



Position Overview

Executive Director, Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust

The Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust (VMILT) is seeking an entrepreneurial, experienced leader with a broad range of personal and organizational skills to take our organization to new heights. This is a wonderful opportunity for an ambitious individual who would like to make a lasting impact on a bucolic island near Seattle - both for a tightknit community of humans that cares about the future of the planet and for the natural world and the critters that depend on it.

VMILT is a 31-year-old thriving nonprofit organization on Vashon-Maury Island, a distinctive maritime landscape, close to urban centers yet very much apart. A short ferry ride from two major cities (Seattle and Tacoma), VMILT offers an unparalleled quality of life in the heart of Puget Sound, with exceptional outdoor recreational options and a deep array of cultural offerings, including world-class visual and performing arts. Financially sound with exceptional community support, VMILT for three+ decades has worked to preserve the natural habitat and distinctive rural nature of our island home. VMILT's mission: *To conserve land and to protect the natural ecosystems and rural character of Vashon-Maury Island for the benefit of the public and future generations.* To date, VMILT has been instrumental in protecting in perpetuity 2,200 acres (about a tenth of the island), working in conjunction with allied governmental agencies. Our core work is funded by private donations stemming from broad and enthusiastic citizen support, which we leverage to form innovative partnerships with agencies and to tap into significant sources of public support. Our membership and greater community are passionate and protective of the island's rural character, and treasure the trails, forests, wetlands, salmon-bearing streams, shoreline, farmland, and other macro- and micro-environments of our nearly 37-square-mile island home.

VMILT is excited to welcome a new executive director to chart our course and lead us into our next chapter, setting the organization's strategy by working creatively and in partnership with our board; managing our team; ensuring that we have the resources to grow and thrive; and, most of all, sustaining and expanding our impact. Leadership must also seek to cultivate strong relationships with local communities of culture and color, especially our neighbors, The Puyallup Tribe of Indians. We take seriously our work to address and repair historical wrongs. The Land Trust acknowledges that we steward the land of the s^xwəbabš (Swiftwater People), who lived here from time immemorial until they were forcibly removed over one hundred and fifty years ago. Their descendants are now our neighbors in the Tacoma area, The Puyallups. Vashon remains a place of significance to The Puyallup Tribe of Indians who have treaty rights in our waters.

Given the passion of our community, our proximity to urban centers, and the changing world in which we live - particularly as new models to address the climate crisis must be developed - we believe this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for a proven and insightful leader eager to truly make

a difference and contribute to long-term change in a community that cares immensely about the mission of this organization.

Goals and Objectives:

- Lead VMILT in developing and implementing long (and short)-term strategic planning, with the emphasis on sustainability.
- Develop staff in such a way that programmatic leadership has continuity and congruence as VMILT grows and evolves.
- Carry forward a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion at every level of the organization and as VMILT relates to the greater community.

Responsibilities:

VMILT has three major programs, supported by our fundraising and administrative operations: Conservation (land acquisition of ecologically significant land, watershed, and shoreline), Stewardship (including monitoring and maintaining preserved land and trails), and Matsuda Farm (a 12-acre historic farm that VMILT owns and operates). Our staff includes 6 FTEs including the executive director. Reporting to the board of directors, the executive director will:

- Lead VMILT in developing and implementing our strategic plan, with the emphasis on impact and financial sustainability and meaningful relationships with potential partners.
- Develop our staff so that our team evolves and grows as the organization expands.
- Establish and maintain a rewarding work environment for staff and volunteers.
- Actively advocate in word and deed a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice, at every level of the organization and as the land trust relates to the greater community, including our potential tribal partners.
- Ensure that the organization has robust and growing revenue streams, realistic annual budgets regularly updated, and well-managed finances.
- Serve as a spokesperson and public face to the community.

Details include:

Strategy, Program Development, and Administration:

- Guide the development of an innovative strategic plan that achieves our mission and maintains a fiscally sound and growing operation.
- Partner with the board and lead the staff in implementing the strategic plan and meeting its goals.
- Ensure that the board is an effective and diverse body that provides oversight, insight, and foresight as a group and as a set of individuals in support of the organization's mission and objectives.
- Provide leadership in developing programmatic and financial plans with the staff.
- Establish and evolve the organization's plans around diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice as fundamental, central tenets of VMILT, both in our internal and our external work. Implement ways to enter into meaningful partnerships with local, regional, and tribal governments and organizations.
- Maintain official records and documents, and ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.
- Maintain a working knowledge of, and contribute to, significant developments and trends in land conservation, incorporating these into VMILT as relevant.

Staff Development:

- Recruit, develop, and retain a high-performing, diverse staff that embodies the organization's values.
- Establish and maintain a rewarding work environment for staff and volunteers.
- Ensure that clear job descriptions are established, staff receive frequent feedback (both formal and informal), and sound human-resource policies are in place, such that VMILT can attract and retain a talented staff.
- Maintain a strong and growing volunteer program.

Fundraising:

- Oversee and implement ambitious fundraising plans, working with the board and staff to ensure that the organization meets its fundraising goals.
- Maintain and expand innovative partnerships with governmental programs and agencies at the federal, state, and county levels that fund land-acquisition, directing resources to critical island conservation needs.
- Cultivate, secure, steward, and expand our major-gifts program.
- Steward and expand our membership program.
- Steward and expand our foundation fundraising program.
- Maintain an excellent gifts-tracking system, acknowledgements system, and reporting system.

Budget and Finance:

- Prepare our annual budget, partnering with the board and staff in its development and implementation.
- Develop and maintain sound financial practices.
- Conduct official correspondence and execute legal documents, involving the board as appropriate.

Community Relations, Communications, and Marketing:

- Establish strong working relationships with governmental agencies and community groups and organizations, including tribal governments and our counterpart professionals within them.
- Cultivate local media contacts.
- Publicize the activities of VMILT, including our goals, programs, and impact.
- Promote the work of VMILT and relevant policy goals to elected officials at all levels.
- Represent VMILT at public events.
- Develop strategies and language for marketing and fundraising materials, including print and all forms of digital communications.

Required Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree, with advanced degree in relevant field preferred; relevant experience will be considered as equivalent/in lieu of educational credentials.
- Significant executive experience.
- Demonstrated success in leading and directing a consequential enterprise, involving supervision of staff and management of substantial funds.
- Employment and management experience with a conservation organization is a plus.
- Strong track record of organizational management and team development; a love of leading and developing teams.
- Deep fundraising experience.

- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal, and experience with public relations.
- Real-world experience with diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice practices.
- A passion for our mission.
- Understanding and knowledge of Pacific Northwest conservation issues, politics, and policy a plus; same for experience with a land-oriented enterprise.

Attributes sought:

- A genuine and discernible affinity for land conservation.
- Ability to connect with a diverse set of individuals and constituencies.
- Maturity and perspective in problem-solving and conflict resolution.
- Sense of humor and personal warmth.
- Active listening, with a two-way communication style.
- Skill at delegation.
- Respect for accountability and transparency

Compensation is competitive and commensurate with experience.

Application:

To apply, please send a resume and cover letter to maryfran.lyons@vashonlandtrust.org with "Land Trust Executive Directorship Opportunity/Puget Sound" in the subject line. We are looking for a thoughtful, personalized cover letter that displays your qualifications, leadership strengths and passions, and communication style. **Interested parties should respond before February 19, 2021, the sooner the better.** Interviews will begin as soon as qualified candidates are identified.

The Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust's commitment to a diverse, inclusive staff reflects our vision of a just, sustainable world. We do our best work when we embrace differences and thrive when we explore them. We're interested in hearing from people who can work with diverse colleagues of varied experiences. We are committed to equal-employment opportunity regardless of race, color, ancestry, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, age, citizenship, marital status, disability, gender identity, or veteran status.