



Michelle Whiting & Associates
Executive Search, Development Strategies, Foundation Relations,
And Organizational Advancement for the Nonprofit Sector

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA

BOLSA CHICA CONSERVANCY MISSION & ORGANIZATION

The Bolsa Chica Conservancy (the Conservancy) is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to conserving the Bolsa Chica Wetlands in Huntington Beach, California. It was established in 1990 by a coalition of government, community, business, and environmental leaders with the mission of providing services that inspire and connect all generations through community involvement and leadership in hands-on restoration and education in wetland science, watersheds, coastal ecology, and environmental sustainability.

With the 1972 passage of the California Coastal Act, it was determined that a viable wetland existed and originally 310 acres were established as the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve. In 1997, under a state and federal interagency agreement, 880 acres of the remaining lowland portions of Bolsa Chica were purchased by the State of California. At 1,449 acres, the Bolsa Chica Wetlands is the largest saltwater marsh between Monterey Bay and the Tijuana River Estuary.

Today, the Conservancy serves as an important ecological reserve and outreach center in the highly urbanized Southern California region. It operates from a temporary modular facility on the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve, offering science-based and standards-aligned classes and guided tours, educational exhibits and displays, research, restoration of degraded wetland and upland habitats, and propagation of native plants for use in restoration projects. In 2018, the Conservancy served nearly 56,000 people of all ages through both its onsite programs as well as across Southern California through its mobile educational van Windows to our Wetlands."

Within the next 36-48 months, the Conservancy will embark on a \$20M building campaign to establish the Center for Coastal Ecology to be located in the nearby Harriett Weider Regional Park. The Center will serve as a regional hub regional hub for science-based learning on coastal ecology, wetland science, conservation planning and environmental sustainability.

THE ROLE OF THE CEO

Bolsa Chica Conservancy (the Conservancy) seeks an energetic, creative, and experienced nonprofit professional with a strong background in fundraising success. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will have overall strategic and operational responsibility for Conservancy's staff, programs, expansion, and



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execution of its mission. S/he will possess and continually develop deep knowledge of the field, core programs, the recently adopted Leadership Vision, fund development strategies, operations, and strategic plans. The CEO will act as the Conservancy's ambassador and be the face of the organization to the community at large. The Board envisions the CEO's duties as the following:

Fundraising and Resource Development (80% position focus)

- Partner with and support the Board and future campaign leadership in advancing fundraising goals. Work closely with the Board to inspire greater participation in development efforts while capitalizing on board member's resources, talents, and networks.
- Create and implement a strategic and systematic fundraising plan for individual and institutional giving. Lead and participate in the solicitation efforts of targeted individuals and institutions. Exercise diplomatic persistence in the cultivation of donors. Demonstrate the ability to close the deal.
- Review and enhance the capacity of the staff and infrastructure to achieve development goals. Create a Bolsa Chica Conservancy where all staff, board, and volunteers serve as fundraisers.
- Implement creative ways of packaging and marketing the Conservancy's programs to targeted philanthropic supporters, as well as to the general public in an effort to broaden visibility and grow the number of participating students, visitors, and volunteers annually.
- Monitor key fundraising trends and issues and communicate their implications to the Board with suggested actions.
- Assume the critical role of strengthening current funding from private sources and be relentless in developing new and more diverse sources of revenue emphasizing major gifts.
- Engender the trust and confidence of the Board, the Executive Team, staff, donors and Bolsa Chica Conservancy volunteers and supporters.

Administration: Leadership, Planning & Growth (20% position focus)

- Maintain high levels of employee morale and volunteer engagement; foster a spirit of teamwork among staff, volunteers and other stakeholders; strengthen internal communications and decision-making; and ensure accountability for results throughout the organization.



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- Promote, discipline, and terminate staff in accordance with legal requirements and Board policy. Evaluate staff performance as needed but at least annually in writing.
- Provide solid financial management skills with the ability to oversee the financial health of the organization and ensure that contributed income meets budget projections.
- Oversee preparation and submit for approval annual operating budgets. Monitor and authorize expenditures in accordance with approved budget; oversee preparation of updated projections based on actual income and expense activity.
- Provide oversight and partnership to the COO in ensuring ongoing local programmatic excellence, rigorous program evaluation, and consistent quality of finance and administration, and systems.
- Be an external local and statewide presence, communicating program results with an emphasis on the successes of the Conservancy's programs as models for regional, statewide, and national recognition, funding, and replication.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE AND CHARACTERISTICS

The CEO should have the following experience and qualifications:

- Accomplished leadership experience with a nonprofit organization achieving fundraising goals in a senior executive role.
- A record of success in raising major gifts from individuals and institutions and a broad-based knowledge of various development activities including relationship-based philanthropy, annual fund, campaigns, event sponsorship, planned giving and social media.
- An understanding and interest in environmental issues.
- Strong knowledge of key philanthropic trends and top-level contacts with major local and regional funding sources.
- Strong familiarity of the Orange County and Southern California business, social, and philanthropic communities.
- Experience working closely and effectively with board members as a strategic partner.
- Excellent human relations skills, persuasive writing and presentation skills, exceptional judgment and maturity.



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FINANCIAL TARGETS

The targeted budget for the current fiscal year is \$800,000, raised exclusively from contributed income. The goal is to double this amount over the next 24-30 months.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The CEO reports to the Bolsa Chica Conservancy Board Chair. The CEO will directly supervise and manage the Chief Operating Officer (COO), and indirectly oversee seven full-and part-time positions including operations, program and education staff.

EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE and CAREER PATH

A minimum of a bachelor's degree is required (though a master's degree or higher is preferred.) While previous experience with an environmental nonprofit is desirable, it is not mandatory. However, the CEO should have an appreciation of the coastal environment, ecology, and wildlife. The ideal candidate has seven to ten years of strong fundraising leadership experience in the nonprofit sector.

COMPENSATION

Bolsa Chica Conservancy offers a competitive salary based on the candidate's experience and qualifications, along with a negotiated bonus based on exceeding goals for new funding. The overall compensation package includes majority employer paid health insurance, two weeks paid vacation with three weeks after two years, nationally recognized holidays (the Conservancy does host a July 4th event), plus a 1% retirement match based on pre-tax annual salary.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Bolsa Chica Conservancy requires the following electronic submission to begin the application process:

- 1.) A cover letter - All candidates are strongly encouraged to develop a thoughtful cover letter that describes how their qualifications and experiences fully intersect with Bolsa Chica Conservancy's needs.
- 2.) Resume/CV
- 3.) Compensation requirements

All three attachments must be received; incomplete applications will not be considered. All materials may be submitted to: Michelle@MichelleWhitingandAssociates.com. No phone calls to the Conservancy offices or personnel please.

Bolsa Chica Conservancy is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer and actively and enthusiastically seeks a diverse pool of candidates.