



## Executive Director Job Announcement & Position Description

**ABOUT CITY PLANTS:** City Plants is an urban forestry initiative founded by the City of Los Angeles to foster catalytic public-private partnerships, plant and care for trees, and advance urban tree canopy equity through community-centered capacity building, grassroots empowerment, and research. In 2006, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa established the Million Trees LA Initiative as a cooperative effort between the City of LA, community-based organizations, businesses, and individuals in order to increase tree canopy coverage throughout Los Angeles, reduce the heat island effect, increase energy conservation, improve air quality, and beautify Los Angeles neighborhoods. The Los Angeles City Council placed the program under the Board of Public Works, which then created a nonprofit arm under the fiscal sponsorship of Community Partners, a 501(c)(3). In 2014, the Office of Mayor Eric Garcetti rebranded the Million Trees LA Initiative as City Plants, and the organization solidified, renewed, and deepened its mission to ensure that every Angeleno has equal access to trees and their benefits. For 17 years, the program has provided technical support, garnered funding for policy initiatives, implemented community-based tree planting programs, facilitated multi-sector partnerships, led innovative pilot projects, and spearheaded critical research in an effort to advance urban forest management, tree equity, and green workforce development throughout the City of Los Angeles.

Today, City Plants is a fiscally-sponsored project of Community Partners, a 501(c)(3), with five full-time employees and an annual program operating budget of \$650k. The organization's primary function is to oversee and administer a multi-year tree planting contract of \$8.3 million through the City of Los Angeles, in partnership with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the Board of Public Works, the Office of the Mayor, the Los Angeles Conservation Corps, and a core collaborative of community-based organizations. Through this collaboration, the City Plants program plants and distributes approximately 15,000 trees throughout the City of Los Angeles each year, working alongside partners to transform streets, private properties, and neighborhoods in an effort to grow climate resilience in low-canopy, historically disinvested, heat-vulnerable communities.

**MISSION AND VISION:** City Plants' mission is to grow a greener, more equitable, and more climate resilient Los Angeles by engaging Angelenos to plant and care for trees throughout the city. City Plants envisions an LA where people in every neighborhood have equal access to trees and their benefits, including clean air, better health, cooling shade, and friendlier, more vibrant communities.

**POSITION SUMMARY & DESCRIPTION:** The Executive Director is the heart of the City Plants program, championing and growing the organization's strategic priorities in response to the needs of the communities and stakeholders we serve. City Plants is seeking a passionate network-weaver and servant-leader to serve as Executive Director. The Executive Director is responsible for bridging grassroots programs and mission-driven strategy with an eye toward community-based, culturally competent systemic change. The Executive Director oversees all aspects of City Plants' operations, including fundraising, program development, financial management, communications, policy innovation, community engagement, constituent services, strategic partnerships, and staff management. Through a servant-leader ethos, the Executive Director motivates and empowers each member of the City Plants team, as well as collaborating partners, to achieve their best work, ensuring alignment with City Plants mission. The Executive Director is responsible for cultivating and maintaining partnerships with key stakeholders, including community, government, nonprofit, and private-sector leaders, serving as the public face for City Plants. This position will have the opportunity to grow an Advisory Board to ensure that the City Plants fulfills its mission and serves its constituents effectively, and uses cutting-edge research and practice to guide its [programs](#). Our ideal candidate is a motivational leader with a proven track record of success in nonprofit management; a strong passion for grassroots engagement; knowledge of and experience with nature-based solutions to climate change; and whose core values are rooted in justice, equity, inclusion, and diversity. The Executive Director is a strategic thinker capable of balancing short-term needs with long-term planning and goals and ensuring the sustainability of the organization through fundraising and development. They will have excellent interpersonal communication skills, rooted in deep listening. The Executive Director is confident in their ability to build consensus among a wide range of stakeholders across diverse communities, often with differing needs and interests.

## **CORE JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Strategic Planning and Partnership Building**

- Sustain and deepen City Plants' reputation as a trusted partner, seeking to effectively and strategically increase positive impact on the urban forest and local communities.
- Create, cultivate, and maintain relationships with government and municipal agencies, public servants, elected officials, local business, nonprofit leaders, volunteers, and community members to deepen City Plants' impact as a bridge-builder.
- Develop and work with the Advisory Board and staff to create and implement a strategic plan, conducting regular assessments of the organization's performance and adjusting the strategic plan as needed.
- Identify opportunities for growth and expansion, and develop plans to pursue them.
- Ensure the organization's programs and activities align with the organization's mission and values.
- Oversee day to day operations of City Plants programs through a strengths-based and supportive approach that recognizes lived experience as expertise.
- Actively create space for productive conversations and feedback among stakeholders, funders, and community members.

- Develop and maintain positive working relationships and build coalitions with resident groups, community based organizations, neighborhood and citywide stakeholders.
- Actively participate in relevant community initiatives related to urban forestry, or other campaigns, as appropriate.
- Identify, establish, and sustain relationships with key stakeholders in relevant project areas.
- Provide strategic insight into the City Plants collaborative and present priority recommendations for program improvement.
- Connect with other urban forestry organizations, non-profits, and government agencies on the local, state, and federal level to learn about best management practices and new methods of urban forest management.
- Collaborate with partner organizations to ensure the highest standards of tree planting, establishment care, record keeping, and community engagement are met.

### **Fundraising and Development**

- Develop and lead the implementation of a comprehensive fundraising and development strategy that aligns with the organization's mission and goals, with a focus on securing major gifts and individual donations.
- Identify and cultivate relationships with high-level donors, foundations, and other potential funding sources, working closely with the Advisory Board and other stakeholders to engage donors, secure major donations, and build a core team of champions for the program.
- Grow the City Plants Advisory Board and host quarterly board meetings to guide program strategy, operations, and budget.
- Work with the Advisory Board and other stakeholders to establish fundraising priorities and opportunities, including annual giving campaigns, special events, and grant applications.
- Provide leadership and direction to staff involved in fundraising and development activities, ensuring that all efforts are aligned with the organization's goals and priorities.
- Develop and implement donor stewardship plans to maintain strong relationships with donors and secure ongoing support, including regular communication, recognition, and engagement opportunities.
- Manage the organization's needs by ensuring annual fundraising goals are met and City Plants expands its mission, reach, and impact, monitoring progress toward fundraising goals and making adjustments as needed.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of best practices in nonprofit fundraising and development, and work collaboratively with the Advisory Board and other stakeholders to continuously improve the organization's fundraising efforts.
- Author grant applications from public and private agencies, generate and sustain donations, and secure corporate sponsorships to advance the organization's mission, goals, and core programs.
- Author and implement independent contractor agreements and program budgets.
- Leverage funds from various sources to execute tree planting and tree equity programs.

### **Financial Management and Leadership**

- Oversee the organization's financial management in partnership with the Operations Manager, ensuring that the organization is financially sound and operating with financial prudence for long-term sustainability.
- Develop and oversee the organization's annual budget, working with the Operations Manager, fiscal agent, and Advisory Board to ensure that it aligns with the organization's goals and priorities.
- Monitor financial performance on an ongoing basis, tracking revenue and expenses and making adjustments as needed to ensure that the organization is operating within its budget.
- Ensure that financial reports are accurate, working with the Operations Manager and fiscal agent to provide detailed financial analysis and reporting as needed.
- Collaborate with the Advisory Board and other stakeholders to identify opportunities for revenue growth and cost savings, while also ensuring that the organization remains financially stable and sustainable for the long term.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of best practices in nonprofit financial management and ensure that the organization's financial policies and procedures are in compliance with all relevant regulations and guidelines.
- Monitor and report on fiscal health of the organization, ensuring funds are available to meet core operating expenses.
- Perform budget modifications, as needed, to ensure timely and responsible spending of all grants and contracts.
- Monitor program and project budgets and contract deliverables, both through City and nonprofit contracts, communicating successes and challenges with funders, city stakeholders, and relevant regional partners.
- Serve as the primary contact for all questions related to program funding.

### **Staff Management and Mentorship**

- Serve as a servant-leader to the organization's staff, providing guidance, motivation, and support to help them succeed in their roles, leading with empathy.
- Foster a positive work environment and promote healthy, open communication, teamwork, and collaboration, empowering staff to contribute their unique perspectives and talents.
- Provide regular feedback to staff members, both in the form of ongoing coaching and formal performance evaluations, to ensure that they meet performance expectations and grow in their roles.
- Produce and implement staff development plans to support the ongoing growth and professional development of each team member.
- Recruit and onboard additional staff, fellows, and interns to advance the organization's mission and operations.
- Model and promote the organization's values and culture, setting the standard for ethical and effective behavior in all interactions.

- Generate clear human resource policies and communicate them effectively to all members of the City Plants team, in coordination with the program's fiscal agent, Community Partners.

### **Program Development, Implementation, and Management**

- Develop and implement a strategic planning process to identify programs that align with the organization's mission and goals, working closely with government, staff, volunteers, and other stakeholders to ensure that programs are effective, efficient, and meet the needs of the organization's constituents.
- Manage the day-to-day operation of programs, working with staff and volunteers to ensure that programs are executed with excellence and create the most impact in support of the City Plants mission.
- Evaluate program outcomes on an ongoing basis, using data, research, and feedback from stakeholders to make adjustments and improvements as needed.
- Support community members in accessing tree planting and urban forestry programs in the City of Los Angeles for both private property and public spaces.
- Collaborate with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power to calculate annual kilowatt-hour impacts of tree planting programs.
- Expand programs and services, as appropriate, to fulfill City Plants' mission, working with stakeholders to identify opportunities for growth and innovation.
- Ensure that programs are implemented in accordance with all relevant regulations and guidelines, maintaining compliance with legal and ethical standards.
- Generate reports on program progress for both public and private funders, with support from staff
- Support the City Plants team in developing and implementing new and innovative community engagement and organizing programs to plant and care for trees along streets, parks, and on private property in priority historically disinvested, low-canopy neighborhoods, as identified by research.
- Ensure the continuation and future of core programs, projects, and research, including the Commonwealth Tree Nursery, Tree Ambassador - Promotor Forestal Community Organizing Program, the LA Urban Forest Equity Collective, the LA Urban Forest Financing Study, and the Los Angeles Center for Urban Natural Resources Sustainability.
- Coordinate with nonprofit and government partners and agencies to ensure timely delivery of program goals and objectives, ushering urban forestry and tree planting contracts through both city and nonprofit administrative processes.

### **Research and Policy**

- Collaborate with City staff on matters and protocol related to industry best management practices, including new methods for nursery selection, tree planting, community engagement, workforce development, and young and mature tree care.
- Work with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Board of Public Works, the Office of the Mayor, and nonprofit partners to continuously improve core tree planting programs in alignment with regional sustainability targets and goals.

- Collaborate with the Board of Public Works Office of Forest Management and other relevant stakeholders to support the development of the first Urban Forest Management Plan for the City of Los Angeles via the monthly Steering Committee and beyond.
- Ensure the continuation, implementation, and enhancement of LA-based research initiatives via Los Angeles Center for Urban Natural Resources Sustainability, including the LA Urban Forest Equity Collective and the LA Urban Forest Financing Study, in partnership with the USDA Forest Service, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and regional members of the Executive Oversight Committee (EOT).

### **Communications, Marketing, & Public Speaking**

- Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing and communications strategy to increase the organization's visibility and reach in alignment with the organization's mission and vision.
- Maintain the organization's brand and generate messaging across all channels, including newsletters, social media, the City Plants website, printed and digital educational and promotional materials, with support from staff.
- Act as the organization's primary spokesperson, representing City Plants to the media, at public events, and through speaking engagements, developing a culturally competent and trusting presence for the program in the larger community.
- Develop and execute communication and marketing strategies to ensure Angelenos can access free trees through various branches of the City Plants programs.

### **DESIRED ATTRIBUTES, EXPERIENCE, AND QUALIFICATIONS**

#### **A strong Executive Director candidate will likely possess:**

- Bachelor's degree in a relevant field and/or a minimum of five years experience in nonprofit or governmental leadership directing and implementing programs relating to urban forestry, urban greening, community engagement, workforce development, business administration, social or environmental services, or a related field.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, rooted in empathy, deep-listening and a servant-leader ethos, with a proven track record of building consensus among a wide range of stakeholders across diverse communities, often with differing needs and interests.
- Mastery of nonprofit fiscal management, including anticipated revenue and expenditure analysis, balance sheet analysis, budget implementation, and cash-flow management.
- Enthusiasm for place-based climate resilience, urban forestry, tree equity, regional coalition building, and/or grassroots community organizing through the lens of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Passion for finding community-centered solutions to environmental issues disproportionately impacting economically disadvantaged populations and communities of color.
- Experience influencing policy alongside municipalities, elected officials, businesses, NGOs, and community members.
- Desire to learn from mistakes and incorporate feedback from critics and supporters alike.

- Knowledge of the urban and community forestry landscape in the City of Los Angeles and beyond.
- Commitment to the cultivation of new and emerging leaders and the ability to inspire, empower, and motivate teams to reach their highest potential, both individually and collectively.
- Knowledge of communication principles, media, and marketing techniques, including writing, oral presentations, and editorial skills.
- Ability to direct and implement administrative, procedural, policy decisions and recommendations in response to identified needs; to grow and sustain strong, positive, and long-lasting partnerships; to gather and analyze data, relevant research, and generate reports; to meet deadlines in a timely manner, organize resources, and determine priorities accordingly.
- Arborist Certification via the International Society of Arboriculture.
- Fluency in the Spanish language.

**LOCATION:** City Plants traditionally operates out of Los Angeles City Hall, 200 N Spring St, Los Angeles, CA 90012, Room M-154. This role is primarily remote until further notice, with regular in-person meetings throughout Los Angeles. The candidate must reside in the greater Los Angeles area and have the ability to work with reasonable access to phone and high-speed internet service. They must also have reliable transportation and be able to travel regionally for regular in-person meetings, with occasional weekend and evening work.

**SALARY RANGE AND BENEFITS:** \$110,000 - \$120,000, depending on experience and qualifications. Through our fiscal sponsor, Community Partners, City Plants offers generous benefits, including paid holidays, mental health days, vacation, a 403(b) plan with employer match, medical, dental, vision, flex spending, and a wide range of professional development opportunities.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Interested candidates can email a cover letter, resume, and three professional references to [rachel.oleary@lacity.org](mailto:rachel.oleary@lacity.org) and [cityplantsed@gmail.com](mailto:cityplantsed@gmail.com), with the subject line “Executive Director Application - [Name].” Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until the position is filled, with the first round of panel interviews slated as early as late June and early July 2023. We thank all applicants for their interest, but only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

City Plants is a fiscally-sponsored project of [Community Partners](#)<sup>®</sup>, an equal opportunity employer committed to a diverse and inclusive workforce. In addition, the organization will consider for employment qualified applicants with criminal histories in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Los Angeles Fair Chance Initiative for Hiring. City Plants strongly encourages applications from Black and Indigenous people, people of color, immigrants, refugees, people with disabilities, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, as well as individuals from other underrepresented and historically marginalized communities. We recognize the lived experiences and leadership of these individuals as being fundamentally relevant to City Plants’ work in advancing our mission.