



Director of Advancement

Organization and Background

Bluegrass Land Conservancy (BLC) is a community-supported, nonprofit, accredited land trust working to protect land in Kentucky's Bluegrass region through permanent conservation easements. We envision a thriving community where land is protected to sustain our identity, economy, and quality of life.

As the first nationally accredited land trust in Kentucky and a top 3 ranked regional land trust in the country, BLC has a 29-year history of mission-driven success and sound fiscal management. BLC has successfully cultivated a strong and wide-reaching group of private, nonprofit, and community partners along with a dedicated donor base that has resulted in the permanent protection and long-term stewardship of tens of thousands of acres of farmland and natural lands for the benefit of future generations.

In 2023 the BLC Board laid out a bold 30-year vision for the future of BLC, which was bolstered by the announcement in late 2023 that BLC was awarded the largest combined grant in the country from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) – totaling \$45.7 million for landowners in Kentucky. In early 2024, BLC was allocated \$4 million from the KY General Assembly in the biennial budget to grow its staff size in order to support the administration of the NRCS program. This projected staff growth be made sustainable through the successful execution of a large-scale comprehensive fundraising campaign, which has been studied and the BLC Board has committed to executing over the next 3-5 years.

This is an exciting opportunity to join an impactful organization that is poised for success!

Objective/Role

Reporting to the Executive Director, the Director of Advancement plays a vital role in the implementation and advancement of Bluegrass Land Conservancy's mission by increasing contributed revenue, partnerships, and community awareness. The Director of Advancement will be responsible for crafting, implementing, maintaining, and growing a comprehensive, diversified, and strategic development and communications effort, in alignment with organizational goals and Land Trust Alliance (LTA) standards and practices.

Desirable Leadership Attributes

A key member of BLC's senior leadership team, the Director of Advancement should be an experienced, enthusiastic individual of high integrity and a passion for the mission, who has demonstrated persistence and his/her/their ability to be creative, solve problems, listen, collaborate, and be able to represent the organization in appropriate situations while engaging and participating with the staff team to provide a unified front. The Director of Advancement will be a smart, decisive strategist with diverse interests and an amiable personality.

The Director of Advancement must excel in the following characteristics:

- **Judgment/Creativity/Entrepreneurial Savvy** – The Director of Advancement must be adept at overcoming challenges regularly and is responsible for making quick, sound decisions in collaboration with the ED, Board, and staff. It is imperative that he/she/they possess the analytical skills that enable him/her to rapidly assess the situation, pursue and evaluate input from staff and stakeholders, and develop creative solutions.
- **Trustworthiness and Respect for Others** – Every individual and business gives Bluegrass Land Conservancy their support voluntarily. This support is directly tied to the trust they have in the organization and its leadership and staff. The Director of Advancement must be respectful and trustworthy.
- **Engaging Personality and Communication Skills** – The Director of Advancement will represent Bluegrass Land Conservancy to existing and potential donors and supporters. It is imperative that he/she/they have the skill set needed to speak with passion and conviction about the mission of Bluegrass Land Conservancy and the importance of charitable giving. The Director of Advancement must interact with others and communicate in a way that inspires support, confidence, and trust.

Responsibilities/Duties

Comprehensive Campaign

- An important and early focus of the Director of Advancement will be to help oversee and execute a successful 3-5 year multi-million-dollar comprehensive campaign, in line with a recently completed feasibility study and BLC Board commitment.
 - o The focus of the campaign will be to meet the immediate growth needs of BLC while solidifying the long-term sustainability of one of the top land trusts in the country – creating a lasting impact for future generations.
 - o In addition, a successful campaign will help bring \$45.7 million in federal funds, and a total of over \$90 million in economic impact into the Commonwealth over the next 5 years, while permanently protecting tens of thousands of acres of important farmland and natural lands.
- The Director of Advancement will work with the Campaign Cabinet, BLC leadership staff, and consultants to support the ED and Board in related fundraising activities, including relationship management, development of materials, direct asks, and donor recognition.

Development and Communications Program Management

- In concert with the above initiative, the Director of Advancement works to envision, execute, and grow the Bluegrass Land Conservancy (BLC) annual development program, including major gifts, corporate giving, grants, planned giving, annual campaigns, and fundraising events, with a goal to increase revenues to \$1.5M+ annually within 5 years.
- Acts as the lead fundraising professional for BLC and should expect regular contact with current and potential major contributors in order to cultivate, solicit, and steward gifts.
- Oversees an effective donor stewardship program to maintain productive relationships with existing, former, and future donors, including corporate partners and foundations, ensuring that BLC is recognized as a preferred, reliable, and productive conservation organization.
- Works closely with the Executive Director and Board to support and guide all fundraising visits.
- Manages a growing team of Development and Communications staff members to implement, maintain, and grow comprehensive, diversified, and strategic development and communications efforts, increasing the number of donors, revenue to the organization, and overall community engagement.
- Oversees BLC's communications program to meet organizational objectives, increase support and visibility, and grow a community conservation ethic.

Qualifications

The Director of Advancement will be thoroughly committed to Bluegrass Land Conservancy's mission. He/she/they should have concrete demonstrable experience and other qualifications including:

- Minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in business, fundraising, nonprofit management, or other relevant field or equivalent experience in fundraising or related field.
- Prefer at least 6 years' experience of front-line development work in progressively more responsible positions that directly relate to the duties stated above, including demonstrative ability to implement and expand comprehensive fundraising programs.
- Experience working on or managing a successful major campaign, achieving a 7-figure or greater result, including participating in 6-7-figure asks.
- Proven management experiences achieving ambitious fundraising goals of at least \$500K annually in organizations where public charitable support accounts for the majority of the budget.
- Experience managing other employees and/or project teams.
- Experience in developing, budgeting and implementing annual and strategic development plans with the ability to analyze, evaluate and prepare reports regarding development program results.
- A historical and/or working knowledge of the Bluegrass region.
- Ability to attend daytime, evening, and weekend events and a desire to attend as many events as possible and practical for the organization across the region.
- Interest in all aspects of BLC and a dedication to promoting BLC's fundraising priorities through developing excellent relationships with Board Members, staff, and donors.
- Demonstrated leadership and the ability to successfully manage multi-functional or diverse areas.
- Successful experience in developing cultivation and solicitation strategies.
- Excellent oral and written communications skills.
- Impeccable organization and memory retention skills.
- A capable professional with a style of open communications, accountability, and engagement in generating ideas.
- Ability to travel the Bluegrass region with a valid driver's license.

Details

General Schedule

Full-time, salaried position.

Administrative Support

Administrative support is limited. BLC has an Operations Manager who is available to assist all employees in a limited capacity for administrative needs and BLC plans to hire a future Administrative Assistant in the next 3-5 years; however, the Director of Advancement should be prepared to handle some of his/her/their own correspondence, filing, records, and report formatting.

Direct Employee Reports

The Director of Advancement currently has two (2) direct reports, including a Development and Events Manager and a Communications and Marketing Manager. Additionally, there is a future Development Assistant that may be hired in the next 2-3 years.

Salary, Benefits, and Schedule

Location

- The Director of Advancement may work fully out of the BLC offices in Lexington, KY, in a hybrid capacity, or remotely from their home or other location within the Bluegrass region, with an understanding that the demands of the job may include regular travel to Lexington or

Louisville and across the Bluegrass for meetings and events. Work location will be arranged at time of hire and may be adjusted if needed as agreed upon by the Executive Director.

Salary

- Annual salary commensurate with experience, with a starting range of \$90,000 - \$140,000.
- Salary increases based upon measurable development performance.
- Year-end bonus and retirement contributions determined annually.

Benefits

- Benefits include full employee health and dental insurance.
- Access to a 403b retirement plan.
- Paid vacation, holidays, personal days, and sick days as detailed in the BLC Personnel Manual.

Schedule

- Full-time, salaried employment.
- The Director of Advancement will be expected to attend events and meetings that occasionally may occur during evenings or weekends.
- Flexible schedule and compensatory time off, at the approval of the ED.

Bluegrass Land Conservancy is an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to creating an inclusive workplace that promotes and values diversity. We strive for, encourage, and protect diversity in age, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, ethnicity, and perspective.

Please send cover letter and resume to Jessie Hancock at jhancock@bluegrassconservancy.org. Position will remain open until filled and applicants will be evaluated as submissions are received.