



CARLSONBECK

EXECUTIVE SEARCH FOR PHILANTHROPY & NONPROFITS

Position Specification



Executive Director

26 February 2024, vF



Carlson Beck advises **ReFED** on the basis of an exclusive consulting assignment. The following details are for your information and should be shared with discretion.



POSITION SPECIFICATION

THE POSITION: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

REPORTS TO: PRESIDENT

LOCATION: FULLY REMOTE

A compelling leadership opportunity with a leader in sustainability.

The President, supported by the Board of Trustees of ReFED, is seeking an experienced senior executive with operational leadership expertise to serve as **Executive Director** for this nonprofit organization addressing the food waste challenge.

Overview

ReFED is the nation's leading nonprofit entirely dedicated to reducing the amount of food that goes to waste across the food system. Starting with the 2016 Roadmap to Reduce U.S. Food Waste, ReFED has produced first-of-their-kind tools and resources and delivered actionable evidence and insights. It acts as a hub and connector in the space, convening the largest annual conference and hosting networks of funders and practitioners. It also seeds and accelerates solutions through work across the food system with investors, foundations, food companies, organizations providing solutions, and more. Partners have included Walmart, Kroger, Google, Sodexo, Compass, Harvard, WWF, and many others. As food waste reduction has emerged as a key climate solution, ReFED is beginning to focus more of its work on that climate-food waste intersection as well.

Considered the pre-eminent leader on the topic of food waste, ReFED has steadily grown since its inception. The organization is led by Dana Gunders, a national expert on food waste and one of the first subject matter experts to bring to light just how much food is lost throughout the food system. A Steering Committee and Board member since 2014, Dana became Executive Director in 2019; her title was recently changed to President.

Structure and Operations

ReFED is overseen by a Board of ten Directors. The team is comprised of 20 staff in the areas of capital and innovation, data and insights, communications, development, and administration. With current hiring plans, the organization will have 30 staff by the end of this year. Four senior staff will report to the Executive Director, including those leading Operations and Finance, Communications, and some or all of Programs.

At present, ReFED has an annual operating budget of \$8.4 million, bolstered by the recent \$15 million in grant funding -- \$5 million a year for the next three years -- from the Ballmer Group. The intent of the funding is to sustain and build programs to further achieve ReFED's impact.



THE POSITION

The Executive Director (“ED”) as currently being specified is a **new position** at ReFED, created to advance management excellence of the organization’s administration and operations to keep pace with the exciting growth. As a result of recent rapid growth, a significant increase in funding, and the organization’s evolutionary trajectory, building the infrastructure for the organization, and its departments and functional areas, is required.

ReFED is at an inflection point that requires operational and administrative expertise to adapt to and further prepare to expand its reach and impact. The successful executive candidate will have the opportunity to take this financially strong and highly regarded organization to the next level of performance and scale.

As ReFED continues its growth and impact, the Executive Director will play a key role by serving as a business leader providing organizational leadership to execute the strategic plan and ensure operational excellence. The Executive Director will be a trusted member of the leadership team with direct oversight of administration, operations, and programs as well as a contributor to the strategic vision, strategic plan, and external activities of ReFED.

Essential Functions and Responsibilities

- **Programs** – Oversee programmatic areas and lead program support, ensuring that operational and administrative processes optimize programmatic deliverables and services.
- **Strategic executive leadership** – Provide organizational leadership; oversee execution of strategic plan and annual objectives; identify complex issues and break down into structured frameworks to prepare for continued growth; create and implement a roadmap to provide best practices in operations, systems, structure, and resources; manage staff support for the Board and serve as key Board-Staff Liaison.
- **Operations leadership and management** – Strategic and tactical leadership and management of organizational operations; identify and implement efficiencies in operational areas; optimize processes and introduce systems and, when appropriate, automate repetitive tasks to achieve greater efficiencies.
- **Organizational administration** – Oversight of administrative functions including finance and human resources; manage an appropriate system of policies, internal controls, and assurance of high-quality organizational outputs; ensure effective internal communications throughout the organization; introduce systems and use of technology whenever possible to ease administrative burden to staff.
- **Communications** – Bring strategy, structure, and efficiency to external communications.
- **People and culture management** – Oversee recruitment and professional development of staff; provide guidance, support, productivity accountability and professional training.
- **Fundraising/development** – Participate in fundraising opportunities in a support role while learning the donors, structure of fundraising, dollar mix of revenue, and other important aspects of the organization’s funding.

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS / EXPERIENCE

- Experience as a nonprofit or for-profit leader with knowledge, expertise, and experience in a leadership role in **scaling and growing** an organization.
- A background that includes leadership in an organization **in transition**.

- **Minimum of ten years** of experience leading and managing a diverse, high caliber, and highly collaborative team, including some **operational or administrative components**.
- Demonstrated **track record of managing** organizational culture change, especially in organizations with a diverse staff (age, gender, race, ethnicity, geography) and a hybrid work style.
- A **passion for ReFED's mission**, and aligned values with the institution, is essential; however, previous food systems experience is not required.
- Minimum of significant exposure to the nonprofit environment and sector via Board participation, if not employment.
- **Fluency in nonprofit finance, compliance, and legal matters** strongly preferred.
- **Strong background in Human Resources with DEI** experience strongly preferred.

Education

Undergraduate degree in relevant field required; advanced degree highly preferred. **Well-qualified candidates with equivalent experience will be considered.**


COMPETENCIES / ATTRIBUTES

The successful candidate will **be**:

- **Passionate** about ReFED's mission and vision.
- Effective at **managing up, down, and across** the organization; empowering staff while upholding appropriate accountability. **Adaptable, accessible, flexible, inclusive, and collaborative** with colleagues. Equally comfortable with high level strategy and in-the-weeds execution.
- **Leader in style and practice**, inspiring adherence to a standard of excellence and to professional best practices and protocols.
- **Decisive** – able to make both decisions that are complex, as well as decisions based on limited information. Able to discern when **autonomy is necessary** and when **intervention is required, administratively savvy and adept**.
- An **excellent communicator** both internally and externally – clear, transparent, inspirational, compelling. Direct, candid, honest and well versed in constructive conflict resolution. Intellectually curious, an active listener.
- Appreciative of and adept at working on issues of **diversity, equity, and inclusion**.
- **A natural problem solver** and **solution seeker** when confronted by challenges or obstacles.
- **Confident and mature** with **high emotional intelligence (“EQ”)** who can work well with diverse internal colleagues and a variety of stakeholders.
- A strategic **risk taker** and **self-starter**, able to take the initiative in moving the work forward.
- **Science and data** driven, valuing and respecting “the numbers.”
- **Respectful** of ReFED's history and track record for high quality work while engendering future success via **creativity, innovation, and patience**.

The successful candidate will **possess**:

- The ability to forge **strong working relationships** internally and externally, able to quickly **develop trusting relationships** across the organization, one who is viewed as a **dependable thought partner**.
- **Exceptional operational**, analytic, and problem-solving skills, and therefore excellent operational and systems knowledge.
- A **growth mindset** as well as the intelligence, intellectual range, and compassion necessary to be successful in a strategic leadership role. These qualities should come with varied and wise experience managing organizational growth and scale.

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- **People management** experience promoting staff members' best performance, knowledge of management best practices, and awareness of professional development resources.
 - Strategic listening **skills coupled with the ability to make decisions.**
 - **Social and managerial skills** to build a team, work across the organization, motivate staff and collaborate with colleagues.
 - Highly developed **interpersonal skills**; ability to foster cooperation and support among staff without direct authority; well developed “soft influence” powers.
 - **Advanced organizational skills** and attention to detail; ability to prioritize work effectively and adjust to multiple demands.

It is not necessary to meet all the criteria above to apply and be considered for this critical position.

COMPENSATION

A minimum annual salary of **\$200K** will be offered, commensurate with experience, comprehensive benefits, and Paid Time Off (PTO) package.

HOW TO APPLY

To initiate consideration for this opportunity, **please submit a resume and cover letter**, speaking to your qualifications as per this Position Specification, to the Carlson Beck representatives below.

For additional information regarding this opportunity, please contact:

Sally Carlson, *Managing Partner*
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sally@carlsonbeck.com

Claire LeTard, *Principal*
985.773.3326 direct
claire@carlsonbeck.com