

POSITION DESCRIPTION

President and Executive Director Seed Savers Exchange



In the last century, the world has lost 75% of its edible plant varieties. In this climate of rapidly declining biodiversity, Seed Savers Exchange has risen, grown, evolved, and ushered in an era of increased awareness and commitment to using diverse seed varieties at home and in the marketplace.

Since 1975, Seed Savers Exchange (SSE) has been committed to conserving and promoting America's culturally diverse but endangered garden and food crop heritage for future generations. Based in Decorah, Iowa, this nonprofit organization has a national membership of over 13,000 individuals, manages an annual budget of \$6M, and employs over 50 full-time staff. Along with its programming, SSE maintains Heritage Farm, where staff curate and grow more than 30,000 varieties of seeds for evaluation and preservation, raise heritage livestock breeds, and welcome 12,000 – 14,000 visitors each year on 890 scenic acres. Heritage Farm is a model for sustainable farming and plays an important role preserving native species and habitats, including a stream with a population of native brook trout as well as mature hardwood forests that provide habitat for rare plant species and migratory songbirds. Seed Savers Exchange is located in the Driftless Area of Northeastern Iowa, characterized by steep bluffs and spring-fed streams and a landscape mosaic of natural areas and small, diverse farms. Decorah is a regional center with a small liberal arts college and excellent public schools. The city has a vibrant, entrepreneurial spirit with organic farms, brew pubs, and a thriving arts scene.

SSE has an active Board of Directors comprised of distinguished and dedicated individuals from across the country. Additionally, trusted advisors lend their expertise and insights to the board and staff as needed.

Seed Savers Exchange is seeking a strategic and collaborative leader who will cultivate authentic and trusting relationships; leverage and build upon the strengths of the staff, board, advisors, and stakeholders; and calmly and fearlessly lead this highly complex organization with energy, openness, and creativity.

SEED SAVERS EXCHANGE MISSION:

As a nonprofit, Seed Savers Exchange aims to conserve and promote America's culturally diverse but endangered garden and food crop heritage for future generations by collecting, growing and sharing heirloom seeds and plants.

CANDIDATE PROFILE:

This position provides a great opportunity for an individual who is passionate about Seed Savers' mission, who embraces the opportunity to promote a vibrant organization that is adaptive, collaborative, and empowered, and who is eager to engage with the vital community and scenic environment of Northeast Iowa.

Seed Savers Exchange is looking for a new executive leader with the following attributes:

- A dynamic and entrepreneurial individual with an open, engaging, and thoughtful leadership style who can cultivate an organizational culture marked by transparent, authentic, and trusting relationships.
- A skilled, pragmatic leader who can manage the change and unpredictability inherent in a business affected by weather and seasonality; who can nimbly and responsively take effective action; and who can also hold the big strategic picture.
- A confident, capable individual with the capacity and drive to learn the business of running an ecologically sustainable farming operation while simultaneously leading a national nonprofit.
- A team builder, people-person, and compassionate whole-hearted leader who fosters an organizational environment of stability and sustainability.
- An excellent communicator with proven ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with a broad range of constituencies. Approachable and empathic.
- Someone who has worked with and has respect for diverse communities and people of all ages and stations in life; a person who interacts authentically with board members, staff, advisors, customers, community and business leaders, funders, volunteers, political figures, government officials, and other stakeholders.

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY:

Reporting to the Seed Savers Exchange Board of Directors, the President/Executive Director is responsible for facilitating implementation of the organization's strategic direction while providing guidance and leadership for its day-to-day operations. Major responsibilities include the following:

Strategic Leadership

- Lead, coach, and collaborate with the management team toward implementation of the organization's strategic goals.
- Establish effective and regular communication with the board and bridge gaps in understanding between the board and staff.
- Work cooperatively and collaboratively with the board to address organizational challenges, and encourage and support board development.
- In collaboration with the internal team of HR advisors, recruit and retain talented employees. Articulate clear responsibilities and accountabilities. Recognize and reward staff achievement.

Financial Stability and Reporting

- Work collaboratively with the Chief Financial Officer to understand and act on financial information and trends.
- Co-create budgets and coach/empower staff leadership to grow their financial management expertise for the benefit of the organization as a whole.
- Develop and encourage healthy information and data flow to support decisions.

Organizational Culture

- Build bridges, both internally and externally.
- Delegate effectively and work to grow staff expertise. Act as facilitator and coach.
- Hone people's best contributions; channel energy through a mycelial connection and extension of talent and drive. Foster understanding of the evolving big picture.
- Encourage high trust and strengthen organizational resiliency.
- Provide developmental growth opportunities for staff.
- Cultivate intergenerational appreciation and inter-reliance.

External Communications and Fundraising

- Nurture external relationships. Gently keep a finger on the pulse with collaborators, holding the strategic vision of external relationships while empowering staff and board to create and grow strong connections with stakeholders.
- Serve as an effective and visible spokesperson and advocate.
- Grow the capacity of staff and board to represent the organization.
- In collaboration with the Development Director, develop and implement strategies to meet organizational fundraising goals.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

EDUCATION: Required: Bachelor's Degree.

Preferred: Post-Baccalaureate degree or training in a related field.

EXPERIENCE: Required: Five years of senior-level management experience in an organization of comparable size and complexity.

Preferred: Eight to ten years of senior-level management experience in an organization of comparable size and complexity. Significant experience with nonprofit management under the fiduciary leadership of a board of directors. Understanding of the management of a working seed-growing company.

COMPENSATION:

Compensation is competitive and commensurate with experience, and includes participation in the organization's comprehensive benefits plan. The salary range is \$100,000 to \$110,000.

TO APPLY: Applications are requested by 5:00 p.m. Friday, June 21st, 2019.

To apply, interested candidates should apply via the Cincinnatus online portal at this link:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/c0c273d740ac4c8c9e1460b6bef5b36e> (Preferred method.

This link can also be found at www.Cincinnatus.com) Alternately, please email your resume and cover letter to Employment@Cincinnatus.com. Note Seed Savers Exchange in the subject line.