

Executive Director, Development

A rare opportunity to shape the future of affordability, artistic vitality, and community character in Laguna Beach.

Build a philanthropic platform with the power to preserve place, possibility, and belonging for generations.

An Organization at a Defining Moment

Laguna Beach Community Land Trust (LBCLT) was founded in 2025 with an ambitious purpose: to acquire, develop, and steward affordable housing and workspace for Laguna Beach workers, seniors, and artists. By holding property for the long term, LBCLT helps protect affordability, economic diversity, and the artistic heritage that makes Laguna Beach distinctive.

In its first seven months, LBCLT acquired four properties containing 75 artist studios, including live/work units, representing \$18.5 million in acquisitions supported by charitable contributions and the City of Laguna Beach. The organization is guided by an engaged board with deep experience in real estate and nonprofit leadership.

The Opportunity to Lead

LBCLT seeks a sophisticated, imaginative, and highly relational fundraising executive to serve as Executive Director, Development. This is an opportunity to build, not simply inherit, a philanthropic enterprise. The successful candidate will shape the organization's development vision, create the infrastructure to support it, and inspire donors to see LBCLT as a compelling way to preserve the community they value.

Reporting to the Board President and partnering closely with a hands-on Board of Directors, this executive will serve as LBCLT's senior fundraising strategist, chief relationship builder, and visible ambassador. The role offers meaningful access to community leaders, a differentiated mission at the intersection of real estate and philanthropy, and the chance to create giving opportunities with tangible, enduring results.

Why This Role Is Distinctive

- Mission with permanence: Gifts can help protect affordable homes and creative workspaces for the long term, creating a visible legacy in Laguna Beach.
- An entrepreneurial mandate: The incoming leader will have the latitude to design the fundraising strategy, systems, messaging, and donor experience.
- A compelling philanthropic proposition: LBCLT can engage traditional donors while also developing planned gifts, charitable property gifts, and other sophisticated giving structures.
- An invested board partnership: The role works directly with board leaders who bring community relationships and nonprofit and real estate experience.
- Early momentum with room to grow: LBCLT has completed significant initial acquisitions and now needs an executive who can build the philanthropic capacity for its next chapter.

The Executive Mandate

- Define the Vision: Create and lead a multi-year development strategy that connects philanthropy to LBCLT's acquisition ambitions, stewardship obligations, and long-term community impact.
- Build Transformational Relationships: Develop and personally manage a portfolio of high-capacity individuals, earning trust and guiding prospects from initial engagement through significant commitment and stewardship.

- Advance Major, Planned, and Property Gifts: Build a disciplined program for principal gifts, legacy commitments, charitable home donations, and other tax-advantaged real estate gifts in collaboration with qualified advisors.
- Diversify the Revenue Model: Expand support from foundations, corporations, public agencies, and community partners while evaluating innovative, mission-aligned funding concepts.
- Activate the Board: Partner with the Board President and directors on relationship mapping, introductions, donor strategy, solicitation preparation, and coordinated follow-through.
- Tell the Story: Develop a persuasive case for support and communications that make the stakes, opportunity, and long-term value of LBCLT's work unmistakable.
- Create an Exceptional Donor Experience: Establish thoughtful cultivation, acknowledgment, reporting, and stewardship practices that deepen connection and encourage sustained investment.
- Build for Scale: Put in place practical systems for prospect research, portfolio management, confidentiality, gift tracking, pipeline reporting, and measurable fundraising execution.
- Lead Externally: Represent LBCLT with credibility and warmth among donors, civic leaders, artist tenants, community partners, professional advisors, and other stakeholders.
- Shape the Institution: Bring executive judgment, resourcefulness, and a builder's mindset as LBCLT grows from an ambitious start-up into an enduring community organization.

What Success Can Look Like

- A clear, board-supported fundraising roadmap with focused priorities, ownership, and operating rhythm.
- A credible pipeline of major-gift, planned-giving, property-gift, foundation, corporate, and public-sector prospects.
- A compelling case for support that resonates with donors who care about community continuity, affordable housing, and Laguna Beach's artistic legacy.
- Stronger board participation in strategic introductions, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship.
- A balanced portfolio of near-term opportunities and longer-horizon commitments that supports sustainable growth.

The Leader We Seek

The strongest candidates will combine executive presence with personal humility, strategic discipline with creativity, and ambition with a genuine commitment to community. They will be energized by the opportunity to create something consequential and comfortable operating both at the boardroom level and in the details of donor development.

- Five to eight years or more of progressive nonprofit development experience, including meaningful responsibility for fundraising strategy and results.
- A demonstrated record of cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major donors and building durable philanthropic relationships.
- Experience building or significantly expanding a diversified development program.
- The credibility and communication skills to engage high-capacity donors, board members, civic leaders, and professional advisors.
- Exceptional storytelling, writing, presentation, and listening skills.
- A hands-on leadership style suited to a lean organization where the executive both sets direction and executes.
- Sound judgment, discretion, organization, resilience, and consistent follow-through.
- A genuine connection to affordable housing, community preservation, the arts, or place-based philanthropy.

Experience That Would Add Value

- Affordable housing, community land trusts, real estate, or property-related philanthropy.

- Planned giving, complex assets, charitable property gifts, or collaboration with donors' legal, tax, and financial advisors.
- The Laguna Beach or greater Orange County philanthropic, civic, or business community.
- Leadership in a growing, founder-oriented, entrepreneurial, or board-engaged nonprofit organization.

Work Environment and Engagement Terms

The role is home-based and requires regular in-person donor and stakeholder engagement in Laguna Beach and throughout greater Orange County. It involves local travel and occasional evening or weekend commitments associated with events and donor cultivation.

LBCLT anticipates engaging this position as an independent contractor. The annualized compensation range for a full-time engagement is \$140,000 to \$170,000. A part-time arrangement may be considered, with responsibilities and compensation adjusted accordingly. Final terms should be documented in a written agreement and reviewed for compliance with applicable worker-classification and compensation requirements.

Join LBCLT

For the right leader, this is more than a development role. It is an opportunity to create a philanthropic legacy, help protect the character of an extraordinary community, and build an institution whose impact can be measured in generations.

Please submit a resume and cover letter to development@lagunabeachclt.org. In your letter, describe what draws you to LBCLT's mission, your experience securing significant philanthropic support, and an example of a fundraising program or donor relationship you helped build.

LBCLT is committed to a respectful and inclusive selection process. Engagement decisions should be based on qualifications, experience, and organizational needs.