Acumen Partners with Lan Su Chinese Garden

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Celebrating 13 years of excellence, Acumen is the premiere boutique, woman-owned Executive Search firm in the Pacific Northwest with global clientele. We work holistically and strategically with our clients to understand their business and culture to facilitate talent who can solve meaningful problems.

ORGANIZATIONAL SUMMARY

Opened to the public in 2000, the Lan Su Chinese Garden Society is a 501(c)3 organization located in Portland, Oregon, whose mission is to cultivate an oasis of tranquil beauty and harmony to inspire, engage, and educate our global community in the appreciation of a richly authentic Chinese culture. The Gardens represent a major tourist and cultural attraction visited by 175,000 guests from all over the world.

A one-of-a-kind, cultural, horticultural, architectural, and artistic gem, the Garden is a partnership between the City of Portland, the Lan Su Chinese Garden Society, the Classical Chinese Garden Trust and the City of Suzhou, China. The walled urban garden includes a gift shop and teahouse which pairs the beauty of and symbolism of the Garden with Chinese tea culture. The Garden is the first full-size Suzhou-style garden in the United States. The Garden is within walking distance to the riverfront, the Oregon Convention Center, the Rose Garden Arena, Saturday Market and downtown Portland.

Recognized as a cornerstone of cultural and civic expression in Portland, the Garden provides innovative programs and services to educators, youth and the general public. The Garden has exciting initiatives in store to include an exciting strategic expansion which promises to energize and revitalize this historic area.

For more information about the Garden, visit: https://lansugarden.org/. The Lan Su Chinese Garden is an equal opportunity employer.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Lan Su Chinese Garden is celebrating its 20th anniversary and is seeking a dynamic and experienced leader to serve as the new Executive Director (ED) to usher in the next 20 years with exciting and groundbreaking initiatives in store. The Lan Su Garden has bright and exciting expansion plans ahead with the development of a new Cultural Center next door.

The ED is the key management leader of the Garden. Under the direction and guidance of the Board of Directors, s/he is responsible for staff, operational administration, programs, community partnerships, strategic expansion, and execution of its mission. This position is responsible for ensuring that resources are in place to accomplish important mission goals; ensuring that both staff and volunteer teams are engaged and aligned to exceed expectations and building the kind of organizational culture which supports the mission.

Additionally, this position has primary responsibility to execute key strategic plan growth initiatives under the direction, and with the assistance of the Board of Directors. Working closely with the fundraising and development team, this position is the liaison to the community.
The ED shall also evangelize the mission of the Garden, while identifying and building sustaining relationships with businesses and public partners to further strategic goals. Other key duties will include the oversight of governance, fundraising, marketing, and community outreach. The position reports directly to the Board of Directors.

Compensation – $90-$120K commensurate with experience with potential for bonus based on goal achievement. Compensation package to include full suite of benefits.

**PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Leadership & Management**

- Demonstrates a passion for the mission of The Garden and a commitment to remaining focused on the goals of a growing arts and culture institution for the greater community while establishing strong relationships with staff, volunteers, and partners.
- Oversees effective day to day operational responsibilities of running a mid-sized, complex 20-year old cultural attraction – Staff, garden, facilities, programming, community outreach, etc.
- Oversees all Garden professional and volunteer relationships in support of organization events, major/planned gift fundraising activities, and programming.
- Responsible for the hiring, development, mentorship and retention of competent, qualified and engaged staff.
- Develops and motivates the professional management team.
- Builds culture of collaboration and communication across all functions and aligns team around shared vision for the Garden.
- Manages and oversees The Garden Management team’s budgets and ensures financially viable, sustainable organization with the resources to meet current and projected growth.
- Serves as the public ambassador for The Garden in the community with the stakeholders.
- Coordinates work with the Board, the Board’s committees, and partner organizations.

**Fundraising & Financial Management**

- Together with the Development Director, develops and manages the fundraising strategies of the Garden.
- Works together to identify, cultivate and solicit major and planned gifts, and relationships with foundations, corporations, individuals and community organizations.
- Monitors the relationship between fundraising activities and financial management activities to ensure resources are sufficiently developed to ensure strategic initiatives are adequately funded.
- Develops opportunities to expand membership and garden visitation

**Strategic Planning and Board Governance**

- Develops and implements the organization’s Strategic Plan and annual action plans in conjunction with the Board.
- Fosters Board Alignment in harmony with The Garden’s mission and vision.
- Manages the Board’s expectations, timelines, and the execution of action items.
- Establishes working committees that include Board members and staff.
• Communicates effectively with the Board and providing, in a timely and accurate manner, all information necessary for the Board to function properly and to make informed decisions.
• Informs the Board regularly of internal and external organizational matters, including relevant staffing, funding and program success and priorities.
• Works with board and staff to ensure that the organization’s mission and strategy is fulfilled through its programs, strategic planning and community outreach.

Community Outreach

• Acts as an evangelist in the community in promotion of the mission, vision, and services of The Garden through public presentations and by attending relevant business events, conferences and gatherings.
• Develops effective working relationships within the community (to include the arts community neighborhood community, local elected officials, Portland Parks and Rec, and sister gardens globally) to ensure that the Garden is represented in the community-at-large and for the constituency that the Garden services.
• Advocacy – Serves as an ambassador for the Garden in the community; articulates and communicates the value of the Garden in improving wellness and quality of life – and promotes community support of the Garden.

WHAT IS ON THE HORIZON FOR THE GARDEN

• Works with the Board Real Estate Committee on Block 24, with a cultural, community, and events center that plans to drive an exciting revitalization of the “Old Town/Chinatown” neighborhood.
• Relocation of the Garden’s headquarters to the new/proposed building.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

• College graduate with at least 5-7 years of general management and direct team leadership experience.
• Experience and expertise in running the day to day operations of a small to mid-sized, complex organization.
• Prior experience leading a successful nonprofit is a plus. Experience at the President, Executive Director, Managing Director, or COO level preferred.
• Master’s degree in a relevant field is a plus.
• Proven track record of overseeing successful fundraising including capital campaigns, securing corporate sponsorships, and/or grant-writing a plus.
• Outstanding written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills.
• Strong planning, organizational and analytical skills.
• A strong leader with the ability to positively align, develop, and motivate Board, staff, and volunteers and build consensus.
• Visionary and innovative thinker.
• Understanding of Chinese cultural traditions preferred, but not required.
• A “diplomat” – effectively engaging large groups of stakeholders across functions, organizations, and cultures.
• Ability to identify and share other non-profit best practices to help advance and expand this relatively young organization in its mission.
KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS OR ABILITIES

- Experience at change leadership and change management; commitment to results; ‘can-do’ mindset with emphasis on accountability.
- Strong organizational abilities including planning, delegating, program development and task facilitation – can build a consensus and bring people together around shared goals.
- Skills to collaborate with and motivate board members, staff, volunteers, and donors.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills; a persuasive and passionate communicator with excellent interpersonal and multidisciplinary project skills.
- Demonstrated ability to lead, motivate, mentor and collaborate with staff to ensure a highly engaged workforce.
- Ability to convey a vision of The Garden’s strategic future to staff, board, volunteers and donors.
- Passion, idealism, sense of humor, integrity, positive attitude, mission-driven, and self-directed abilities.
- Action-oriented, entrepreneurial, adaptable, and innovative approach to business planning.

Procedure for Applying

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Keywords: Executive Director, ED, Managing Director, COO, President, nonprofit, strategic planning, operations, fundraising, development, capital campaign, leadership, programs, programming, events, visionary, Board development, community outreach, budgeting, financial management, PR, public relations, arts, culture, 501c3, capital campaigns, grants, corporate sponsorship, philanthropy, community relations, project management

- JOB DESCRIPTION

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Master's degree in a relevant field is a plus.
Proven track record of overseeing successful fundraising including capital campaigns, securing corporate sponsorships, and/or grant-writing a plus.
Outstanding written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills.
Strong planning, organizational and analytical skills.
A strong leader with the ability to positively align, develop, and motivate Board, staff, and volunteers and build consensus.
Visionary and innovative thinker.
Understanding of Chinese cultural traditions preferred, but not required.
A “diplomat” – effectively engaging large groups of stakeholders across functions, organizations, and cultures.
• Ability to identify and share other non-profit best practices to help advance and expand this relatively young organization in its mission.

**KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS OR ABILITIES**

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• Ability to convey a vision of The Garden's strategic future to staff, board, volunteers and donors.
• Passion, idealism, sense of humor, integrity, positive attitude, mission-driven, and self-directed abilities.
• Action-oriented, entrepreneurial, adaptable, and innovative approach to business planning.

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