



Climate Science Alliance

Development Director

The Development Director is the Climate Science Alliance's chief fundraising strategist, leading the philanthropic program for the organization's newly independent chapter as a 501(c)3 non-profit. This is a unique opportunity for development professionals who are looking to shape and lead a fundraising program from its foundation, at an organization with a decade of transformational, community-led impact behind it.

The Director owns the full donor lifecycle—identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship—across major gifts, the annual fund, grants, sponsorships, and membership and experiential giving. This role is anchored in relationship-driven fundraising: translating our mission and story into a compelling case for support, and activating a deep network to connect new donors, partners, and champions for meaningful impact. You'll work closely with the Executive Director and Board of Directors to grow a diversified, sustainable funding base for climate solutions.

What Success Looks Like in the First 90 days

- Has reviewed existing donor records and fundraising history and presented a reflection on the current state of fundraising with a high-level plan for next steps, within the first 30 days
- Has established a donor tracking system and drafted a 12-month fundraising plan with concrete revenue targets across major gifts, the annual fund, grants, sponsorships, and membership and experiential giving
- Has expanded the donor prospect list, identifying 15+ warm leads for cultivation, and identified potential sources of support for the organization's membership and experiential giving programs
- Has begun active cultivation and solicitation with top prospects, secured a first new gift or strong potential commitment, and begun promoting sponsorship opportunities

PRIMARY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This role advances the Climate Science Alliance's goals through four focal areas:

1. Donor Stewardship & Retention

2. Fundraising Strategy & Major Gifts
3. Leadership, Board, & External Representation
4. Other

Donor Stewardship & Retention (40%)

- Activate personal and professional networks to generate warm introductions, referrals, and new donor and partner relationships
- Collaborate with staff and leadership to identify programmatic connections that can inform and support the giving pathways
- Convert relationship capital and trust into sustained, multi-year donor commitments
- Manage relationships with foundation and corporate funders
- Ensure timely donor acknowledgment, recognition, and impact reporting
- Monitor donor retention and renewal patterns; develop strategies to re-engage lapsed donors
- Maintain accurate donor records and pipeline tracking in the CRM/donor database

Fundraising Strategy & Major Gifts (40%)

- Develop and execute a comprehensive annual fundraising strategy across individual giving, major gifts, corporate/foundation support, grants, and membership and experiential giving as applicable
- Build and manage a portfolio of major donors and prospects: identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship
- Conduct prospect research to identify new individual, corporate, and foundation funding opportunities
- Set annual revenue goals and track performance against them
- Plan and execute fundraising and donor stewardship events, leveraging personal and community networks to drive attendance and giving
- Evaluate and implement the giving pathways that best suit the organization's needs each year, including but not limited to:
 - Annual fund program, including appeal mailings and campaigns
 - Capital campaigns and other major fundraising initiatives
 - Planned giving program (e.g., bequests, deferred gifts)
 - Corporate and event sponsorships
 - Membership and experiential giving (e.g., tiered memberships, donor-facing publications, guided site experiences, and open house programming that deepen public engagement while generating recurring and one-time revenue)

Leadership, Board & External Representation (10%)

- Partner with the Executive Director and Board of Directors on fundraising strategy and major donor cultivation
- Staff the Board Development Committee, as applicable
- Support board members and volunteers as fundraising ambassadors, helping them activate their own networks on behalf of the organization
- Build up a volunteer base as part of increasing engagement with the organization and growing the donor pipeline
- Make public appearances and represent the organization at community and donor events
- Prepare and present fundraising reports to the Executive Director and Board

Other (10%)

- Contribute to programs and events by participating in planning and providing on-site event support as needed
 - Provide technical and logistical support to external partners as assigned
 - Other duties as assigned
-

QUALIFICATIONS

This is a senior, largely self-directed role, and we are prioritizing applicants with demonstrated experience over those with general familiarity of the following qualifications. We recognize that no one person will have every skill listed below, and we welcome applicants from a variety of experiences and backgrounds to apply, including Indigenous, Black, Latine, and/or LGBTQIA+ individuals.

The minimum required qualifications include:

- 5+ years in a relationship-driven revenue role (development, major gifts, sponsorship, enrollment/admissions, sales, or account management) with a demonstrated track record of significant revenue growth
- Proven ability to build and convert a pipeline—moving prospects from initial interest to committed, recurring investment
- Strong personal network with established trust and credibility, and a track record of activating that network for organizational benefit
- Excellent storytelling and relationship-building skills across written, verbal, and in-person settings

- Experience managing revenue against goals, including budgeting, forecasting, and reporting
- CRM database proficiency (donor/client/prospect management system)
- Comfort representing the organization publicly and building trust quickly with new stakeholders

Ideal candidates will also possess many of the following skills:

- Experience developing membership, sponsorship, or other recurring/experiential revenue programs
 - Experience with Notion or similar project management software
 - Experience working with or knowledge of international and Native communities
 - Prior experience mentoring or managing junior staff, interns, or contractors
 - Existing connections with San Diego or southern California philanthropic and business community
-

TERMS

Position Type

- 40-hour-per-week position with normal business hours 9:00am–5:00pm Monday through Friday, unless otherwise discussed or in the case of after-hours or weekend programs and events
- On-site position based in La Jolla, California with hybrid flexibility
- Requires additional travel dependent on funding and project needs
- Position salary is \$43-48/hour based on experience
- This position is contingent upon funding and performance

Working Conditions

Requires a valid US driver's license and clean driving record. Requires occasionally lifting objects up to 40 lbs. and participating in community events in hot, dry, and sometimes wet conditions.

HOW TO APPLY

Qualified candidates should submit a resume and cover letter in **PDF format** to info@climatesciencealliance.org. Please put “[Your Name] - Development Director” in the email subject line.

In your cover letter, include responses to the following:

- Why do you want to work for the Climate Science Alliance?
- Briefly, what is your greatest strength that you would bring to this role?
- When can you start?
- Have you read the position pay and terms, and are you comfortable with them?

Along with your resume and cover letter, please include:

- A short written response (200–300 words) describing a fundraising relationship or campaign you led independently, including the outcome (e.g. dollars raised, donors retained, pipeline built).
- One or two examples of donor-facing writing you're proud of (a proposal, appeal letter, or stewardship report)
- Any other examples that would help us assess your fundraising experience

The position will remain open until filled.