

ORGANIZATION: Vermont Center for Ecostudies
POSITION: Executive Director
REPORTS TO: Board of Trustees
LOCATION: Norwich, Vermont
INFORMATION: [Website](#); [Strategic Plan](#)
TO APPLY: Please send cover letter and resume as one PDF to VCEED@pbrsearch.com with title format “Last Name First Name – Letter Resume.”

BACKGROUND

The Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE) advances wildlife conservation in the Americas through research, monitoring, data science, and community engagement. At VCE, biologists study birds, insects, amphibians, and other wildlife from Canada to South America. Enhancing the Center’s work is a legion of experts, volunteer community scientists, and naturalists. What VCE discovers about wildlife and conservation is shared with scientists, policy makers, conservationists, and the general public. VCE publishes research in peer-reviewed scientific literature, which helps to advance the knowledge base and inform public policy. VCE conducts cutting-edge data science with projects such as the [Vermont Atlas of Life](#), a comprehensive, ambitious online database of a growing body of knowledge about Vermont’s biodiversity, available to school children and researchers alike. VCE’s suite of associated analytical tools and reporting modules provide essential insights to inform conservation decisions that are now being adopted beyond Vermont. Successes include giving policy makers the science they need to propose controls on mercury pollution, protecting vanishing bumblebees under the state endangered species law, and mapping and protecting vernal pools in collaboration with other conservationists across the Northeast.

After almost 15 years, VCE is looking ahead to the next chapter with a new strategic plan centered on three goals: 1. invest in pioneering science, 2. expand the conservation impact of VCE’s work, and 3. create a broader vision for community science. These goals will be achieved, in part, through investing in human resources, expanding partnerships and ‘big data’ science, ensuring science-driven conservation, and providing more opportunities for involvement from community scientists. VCE is in the midst of its first capital campaign with initial gifts totaling \$4.1 million from well-informed and -stewarded donors. VCE has set an aspirational campaign goal of \$6.5 million.

POSITION

The executive director is responsible for the strategic leadership and engaged, compassionate management of VCE’s staff and resources while reporting to and working closely with the Board of Trustees. The executive director will provide leadership for all aspects of VCE, including strategic direction-setting, fundraising, relations with volunteers and donors, program development and management, financial management, and relations with the broader community and other institutions. VCE currently employs 18 full-time staff, engages over 600 community scientists a year, and operates on an annual budget of \$1.6 million.

This is a multifaceted position calling for an experienced leader and manager with a holistic vision for the unique mission and impact of VCE. They will build upon VCE’s strong programmatic and financial foundation while also evolving its structures and programming as needed to ensure that VCE remains rigorous and relevant to conservation science today and achieves its vision of a society that sustains healthy ecosystems through science-based decision-making.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Leadership

- Work with the board and staff to execute VCE’s mission of advancing the conservation of wildlife across the Americas through research, monitoring, and community engagement.

- Effectively communicate goals and strategies both internally and externally so that all stakeholders – from trustees to major donors and staff – understand their role and responsibility in making the mission a reality.
- Lead and manage a strong, capable team so they are inspired to do exceptional work; be a positive and accessible presence to all who work at VCE.
- Set and model high standards for professionalism, work product, and collegiality, and hold people responsible for maintaining them; support staff in their careers, ensuring people have opportunities for professional development that enhance their growth and their work.
- Ensure staff members understand how their specific roles contribute to the overarching mission and purpose of the organization, evolving the organizational structure as needed to allow for greater efficiency, increased communication, and a higher level of integration.
- Build upon and continue to realize VCE’s diversity, equity, and inclusion [statement](#), so that VCE fulfills its goal of creating a culture that celebrates diversity, fosters inclusivity, and values dissenting opinions and rigorous examination within its community.

External Relations

- Be the organization’s primary fundraiser, working closely with the board and staff to raise annual and restricted support from individuals, foundations, and competitive research grant agencies.
- Be the face and voice of VCE, working actively to elevate its profile, promote and publicize its programming, and expand appreciation for its mission.
- Work closely with the chair and full board to recruit, retain, and engage board members.
- With warmth and emotional intelligence, become a valued and visible member of the Vermont community and beyond, with the ability to engage with people from a wide array of backgrounds, including funders, collaborating scientists, policy-makers, and community scientists.

QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will be a seasoned, visionary leader with a passion for VCE’s mission and the ability to imagine its future. Specifically, the executive director should have:

- At least five years of experience in leadership roles with significant external and internal responsibilities, and a track record of motivating results-oriented teams and taking an organization through its next stage of growth.
- A degree in natural science is highly preferred, with a strong preference for an advanced degree; demonstrated understanding of what it takes to run a successful research science program is required.
- Extensive experience fundraising with the ability to cultivate relationships and to bring in contributions from all revenue sources.
- Strong written and verbal communication abilities; a persuasive and passionate communication style and listening skills, with the ability to represent VCE’s interests to its diverse constituencies.
- A strong commitment to furthering diversity, equity, access, and inclusion in all forms.
- The ability to be a strategic and inspirational leader for staff, board members, and the community; excellent management and interpersonal skills and experience leading a highly capable staff in ways that emphasize collaboration and teamwork.
- Capacity for bold, innovative thinking and visioning; a willingness to change established ways of working and promoting VCE’s mission.
- Demonstrated passion for the outdoors and natural history, and interest in sharing that passion with others.
- Emotional intelligence, a warm and genuine personality, and the ability to engage board members and manage board development. Humor and empathy; a sense of fun and camaraderie.

COMPENSATION

- Competitive compensation package, including a strong benefits package and a salary range commensurate with experience.
- Generous relocation allowance if needed.

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