



PO Box 1284
Ventura, CA 93002
(805) 643-8044
www.venturalandtrust.org

Development Director (Senior Leadership Role)

Ventura Land Trust (VLT) is a nonprofit land conservation organization dedicated to protecting the land, water, wildlife, and scenic beauty of the Ventura region for current and future generations. Through strategic conservation, stewardship, and community engagement, VLT advances climate resilience, biodiversity protection, public access, and lasting environmental impact.

As VLT enters a period of strategic growth and increased community impact, we are seeking an experienced Development Director to lead the evolution of our fundraising program and help shape the organization's long-term sustainability and influence.

VLT fosters a collaborative, mission-driven culture grounded in stewardship, innovation, and shared leadership.

Position Summary

The Development Director is a senior leadership position responsible for defining and driving Ventura Land Trust's comprehensive fundraising strategy and advancing a strong culture of philanthropy across the organization.

Reporting to the Executive Director and serving as a key member of the leadership team, the Development Director plays a central role in shaping organizational strategy, strengthening external partnerships, and positioning VLT for transformational growth. This role blends high-level strategy with relationship-centered fundraising, focusing on building deep partnerships with donors and community leaders who share VLT's vision for conservation.

This position offers significant autonomy and the opportunity to build and refine systems, strategies, and partnerships that will shape the future trajectory of Ventura Land Trust.

Position Details

Title: Development Director

Status: Exempt

Department: Development

Reports To: Executive Director

Employment Type: Full-Time

Location: Hybrid (Ventura office with remote flexibility)

Salary Range: \$100,000–\$120,000 annually



PO Box 1284
Ventura, CA 93002
(805) 643-8044
www.venturlandtrust.org

Core Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership & Organizational Influence

- Design and lead a multi-year fundraising strategy aligned with VLT's strategic plan and conservation priorities.
- Lead all fundraising initiatives including annual giving, major gifts, institutional funding, corporate sponsorships, planned giving, special events, and special campaigns.
- Partner with the Executive Director and Board to set fundraising goals and grow revenue by 15–25% over 2–3 years.
- Serve as a strategic thought partner to the Executive Director and Board of Directors on organizational growth, philanthropic trends, and long-term sustainability.
- Shape revenue diversification strategies that expand VLT's funding base, membership base, and resilience.
- Translate organizational vision into clear fundraising priorities, metrics, and action plans.
- Help strengthen a culture of philanthropy across the organization, integrating development into program strategy and leadership decision-making.

Major Gifts & Transformational Relationships

- Lead strategy for major gifts, including cultivation of high-capacity donors and long-term philanthropic partnerships.
- Manage a portfolio of key donor relationships and personally solicit significant gifts, including estate gifts.
- Develop opportunities for donors to engage deeply with conservation outcomes and land stewardship impact.
- Represent VLT as a trusted ambassador in philanthropic, conservation, and community networks.

Campaigns, Institutional Funding & Growth Initiatives

- Provide strategic leadership for capital campaigns and major fundraising initiatives.
- Guide institutional fundraising strategy across foundations, corporate partners, and government funding sources.
- Lead annual fund strategy including appeals, donor communications, and stewardship programs.
- Manage membership program and legacy giving initiative (Guardians of the Green).
- Identify emerging opportunities that align philanthropic investment with conservation impact.



PO Box 1284
Ventura, CA 93002
(805) 643-8044
www.venturlandtrust.org

Leadership, Team Development & Board Partnership

- Lead and mentor development staff, fostering a collaborative, high-performing team culture.
- Partner with the Executive Director to engage and empower board members as fundraising champions.
- Build cross-departmental collaboration with programs and communications to elevate storytelling and donor engagement.

Development Infrastructure & Analytics

- Oversee development operations, systems, and processes, including CRM strategy (Salesforce) and donor data integrity.
- Establish metrics and dashboards that support strategic decision-making and transparent reporting.
- Manage development budget, revenue projections, and forecasting.

Community Engagement & External Leadership

- Oversee sponsorship acquisition and fundraising strategy for signature events (e.g., Wild & Scenic Film Festival).
- Serve as a visible leader for VLT within the community and conservation sector.
- Build partnerships that advance conservation goals, expand visibility, and strengthen regional impact.
- Represent VLT at public events, speaking engagements, and community forums.

Qualifications

- Deep commitment to Ventura Land Trust's mission and conservation values.
- 8–12+ years of progressive nonprofit fundraising experience, including senior leadership responsibilities.
- Demonstrated success securing major gifts and building lasting donor relationships.
- Experience developing and executing strategic fundraising plans.
- Proven ability to influence organizational strategy through fundraising leadership.
- Experience partnering effectively with executive leadership and boards of directors.
- Strong communication and storytelling skills.
- Experience with donor management systems; Salesforce experience preferred.



PO Box 1284
Ventura, CA 93002
(805) 643-8044
www.venturalandtrust.org

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience with land trusts, environmental nonprofits, or conservation-focused organizations.
- Familiarity with planned giving, legacy giving, or land conservation funding models.
- Bilingual English/Spanish.

Work Environment & Expectations

- Hybrid work environment with regular in-person engagement.
- Flexible schedule including occasional evenings and weekends.
- Local travel for donor meetings, events, and community engagement.
- Occasionally involves working out-of-doors.
- Must be able to regularly climb and descend from stairs and other inclines, stand/walk for up to four continuous hours, manipulate computer and office tools, sit and work at a computer for extended periods of time, and use tools.
- Ability to occasionally lift and carry objects weighing up to 30 lbs.

Compensation & Benefits

- Salary range: \$100,000–\$120,000 depending on experience.
- Medical coverage.
- Employee-contributed 401(k) retirement savings program.
- Twelve paid holidays, plus generous vacation and sick leave.
- Hybrid work flexibility.
- Dog-friendly office culture.

To Apply

At this point, we hope you're feeling excited about the job description you're reading. Even if you don't feel that you meet every single requirement, we still encourage you to apply.

Studies have shown that women and people of color are less likely to apply for jobs unless they believe they can perform every job description task. We are most interested in finding the best candidate for the job, and that candidate may come from a less traditional background. We believe that all people are capable of great things, so we may consider an equivalent combination of knowledge, skills, education, and experience to meet minimum qualifications. If you are interested in applying, we encourage you to think broadly about your background and skill set for the role.



PO Box 1284
Ventura, CA 93002
(805) 643-8044
www.venturlandtrust.org

To be considered for this position, submit resume and cover letter to careers@venturlandtrust.org with "Development Director" in the subject line. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis for this position until the role is filled.

For more information, please visit our website: venturlandtrust.org/careers

Equal Opportunity Statement

Ventura Land Trust is an equal opportunity employer committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming workplace.