



CITY OF
**VIRGINIA
BEACH**



Aquarium Development Officer

Compensation Range & Starting Salary:

Pay Range: \$83,033.60-\$128,710.40

Starting Salary: May be negotiable depending on qualifications

OUR CULTURE

The mission of the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center is to connect people to the marine environment, inspiring a more sustainable future. With over 633,000 guests in fiscal year 2025, the Virginia Aquarium is the third most visited cultural attraction in the Commonwealth of Virginia and aspires to be a driver in conservation, education, tourism and sustainability - leading the charge to save wildlife and their ecosystems.

POSITION OVERVIEW

The **Aquarium Development Officer** provides executive leadership for all **fundraising and philanthropic initiatives** at the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center. Reporting to the Executive Director and serving as a key member of the leadership team, the Aquarium Development Officer develops and executes strategies to expand and diversify revenue across all giving portfolios, including major gifts, planned giving, corporate partnerships, endowments, annual fund, and capital campaigns.

This role directs the overall development function and staff, ensuring alignment with the organization's mission and strategic priorities while fostering a culture of philanthropy to support long-term institutional growth. The **ideal candidate** will have demonstrated success in leading a high-performing development program, cultivating transformational gifts, and advancing mission-driven organizations through strategic fundraising initiatives.

Essential Functions include:

- Direct the fundraising activities of the Virginia Aquarium, including major gifts, corporate and foundation grants, annual and capital campaigns, planned giving and special events
- Guide and support Board fundraising activities
- Supervise development staff
- Provide development training to staff to build a culture of philanthropy across the organization
- Coordinate and support Executive Director's fundraising efforts, including prospect outreach efforts, meeting preparation and follow-up, strategy development, pipeline management and gift proposals

The **ideal candidate** will demonstrate:

- A proven record of success in fundraising, donor engagement, and securing major contributions for a nonprofit organization
- Extensive experience in donor relations, retention, stewardship, and cultivation across diverse giving levels

- Skills in developing and managing large-scale capital campaigns
- Experience overseeing endowment funds with multiple designations
- Experience in designing and implementing comprehensive fundraising strategies
- Knowledge of Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) from IRAs and gifts of appreciated securities, including a solid understanding of relevant financial and tax implications
- Proven ability to cultivate and secure planned gifts, such as bequests, charitable trusts, legacy commitments, and complex contributions
- Experience in researching, preparing, and submitting grant proposals to secure funding
- Familiarity with CRM platforms (e.g., Raiser's Edge, Salesforce) and donor database management

Minimum Qualifications:

Requires a bachelor's degree in related field and six (6) years of experience in related development work utilizing the required knowledge, skills, and abilities in such position as development officer OR an equivalent combination of education (above the high school level) and/or experience equivalent to ten (10) years in fields utilizing the required knowledge, skills, and abilities.

ABOUT US

Organizational Structure & Mission

- Public-private partnership between the City of Virginia Beach and the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center Foundation
- The Foundation handles annual and capital fundraising, animal populations, exhibits, the Stranding Response Program, conservation, scientific research, and mission-related education programs

Impact & Scale

- Generating \$257 million in economic impact for Virginia Beach in fiscal year 2022
- Supported more than 3,000 jobs and nearly \$85 million in labor income
- Generated \$5.8 million in tax revenues for Virginia Beach and \$8 million for the Commonwealth of Virginia
- \$2.9 million total fundraising in fiscal year 2025

Major Capital Campaign Opportunity

- Virginia Aquarium Future Renovation (VAFR) project is an approximately \$150 million investment to replace aging infrastructure and enhance visitor experience
- Projected to increase operations supporting 3,400 jobs and nearly \$300 million in annual economic activity upon completion

Conservation & Education Programs

- Nationally recognized Stranding Response Program that responded to over 107 marine mammal cases, 9 whale events, and 280 sea turtle strandings in 2024
- Led more than 250 education programs reaching over 14,000 students in fiscal year 2024

Credentials

- Accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums, and World Association of Zoos and Aquariums

Take me to: [Virginia Aquarium Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Report](#)

WHAT WE OFFER

Recognized as one of America's Best-In-State Employers for 2024, the City of Virginia Beach is proud to offer a diverse and dynamic work environment. Our workforce plays a crucial role in delivering exceptional government services to both our citizens and fellow City employees.

The City of Virginia Beach provides a **comprehensive benefits package**, which includes health, dental, and life insurance, retirement and savings plans, maternity, paternity, and parental leave, as well as paid holidays and leave.

Additional key benefits include:

- Employee Wellness Program
- Tuition Reimbursement
- Professional Development Opportunities
- Employee Assistance Program

Take me to: [Full-Time Employee Benefits Summary](#)

Working Conditions:

Per HR Policy 6.19, Americans with Disabilities, the City follows the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in all hiring and employment decisions. The City shall not discriminate on the basis of disability in its hiring and employment practices. The City shall make reasonable accommodations for the known physical or mental limitations of a qualified applicant or employee with a disability upon request unless the accommodation would cause an undue hardship on the operation of the City's business.

The Working Conditions Summary is intended to provide a general overview of the environmental conditions inherent in the job setting, as well as the physical, mental, and sensory requirements necessary to perform the essential functions of the position in the noted job profile. Please copy and paste the URL below into your web browser to view the Working Conditions Summary for this position. <https://workingcondition-summary-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/P12969.pdf>

Official Job Description:

To browse the official job description, please access this link - <https://virginia-beach-departments-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/city/job-descriptions-pay-plans/Aquarium-Development-Officer-03397.pdf>

VRS Contribution: All full-time employees are required to contribute 5% of annual salary toward their retirement account; in accordance with VRS retirement provisions. This will be handled through a pre-tax payroll deduction.

Drug Free Workplace: The City of Virginia Beach maintains a drug free workplace.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Statement: The City of Virginia Beach is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to providing a diverse and inclusive work environment. We do not discriminate against any applicant or employee on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other protected status as defined by applicable law.

How to Apply: Visit the [Aquarium Development Officer](#) job posting on the City of Virginia Beach Careers website.