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## **PARTNERSHIP FOR THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM**

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

### **POSITION DESCRIPTION**

The Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS or The Partnership), the only nationwide, nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the extraordinary value of America's National Scenic and Historic Trails, seeks our next Executive Director.

The Partnership seeks a dynamic leader who can oversee and participate in all aspects of the organization. The ideal candidate will bring strong administration and operational skills, coupled with a readiness for learning and relationship building; gaining an understanding of the Partnership's history and current position; and developing a rapport with the staff, board, members, and strategic partners. They will demonstrate leadership, vision and an entrepreneurial spirit, building on the organization's current strengths and advancing our work to the next level.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW**

The Partnership envisions a world-class system of National Scenic and Historic Trails that preserves natural and cultural values and provides recreational benefits for all. To realize that vision, our mission is to empower, inspire, and strengthen public and private partners to develop, preserve, promote, and sustain the congressionally-designated National Scenic and Historic Trails.

Since 1997, PNTS has embodied the collaborative spirit of the National Trails System Act as an advocate for the trails. Today, we connect 34 member trail organizations, eight affiliates, and five federal agency partners to serve as a collective voice for the over 55,000 miles of trails within the National Trails System.

The Partnership has an annual budget of \$450,000. The organization is currently led by a part-time interim Executive Director, comprised of a virtual staffing structure, consisting of one part-time employee and six part-time contractors.

It is governed by a 15-member Board, with guidance from a Trail Leaders Council that includes representation of all 34 PNTS member organizations. The Partnership's major activities, collaborations, and signature programs include:

- The annual Hike the Hill® multi-day action aimed at increasing congressional and federal agency leader awareness and adequate funding of the National Trails System (a joint 23-year effort with the American Hiking Society).
- An annual, collaborative, multi-agency Land and Water Conservation Fund appropriations proposal that includes a single, prioritized list of land protection needs for National Scenic and Historic Trails.
- Multi-Year Action Plan to better protect and complete, promote and effectively manage the National Scenic and Historic Trails that includes the creation of a coalition, goals and strategies for protection, raising national awareness of the value of the National Trails, and obtaining increased federal funding.

- National Trails System Gap Analysis and Corridor Protection Project in partnership with the Trust for Public Land to establish and apply a methodology to identify and map remaining gaps in trail corridor and high value site protection in all 30 National Trails and to analyze disruptive development and protection mechanisms.
- Biennial workshops for scenic and historic trails to share best practices; monthly webinars; and biennial convening of members, partners, and allies from the National Trails community.
- Trail Apprentice Program and Trail Internships to introduce young adults to the National Trails System and engage them in its stewardship by providing scholarships for Apprentices to participate in PNTS workshops and conferences, and by providing competitive grants to member organizations to employ interns.
- Publication of the *Pathways Across America* quarterly journal.

To learn more about the Partnership's current work, visit [www.pnts.org](http://www.pnts.org).

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director provides overall leadership for the Partnership. Working with the Board to establish organizational strategy and priorities, the Executive Director:

- hires and supervises staff;
- models collaboration with and among PNTS member organizations and partners;
- mobilizes and manages volunteers;
- raises funds and ensures their effective management; and
- represents the Partnership to policymakers, diverse stakeholders, and the broader community.

The Partnership's next leader must hold a dual focus, as they will be responsible for advancing the organization's strategic goals, and for ensuring and personally having a hand in the day-to-day operations to support that work effectively and efficiently. They will play a critical lead role in achieving our organizational priorities, which include:

- maintaining active policy advocacy;
- innovating member services to meet evolving needs;
- enhancing financial sustainability through fund development; and
- growing our visibility as a unifying voice, advocate, and resource for the nation's scenic and historic trails.

They must be entrepreneurial, a strategic thinker, a skilled communicator and teambuilder. They will be the primary spokesperson for the Partnership in a wide range of situations in which they will be expected to provide trust-inspiring leadership, attract funding, mobilize broad-based support, and act with confidence, knowledge, and wisdom on behalf of the organization.

## KEY AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

- **Administration and Operations:** Leads the organization's administration and operations functions with support from staff and contractors. The Executive Director will guide the modernization of business practices.
- **Board and Staff Development:** In partnership with Board leadership, develops an engaged, high-performing governing Board and Trail Leaders Council; recruits, retains, supervises, and motivates an exceptional staff. The Executive Director will have the opportunity to design a new staffing structure.
- **Fund Development and Financial Management:** Ensures the organization has the resources it needs to do its work effectively; leads fundraising efforts; develops relationships with individual, foundation, government, and corporate donors; ensures responsible budgeting and financial management.
- **Strategic Direction and Planning:** Partners with the Board to develop the Partnership's strategic direction and ensures progress toward the stated goals.
- **Membership and Partnership Building:** Develops and maintains collaborative relationships with members, affiliates, funders, federal agencies, policymakers, nonprofit partners, and other key stakeholders; represents PNTS to broad and diverse audiences, increasing the organization's visibility, and promoting its work.
- **Education and Advocacy:** Leads and actively participates in the development and delivery of programs, events, and member services including workshops and webinars, convenings, *Pathways Across America* journal, and Hike the Hill<sup>®</sup> week. Designs and implements advocacy strategies for the protection, completion, and stewardship of the national trails.

## COMPETENCIES

- **Visionary:** Sees the long-term possibilities of what the future can be.
- **Strategic Thinker:** Anticipates and prepares for future events and outcomes.
- **Credible:** Demonstrates integrity and professionalism.
- **Teambuilder:** Partners with and develops others to realize better results.
- **Values-driven:** Is motivated by belief in and commitment to the mission.
- **Perceptive:** Has a keen understanding of people, ideas, and organizations.

## SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- **Leadership:** Has significant leadership experience and commands others' respect.
- **Management:** Possesses a proven track record of managing multi-stakeholder organizations. Has experience managing all aspects of nonprofit administration (human resources, financial management, and project management).
- **Fundraising:** Is skilled in achieving significant results in fund development.
- **Field Knowledge:** Has knowledge of public trails or related fields.
- **Advocacy:** Has experience in policy advocacy.
- **Communication:** Demonstrates superior written and verbal communication, and exceptional public speaking skills.
- **Entrepreneurial and Innovation:** Uses original thinking to generate new ideas and solutions.

## QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree and minimum of five years of relevant management experience.
- Prior experience with public lands, outdoor recreation, or historic or cultural preservation organization(s) preferred; nonprofit organization, or association experience a plus.

## REQUIREMENTS

- This position is based in the Washington, DC area and requires some national travel.

The anticipated start date for the position is Fall 2020. Applications will be considered until the position is filled.

If you are a skilled leader and manager, thrive on collaborating with diverse stakeholders, and are passionate about the nation's history, culture, and landscapes, we hope you will consider applying.

Partnership for the National Trails System is an equal opportunity employer and invites individuals who bring a diversity of culture, experience, and ideas to apply.

## HOW TO APPLY

To inquire about this opportunity, please contact Mary Stelletello, Principal, Vista Global Coaching & Consulting at [mary@vistaglobalcc.com](mailto:mary@vistaglobalcc.com). To apply or nominate an individual, please send a cover letter and resume by email only to [EDSearch@pnts.org](mailto:EDSearch@pnts.org). All correspondence will be held in the strictest confidence. No phone inquiries, please.