



Director of Development Position Description

About Aquidneck Land Trust (ALT)

Founded in 1990, the Aquidneck Land Trust (ALT) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization operating in Newport County, Rhode Island. Aquidneck Land Trust's mission is to preserve and steward Aquidneck Island's open spaces for the lasting benefit of the community, while connecting people with the land that defines the island's natural character. ALT has a service area of three towns (Newport, Middletown, and Portsmouth), covering approximately 25,000 acres on Aquidneck Island. We work to connect people to nature, protect our drinking and coastal waters, preserve farmland and support local agriculture, provide places to play for the community, and work to make our island more resilient to climate change.

ALT has conserved 2730 acres across 92 properties and manages over 13 miles of free hiking trails. We've conserved all types of lands including active farms, city parks, undisturbed habitat tracts, and cultural estates. A sampling of our outreach programs includes a land-link farm access program, watershed and climate change education programs in local schools, free "Walk and Talks" on our properties, art contests for children, and facilitating a local small grant program for grassroots organizations. ALT also collaborates with all the municipalities and the many non-profits working in the area to broaden our impact.

Aquidneck Land Trust has a staff of 8 (7 FTEs / 1 PTE) working from an office in Middletown. ALT is proud of its long record of strong fiscal management and institutional integrity, both of which have enabled it to seek and receive public, private, and foundational support for thirty-two years, as well as receive accreditation with the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission. **For more information about the organization, see www.ailt.org.**

About Strike Fund I and Strike Fund II

After recognizing the need to accelerate the pace of its land conservation efforts in 2018, ALT began to lay the groundwork for a Strike Fund campaign with the goal of raising \$9 million to conserve key properties. These properties were identified via a thorough land evaluation process, scoring every parcel of open space over a certain minimum size for its inherent conservation values. Each parcel was run through a GIS-based scoring criteria and given a relative score. A non-spatial criteria was applied to obtain a final conservation score.

The top 43 properties became the Strike Fund list of parcels. Over a three-year period, and with great thanks to the van Beuren Charitable Foundation, ALT met its goal of raising \$9M in gifts and pledges from nearly 90 individuals and foundations. Since December 2020, ALT has conserved or has under agreement 11 Strike Fund properties totaling 161.4 acres, thanks to the power of the Strike Fund. (Five additional non-Strike Fund properties have closed or are under agreement, totaling 40.31 acres.) The Fund changed the way ALT does business; we could compete head-to-head with developers, could close quickly when landowners required it, and could – and did! – engage in multiple deals at once. The Strike Fund was an unqualified success.

Since the campaign began, the world has changed. Local property values have skyrocketed due to increased demand caused by the world pandemic, low interest rates, and an increase in the purchase of second homes. Our timeline to conserve the remaining Strike Fund properties has contracted. With our fundraising infrastructure already in place, and with a group of staff and volunteers who are committed to repeating the success of Strike Fund I, we are ready to embark on Strike Fund II.

Strike Fund II targets the list of remaining priority parcels from the original top 43 properties. Based on the fundraising success of Strike Fund I, and continued donor interest and landowner engagement, we believe that ALT is well-positioned to raise an additional \$30M over five years.

Conservation and preservation goals to be realized through the Strike Fund II campaign are a major feature of the ALT's recently completed strategic plan.

About Aquidneck Island

Aquidneck Island, Rhode Island, home to Middletown, Newport, and Portsmouth is approximately 35 miles south of Providence, the state capital. T.F. Green Airport is centrally located about 25 miles from Newport and easily accessible to many hubs around the country. The island is comprised of about 24,000 acres and boasts magnificent coastlines, beautiful agricultural farm lands and luscious forested land in addition to many residential areas in each of the three communities. Aquidneck Island, with a population of about 60,000, (and nearly 150,000 residents during the good weather season) has many points of interest for people of all ages. Along the coast, you can find camping, hiking, swimming, sailing, and fishing. You may enjoy restaurants, shopping, and cultural attractions, too. Newport has become home or second home to a very diverse and cosmopolitan population that includes global leaders in technology, finance, culture and the arts. Over the last few years, for example, the public record shows that Larry Ellison, Judge Judy, Jay Leno and Steve Schwarzman have bought homes on Aquidneck Island. Much of the history of Rhode Island, founded in 1639 as a haven of religious freedom, has been carefully preserved, featuring the greatest number of Colonial era homes still used as private residences, Gilded Age mansions, and historic religious institutions. When you are on our beautiful island, it is inevitable that you will find yourself getting lost in the richness of what it has to offer.

In 2021, Conde Nast Traveller named Newport a top 10 small city in America:

<https://www.thenewportbuzz.com/newport-named-a-top-10-small-city-in-america-by-conde-nast-traveler/32467> And, Booking.com named Newport the friendliest place in

America: <https://whatsupnewp.com/2022/08/newport-named-the-friendliest-and-most-welcoming-place-in-america/>

About the Role

Under the direction of the Executive Director and in partnership with the Board of Directors, this position oversees all philanthropic revenue generation for one of the Ocean State's largest land trusts. The Director of Development is responsible for overseeing the cultivation, solicitation and stewardship of ALT's dedicated donor community. The Director of Development has overall responsibility for the \$30M+ Strike Fund II Campaign (raising approximately \$20M in individual, foundation and corporate support and \$10M in government grants) and future capital ventures, as well as all of the organization's annual fundraising programs and operations. The successful candidate will help forge new relationships to build ALT's visibility, impact, and financial resources. S/he will increase revenue through the solicitation of major, leadership, and planned gifts. S/he will expand ALT's leadership donor community, as well as donors at all levels who believe in ALT's mission and vision. The Director of Development will leverage the philanthropic potential for the organization, attracting support from individuals/families, corporations, and foundations. The successful candidate will report to and work closely with the Executive Director, as well as dedicated Board leadership and other senior staff members, to secure funding as well as organizational success in achieving its strategic objectives. This position leads a team consisting of newly created Assistant Director of Development and Development Associate positions. The Director of Development also works closely with the Communications and Outreach Manager to support the organization's fundraising initiatives and excellent prospect cultivation and donor stewardship. In addition, this position provides staff support to all board-level fundraising committees, as well as the Board Governance Committee.

Core Responsibilities:

- 1. Raise the philanthropic resources necessary to support and grow Aquidneck Land Trust program support and conservation initiatives**
 - a. Manage a portfolio of prospects and donors who have the potential to provide significant charitable gifts to the organization. Cultivate, solicit and close annual, major gift, multi-year and planned gift contributions. Achieve all revenue goals.
 - b. Help the Executive Director identify mission-aligned new funding prospects to support the organization.
 - c. In conjunction with the Executive Director, develop ALT's grant strategy, maintaining regular correspondence with foundations, donors, and board members with a long-term relationship approach.
 - d. Serve as a passionate proponent of the organization and its mission.
 - e. Appropriately represent the organization, its board and staff leadership to donors and prospects.

- 2. Implement a comprehensive fundraising program.**
 - a. Implement fundraising strategies and programs, including a special emphasis on major giving, corporate partnerships, foundation relations initiatives, and deferred and planned giving. that increase the

organization's support from individuals, corporations, foundations and other sources;

- b. Provide leadership, strategic direction, management and coordination for all aspects of the program's development efforts;
- c. Prepare the annual fundraising plan in collaboration with the Executive Director for presentation to the Advancement Committee and the Board of Directors; provide detailed reports about the fundraising progress to the Executive Director and Board of Directors on a regular basis;
- d. Oversee donor stewardship and recognition programs, as well as all annual giving programs;
- e. Develop event strategy and oversee established annual fundraising events and develop plan for event revenue growth and expansion;
- f. Ensure that appropriate systems and procedures are in place to support the program's future fundraising goals;

3. Work collaboratively with volunteer and staff leadership across the island to enhance their fundraising skills and to support their revenue generating efforts.

- a. Partner with the Executive Director in cultivating and training fundraising volunteers to deploy their time and attention to leverage the greatest revenue generating opportunities. Coordinate fundraising efforts of Executive Director, the Advancement Committee of the Board of Directors, and other key fundraising team members;
- b. Work effectively with the Board of Directors and other key volunteers, leveraging their talents, resources and ideas to enhance fundraising activities; understand the Board's giving patterns and desired involvement; enhance board members' ability to identify fundraising opportunities and encourage their ongoing participation as donors and solicitors;
- c. Build strong relationships with staff and Board leadership; understand Aquidneck Land Trust's conservation programs; work collaboratively with program staff to integrate innovative development strategies throughout the program;
- d. Manage the development team. Supervise the Assistant Director of Development and Development Associate to ensure team success.
- e. Lead, mentor and inspire staff and volunteers with fundraising responsibilities to excel in their roles. Strategically grow staffing capacity as growth in resources allow. Create working environment that is rewarding to staff and volunteers.
- f. Work seamlessly with the Communications and Outreach Manager to ensure that all ALT communications support and educate stakeholders about the urgency of land conservation by ALT and the many benefits that conserved land brings to the entire island community, now and for posterity. Work with Communications staff to provide frequent updates about important and iconic land parcels lost to development as well as conservation wins for the ALT.
- g. Recruit and motivate community and business volunteers to increase philanthropic attainment.
- h. Under the guidance and leadership of the Executive Director, help lead staff and volunteers to institutionalize philanthropy and fund development within the organization. Foster a culture of philanthropy within the

organization. Assure that the organization's culture, systems and procedures support fund development and vice versa.

4. Serve as a member of Aquidneck Land Trust's senior management team to advance the organization's goals.

- a. First and foremost, assist the Executive Director in maintaining focus on achievement of the organization-wide goals, and building and implementing the comprehensive fundraising program to support achievement of the goals set forth in Aquidneck Land Trust's annual and long-term strategic plan/s.
- b. Provide counsel and guidance to the Executive Director and members of the senior staff team in order to incorporate the development perspective in all other aspects of organizational programming.
- c. Embrace a culture focused on strong vertical and horizontal communication lines throughout the organization.
- d. Serve as a proactive problem solver.
- e. Ensure that philanthropy and fund development are carried out in accordance with the organization's mission, vision and values.
- f. Help establish performance measures, monitor results and help the Executive Director, development committee(s) and board evaluate the effectiveness of the organization's fund development program. Monitor all donor information; provide and present statistical analysis to board and senior leaders as needed.
- g. Provide the Executive Director with assistance with board committee work as necessary and specifically to oversee the Advancement Committee and provide staff support to the Governance Committee to ensure the board is led by a dedicated cadre of volunteer leaders who steward the organization's success and will achieve all of their fundraising responsibilities.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree required, Master's preferred.
- 7-plus years of professional experience in a nonprofit organization; demonstrated success in a development function (creating and managing relationships with multiple donor sources).
- Experience with Salesforce NPSP.
- Demonstrated experience in managing people and budgets
- Demonstrable track record of personally identifying, cultivating, soliciting, and closing individual donors, corporations and foundations
- A record of measurable results in organizing and implementing such activities as: major gifts, capital campaigns, annual funds, corporate and foundation giving, planned giving, direct response and special events
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively with and quickly gain the respect and support of various constituencies, including board and staff members, donors, foundation and civic leaders; experience recruiting, organizing and inspiring volunteers
- Charismatic, enthusiastic, and passionate in approach to advance the organization's mission by building a community of mission-aligned investors

- Creative, resilient and strategic
- A track record as an effective communicator; highly developed skills in writing and speaking; competence at crafting proposals and presentations, donor correspondence and other kinds of materials; receptive and responsive to feedback; the ability to communicate the program's mission and interests to a broad audience
- Ability to give and receive feedback as a tool for growth.
- Flexible and adaptable style; a leader who can positively impact both strategic and tactical fundraising initiatives.
- High energy and passion for Aquidneck Land Trust's mission is essential.
- Strong organizational and time management skills with exceptional attention to detail.
- The ability to work independently and as a team player, to take initiative, and to manage multiple tasks and projects at a time.
- Outstanding customer service skills
- Passion for philanthropy and nonprofit work
- Works well under pressure to meet deadlines

Aquidneck Land Trust is committed to building a diverse, equitable and inclusive culture and community. **Candidates of color, bilingual and bicultural candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.** If you are interested in working at a well-established and supportive organization committed to land conservation, please apply.

Interested candidates should send resume, cover letter and compensation requirements to: Chuck Gordon, President and CEO, New Kensington Group, at chuckgordon1979@gmail.com.