



Director of Philanthropy

AERO is hiring a Director of Philanthropy to lead the fundraising efforts of our organization as we celebrate our 50th anniversary and embark on a 10-year strategic initiative to grow a resilient and reliable Montana food system for all Montanans. This is a chance to help take our legacy organization to the next level as we draw in a broader, more diverse public into vital conversations and collaborative engagement focused on stewarding Montana-grown, health-giving food resources for the future health and well-being of Montana's citizens, families, and communities.

The Director of Philanthropy is a key member of the organization's leadership, overseeing all the fundraising activities that support programming in our three focus areas of (1) building consumer demand for MT-grown foods; (2) building MT market channels for MT producers, and (3) building community knowledge, resources, and networks. The position works closely with the Executive Director and Board of Directors Fundraising Task Force, creates and implements the annual Development plan in collaboration with the Executive Director, collaborates with the organization's leadership, and keeps the staff and board abreast of, and engaged in, fundraising efforts.

The ideal candidate is a highly autonomous and high performing individual with proven experience in supervising and leading teams to success; thorough understanding of a wide range of fundraising techniques; deep regard for the Montana values of stewardship, reciprocity, and kindness; an appreciation for the value of strong, food- and nutrition-secure communities; and experience advancing justice, equity, diversity and inclusion within fundraising principles.

About the Job

The Director of Philanthropy works under the direct supervision of the Executive Director. This is a remote working position within the state of Montana.

While we are a legacy organization, implementing our strategic initiative has elements in common with that of a start-up company, and our culture is one of test-and-iterate. An affinity for and comfort with change, creativity, joint problem-solving, agility, and experimentation is a must for a successful team member.

AERO is working to address a historic lack of representation, inclusion and equity in the food system sector with effective solutions. We welcome applicants from all life experiences and encourage members of traditionally underrepresented backgrounds to apply, including Indigenous people, people of color, women, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ people, two spirit, and non-binary people.

Job Responsibilities:

- Works closely with the Executive Director and Board of Directors Fundraising Task Force to set philanthropic scope and direction, and to foster an atmosphere of collaboration, innovation and belonging
- Develops and implements annual fundraising work plan and sets strategic development 1-YR, 3-YR and 10-YR goals for the organization, including annual campaigns, major gifts, grants, monthly giving, planned giving, and special initiatives and campaigns
- Solicits and secure gifts, both independently and with the Fundraising Task Force and Executive Director, ensuring that specific, measurable operations and special projects goals outlined in the annual Development plan and strategic development 1-YR, 3-YR and 10-YR goals are met
- Manages philanthropic funding grant portfolio, including research of new grant opportunities, grant writing, and grant reporting
- Develops strategies to build a funder community that reflects the diversity of the communities AERO serves, and sets Development Team goals for advancing justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI)
- Builds and manages the Development Team budget, ensuring that expenditure is effectively controlled and revenue goals are met
- Manages any Development Team support staff, including hiring, training, setting individual performance goals and providing ongoing review and feedback that is fair and consistent, and in alignment with AERO's policies and practices
- Oversees relationships with key external contractors including grant writers, direct mail/campaign marketers, CRM consultants, event planner consultants, and others as appropriate
- Collaborates with the Board of Directors and the organization's other Team Directors in regular, recurring sessions, supporting the design and sustainable, effective implementation of the organization's 1-YR, 3-YR and 10-YR goals in alignment with the organization's mission and core values, and reporting on the Development Team's activities and progress
- Oversees direction of fundraising-related mailings, email and social media appeals, digital and print ads, online donation pages, fact sheets and acknowledgement letters, working collaboratively with the Executive Director and the Marketing and Communications Team
- Represents AERO's mission, vision, strategic initiative and commitment to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion to AERO and Abundant Montana's community of readers, allies, members, community partners, funders, and other stakeholders
- Manages a portfolio of major donors and cultivates relationships through personal correspondence and visits, both alone and with the Executive Director, board members, and AERO/Abundant Montana staff members as appropriate

- Guides the fundraising activities of the Executive Director
- Supports the Board Development Task Force in cultivating donor relationships with board members, and soliciting them for annual gifts
- Maintains Development Team handbook detailing practices, workflows and gift acceptance guidelines, with input and collaboration from the Development Team and Board Development Task Force
- Ensures that AERO's donor records and data tracking are accurate and up to date, and ensures timely and appropriate donor acknowledgment
- Develops and implements a donor retention strategy
- Works in partnership with team members and contractors to oversee donor event planning
- Works with AERO's program teams to ensure program information for donor and foundation pitches and reports is clear and in alignment with program requirements
- Ensures that AERO's nonprofit listings and registrations are up to date

Skills Required:

We're most interested in hearing how your own skills, broader experience, and qualifications would enhance the Director of Philanthropy role and benefit AERO and the communities we currently serve and anticipate serving moving forward. We're looking for someone who is passionate about our mission and [values](#) (Vision-Holders, Greater Together, Compassionate, Accountable, Imaginative Pragmatists, Agile, and Playful), and who is driven to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion in Montana's food system sector and in working practices and company cultures.

The ideal candidate has exceptional written and verbal communication skills; is comfortable with public speaking and representing the organization as needed with the media and in public presentations; excels in engaging diverse internal and external audiences, including staff and board members, and new and longtime supporters; has strong organizational skills and the ability to monitor and control budgets; and has thorough knowledge of a wide range of fundraising techniques.

Professional skills, competencies and experience that align with our ideal candidate include:

- At least 5 years fundraising and senior management experience
- Proven track record for cultivating donor relationships
- Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail
- Always a team player; lifts everyone around them
- Adapts well to change
- Never stops learning
- A bachelor's degree or experience equivalent in nonprofit, public or business administration

Compensation, Benefits and General Terms:

- Full-time, exempt position, with base salary of \$56,000 - \$60,000, based on experience
- 4-day, 32-hour work week Monday-Thursday; no internal meetings on Fridays
- Remote work environment, with twice annual in-person staff retreats and annual company conference
- Employer funded medical, dental, and vision health care benefits
- Unlimited paid time off
- Remote work stipend
- Eligible for company-sponsored retirement plan with employer match contribution after 2 years employment

To Apply

To apply, please email a resume, cover letter, two (2) writing examples (***see instructions below*), and three (3) references to rkelson@aeromt.org with the subject line "Director of Philanthropy Application." Please ensure your cover letter includes any personal experience or qualifications you may have, and how you'd advance justice, equity, diversity and inclusion through the work. In your email, please let us know how you heard about the position.

****Writing samples instructions:** We've found that it's helpful to look at actual work samples to get a better sense of your written communication skills and style. Please share two (2) pieces of your writing that will help to give us that sense. One should be a mass appeal to a membership base asking for financial support, and one should be a letter to an individual donor or funder making a case for support. We'll keep anything that you share with us confidential. Please redact names or other details to keep information private.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis beginning April 22.

Ideal start date is May 15, 2024.

AERO is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion among our staff, volunteers, programs, and partners; and to creating a safe, supportive and accommodating work community. We are an equal opportunity employer and prohibit the unlawful discrimination against applicants or employees based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, marital status, gender identity or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law.

BACKGROUND

Founded in 1974 as a statewide grassroots organization, AERO (Alternative Energy Resources Organization) has been working at the intersection of alternative energy, sustainable/stewardship agriculture, and community food systems to promote a more sustainable Montana for all for 50 years. Our niche is bridging knowledge gaps for enduring community impact through solution-driven education. [Learn about our strategic initiative here.](#)

Abundant Montana, our flagship program, is the go-to resource for local food in the state. Using a revenue-driven product and services model, Abundant Montana is growing a more resilient and reliable Montana food system through multi-media campaigns that educate Montana individuals and institutions about the value of Montana-grown food and where to find it, and providing media promotion, marketing technical assistance, and business-to-business connection support for Montana food and farming businesses to increase their in-state sales channels.