

POSITION DESCRIPTION: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

The Providence Preservation Society (PPS), founded in 1956, is a 501(c) (3) membership organization whose mission is to improve the city of Providence for the people who live and work here through historic preservation and enhancement of the built environment.

PPS works city-wide advocating for the restoration, sensitive rehabilitation, and sustainable use of historic buildings and neighborhoods, and for well-designed contemporary architecture so that new construction enhances the physical and social city. It is actively engaged in matters of planning and public policy affecting the urbanity of civic life. It believes that, together, people and place define a city's success.

PPS creates, administers, and offers in partnership with others educational programs informing the public about Providence's rich architectural environment. PPS's heritage education program is multi-faceted. As examples, it reaches 3,000 public and independent school students annually with a field-based touring program; presents yearly training sessions for realtors; publishes a newsletter; has developed an e-news feature; implements a citywide marker program; sponsored production of the award-winning *PPS/AIAri Guide to Providence Architecture*; and recently instituted gatherings for Young Preservationists.

Activist public advocacy is a long-standing hallmark of the organization. It accomplishes its preservation policy work through formal efforts such as the Most Endangered Properties Program and an associated traveling photography and oral history exhibit; annual preservation awards; and through direct promotion of preservation's benefits to the community and to elected and appointed officials at city, state, and federal levels.

Additionally, for many years, PPS has had an effective Planning and Architectural Review Committee whose mission, in concert with the Board, is to influence city planning and zoning initiatives and property development affecting historic areas, including downtown. Commissioning cultural resource surveys and with other advocacy opportunities, PPS documents and protects a wide variety of neighborhoods and building types.

The annual PPS Festival of Historic Houses celebrates the architectural heritage and success of preservation efforts across the city. During Festival tours, PPS highlights individual and corporate activities that demonstrate sensitive preservation and careful stewardship of special places. The Festival is a nationally-recognized event that attracts thousands from throughout the region; it is also a major fundraiser for the Society. PPS currently produces other events, including a Fall fundraiser, a Holiday Festival in early December; an annual Winter Bash showcasing an historic industrial property; and the Annual Meeting, at which the organization conducts its business and distributes preservation awards.

PPS collaborates with a wide variety of people and organizations, including neighborhoods, statewide advocacy groups, and state and local regulatory agencies.

PPS has a 36-member Board of Trustees and a staff of four. The organization operates out of an eighteenth-century building jointly owned by PPS and the Junior League of Rhode Island. PPS has an operating budget of approximately \$500,000, an endowment of approximately \$1.2 million, and a membership of approximately 700. More than 200 volunteers annually assist in the work of the Society.

In the last three years, the organization has successfully restored ties to its traditional East Side base and forged more productive collaborations in revitalizing neighborhoods on Providence's West and South sides while also mounting a successful capital campaign with a goal to double the endowment. In the last two and a half years PPS has effectively tripled its resources.

THE POSITION

The Executive Director reports to and works closely with the Board of Trustees and serves as chief executive and public spokesperson for the organization. S/he has broad decision-making authority, implementing plans and programs in accordance with policies formulated jointly with the staff and board; as well as managing and coordinating the Society's operations, finances, staff, and development activities.

The Executive Director is responsible for conceptualizing, implementing, and directing the membership program and all fundraising efforts of the organization, and nurturing Trustee support.

A primary role of the Executive Director is as advocate and spokesperson for preservation principles and to represent PPS and its mission and goals to public and private concerns. S/he is the chief liaison with governmental officials at all levels and the public, and is expected to be an active and visible presence in the community.

The Executive Director interacts with the President on a regular basis, reviewing progress toward achieving objectives and seeking guidance on complex issues. S/he also proposes and responds to questions concerning new initiatives and, in general, keeps the board fully informed about and involved in the organization's activities.

Specific responsibilities of the Executive Director include:

- Articulating a vision, developed by the board and staff, for the long-term advancement of the organization.
- Ensuring that PPS fulfills its mission, develops long- and short-range plans, and evaluates its existing programs on a regular basis to achieve continuing viability.

- Formulating and implementing overall marketing and communications programs designed to create a clear, consistent identity for PPS resulting in wide-spread support and acceptance of its preservation and educational activities.
- Principal responsibility for supervising day-to-day operations of the staff and organization.
- Preparing and administering annual budgets and ensuring that appropriate systems, procedures, and financial controls are in place and adhered to.
- Managing revenues and expenses according to the budget.
- Managing and providing leadership to staff, delegating specific responsibilities and appropriate authority, and fostering intra-organizational communication.
- Creating an atmosphere conducive to a high level of staff morale, including promoting effective staff professional development.
- Ensuring appropriate staff support for volunteers and committees, thereby enabling them to perform their functions successfully.
- Cultivating and maintaining relations with current and potential grant sources, leadership donors, and corporate sponsors; initiating and supervising grant applications.
- Identifying opportunities that are consistent with the overall mission and goals of PPS.
- Stewarding the assets of the organization.

In the performance of these responsibilities, the Executive Director shall:

- Serve as chief advisor to the Board, assuring its effectiveness in policy-making, fundraising, evaluation, and allocating human resources.
- Orient new trustees to the organization and to their roles and responsibilities.
- Ensure that programming and other activities are mission-related and effective.
- Recruit and develop a competent, enthusiastic, and stable staff.
- Cultivate and maintain partnerships and good working relationships with city government, national and neighborhood preservation groups, and the education

and business sectors to extend PPS's reach, maximize its potential, and promote understanding of its objectives.

- Respond to changes in the business or political environment locally and nationally that may affect historic preservation.
- Confirm that PPS offers a balance of public education programs and pro-active advocacy.
- Model a high level of excellence, energy and professionalism for staff in interacting with the organization's members, donors, and other constituents.

Qualifications:

The successful candidate will have:

- Demonstrated leadership, strategic thinking, and management skills.
- A working knowledge of relevant disciplines including historic preservation, architectural history, zoning regulations, and available financial tools for preservation.
- Knowledge of and a commitment to preservation principles and techniques, and a personal interest in and understanding of their relevance to contemporary life and impact on the local economy.
- A history of having defined, communicated, and achieved goals.
- Proven fundraising, marketing, and public relations experience.
- Organizational skills that enable a focus on overall goals while managing a wide variety of activities.
- The ability to gain attention and respect through collegial, rational, experience-based thinking, supported by cogent public speaking and written communication skills.
- A proven ability to manage change successfully and motivate a community to embrace it.
- A level of education appropriate to the position (preferably a graduate degree in a related discipline, or equivalent experience).
- The dedication, discipline, and ambition to translate vision into concrete action.

- A passion for the job that needs to be done.

It is strongly recommended, although not mandatory, that the Executive Director be a resident of the city.

Compensation

The compensation package for this position will include a salary commensurate with skills and experience, with financial incentives for performance, paid vacation time, and preferred-provider health insurance paid by the employer. This is a full-time, exempt position.

PROVIDENCE PROFILE

Providence, the capital city of Rhode Island, has a population of about 180,000. Because of a high concentration of arts, cultural, and educational institutions, the city has tremendous aesthetic and cultural opportunities, as well as a large number of non-profit organizations.

The city is defined by a strong-mayor form of government, with a ward-based city council. Three design review committees oversee various parts of the city: the local historic districts, Downcity (the historic downtown), and Capital Center, the area made vacant by the relocation of the railroads and the Woonasquatucket River. Additional design review opportunities have been made available by the upcoming relocation of Interstate 195 and other one-time public policy initiatives.

Providence has long had a strong commitment to historic preservation; it continues today. Current challenges stem from the discovery of the city by out-of-state developers and chain-retail corporations. Coupled with a very high property tax rate and persistent need to increase the tax base, this fairly recent phenomenon requires close monitoring and advocacy by PPS to ensure that appropriate development is realized throughout the city.

Providence has evolved over the last 20 years into a desirable, walkable city with international cachet, in large measure because of the work of the Providence Preservation Society and its sister organization, the Revolving Fund. The city enjoys an unparalleled collection of historic buildings and public spaces dating from the early 18th century to the present, with 30 National Register districts within its boundaries. Rhode Island has the highest concentration of National Register-listed properties in the country.

Send a letter of interest and a current resume by January 23, 2008 to: David Karoff, 5 Thurston Street, Providence, RI 02907 or dkaroff@gmail.com. For more information go to www.ppsri.org. An Equal Opportunity Employer.