEO's mission.
2. Expand GEO's membership by recruiting and engaging staff at foundations, corporate giving programs, and other grantmaking organizations.
3. Provide staff support to GEO task groups that currently focus on research; the GEO website; programs (such as the March, 2002, national conference, which will take place in Washington, DC); membership development; organizational development; and finances.
4. Build relationships with other people and organizations involved in nonprofit organizational effectiveness efforts, such as other grantmaker affinity groups, other funder associations, and management-support organizations.
5. Insure that GEO itself evolves as a values- and vision-driven organization that uses evaluation tools to measure its performance on a periodic basis.
6. Insure the fiscal soundness of GEO by developing and implementing a financial strategy based on obtaining sponsorships from members, grant support from grantmakers, and earned income from activities such as conferences and publications.
7. Oversee the day-to-day operations of an organization that will initially have a paid staff of two people (Executive Director plus a part-time assistant), with the expectation that some activities will be carried out by outside contractors (such as organizing the 2002 national conference, work that is already underway).

Desired Skills and Personal Characteristics

The Executive Director should be:

1. Knowledgeable about the substance of organizational effectiveness within the nonprofit sector. A successful track-record in a senior management role at a nonprofit organization would be very helpful.
2. Knowledgeable about the work of grantmakers. Professional experience at a foundation is helpful, but not required.

3. Knowledgeable about the work of associations, especially those that began without any fulltime staff and then made the transition to its first fulltime Executive Director.
4. Capable of working effectively with steering committee members, including those who were instrumental in launching the organization. An ability to share power with the board, while insuring that decisions get made in a timely way, is critical.
5. Exceptionally well-organized, capable of managing multiple projects effectively, on time, and within budget.
6. A self-starter who is comfortable working in a very small office, where key working relationships with steering committee members take place most frequently via email and telephone.
7. Able to travel nationwide to meet with current and potential members, funders, and partners.
8. An excellent communicator, able to represent GEO by attending or speaking at key conferences and meetings.
9. Proficient in taking full advantage of computer technology to enhance GEO's website and facilitate communications among its members and partners around the country.
10. Familiar with evaluation methodologies to support GEO's own development as an effective organization.
11. Comfortable in raising money from foundations and members to support GEO's ambitious agenda.
12. Creative and entrepreneurially oriented to help GEO find the best ways to carry out its mission. The steering committee fully expects the executive director to identify and recommend programs and services that the organization should adopt, not just implement ideas that originate within the membership.

Desired Experience

Besides the comments related to experience noted above, the ideal Executive Director will have at least five years of nonprofit or relevant management experience, ideally including some start-up or grantmaking experience.

Compensation and Location

The anticipated starting salary will be \$65,000 to \$70,000, plus benefits. GEO is willing to consider flexible work arrangements, including a four-day work week.

GEO's steering committee expects the office to be in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, but is willing to consider hiring an Executive Director who would be based elsewhere in the United States. GEO will not lease office space until the new Executive Director has been identified.

To Apply

Please **e-mail** (or mail) a cover letter, resume, email address, and three-year salary history (which will be held in strict confidence) to:

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5809 Augusta Lane
Bethesda, MD 20816
Tel.: 301-320-0680
E-mail: Larry@SlesingerManagement.com (attached files in MS Word only)

(This job announcement can also be found at www.SlesingerManagement.com.)

Grantmakers for Effective Organizations is an Equal Opportunity Employer.