

RIVERE Ecological Center

Executive Director

Organization: RIVERE Ecological Center

Location: Fredericksburg, Virginia (Hybrid: Remote / On-Site / Community)

Position Type: Full-Time, Exempt W-2 Employee (12-Month Limited Term with Option for Renewal Pending Funding/Campaign Milestones)

Target Start Date: December 1, 2026

About RIVERE Ecological Center

RIVERE is a 501(c)(3) not for profit corporation that is working to build the RIVERE Ecological Center, a purpose-built hub along the Rappahannock River in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Designed as shared space, the Center will bring together researchers, environmental educators, nonprofits, ecopreneurs, public agencies, Tribal partners, and community members who are working to advance watershed health and river stewardship. Rather than operating programs itself, RIVERE will provide the space, digital tools, and connective tissue that allow existing organizations to collaborate more deeply, reach more people, and create lasting economic, environmental, and educational impact.

The Rappahannock SmartRiver Initiative will serve as a focal point for collaboration among researchers and ecopreneurs at the RIVERE Ecological Center. This pioneering initiative aims to deploy a smart wireless sensor network in tributaries throughout the length of the Rappahannock to enable proactive monitoring, mitigation, and planning measures as projected population growth and development upstream place increased pressure on the river.

RIVERE collaborates and engages with over 120 regional and national stakeholders, to include Virginia Tech, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Friends of the Rappahannock, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Patawomeck Indian Tribe of Virginia, the Virginia Innovation Partnership Corporation, the University of Mary Washington, the City of Fredericksburg, and Stafford County. RIVERE is preparing to launch a capital campaign to construct a 30,000 square foot state-of-the-art ecological center featuring wet/dry laboratories, immersive virtual/augmented reality exhibit space, conference facilities, and a coworking membership model.

Position Summary

The Executive Director (ED) serves as the chief executive leader of RIVERE, driving

strategic direction, financial growth, operational development, and stakeholder mobilization. Reporting directly to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will lead RIVERE through a critical transition from its foundational startup phase into rapid organizational expansion.

Key priorities include co-leading the capital campaign alongside the Board of Directors, overseeing startup nonprofit infrastructure development, supervising staff and operational systems, establishing the center's earned revenue coworking model, and managing complex public-private partnerships. The Executive Director works in close collaboration with project leads, the Operations Manager, board leadership, and key institutional partners.

Core Responsibilities

1. Strategic Direction & Startup Execution

(In partnership with the founder and board of directors)

- **Organizational Scaling:** Define and execute strategic growth plans that transition RIVERE from initial startup planning to full facility operation and regional presence.
- **Board Governance & Collaboration:** Partner closely with the Founder & Chairperson of the Board and the Board of Directors; prepare board packets, track governance metrics, support board expansion, and implement board committee charters.
- **Consultant & Advisory Management:** Lead direct collaboration with external advisory teams, including CIMA Consulting (project leadership, financial modeling, campaign strategy) and architectural/engineering partners.

2. Capital Campaign & Comprehensive Fundraising

(Supported by development consultants)

- **Capital Campaign Leadership:** Drive campaign readiness and execution in partnership with the Board and campaign consultants; cultivate, solicit, and steward major individual donors, family foundations, and corporate partners.
- **Institutional Funding Pipeline:** Oversee grant strategy, proposal development, and funder relations across federal, state, and private foundation sources.
- **Donor Infrastructure:** Ensure robust utilization of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems (DonorPerfect) to maintain active donor pipelines, moves management tracking, and multi-year pledge fulfillment.

3. Coworking Formation & Earned Revenue Strategy

- **Coworking Space Model Execution:** Operationalize RIVERE's earned revenue

strategy based on the Gather Workspaces, LLC coworking membership model; manage facility space allocation across private offices, dedicated desks, and floating memberships.

- **Ecopreneurial Hub Development:** Build an active community of environmental technology start-ups, academic researchers, non-profit partners, and corporate tenants to achieve 70% to 80% occupancy targets.
- **Event & Space Rental Management:** Establish pricing models and operational procedures for renting conference rooms, auditorium facilities, and event spaces to external organizations.

4. Financial Oversight & Administrative Management

(Supported by external contracted accounting firm, development consultants, operations manager)

- **Budgeting & Financial Modeling:** Maintain primary financial oversight; develop annual operating budgets, monitor cash flow projections, track burn rates, and ensure alignment with multi-year capital construction financial models.
- **Fiscal Accountability & Audits:** Oversee financial management together with contracted external accounting firm; oversee procurement policies, contracting, and compliance audits in accordance with 501(c)(3) standards.
- **Risk Management & Compliance:** Maintain organizational insurance, lease agreements, risk registers, and legal compliance across all operations and property management activities.

5. Staff Supervision & Team Leadership

- **Team Building & Management:** Direct, evaluate, and mentor RIVERE personnel, beginning with direct supervision of the Operations Manager and expanding to future program leads, grant writers, and administrative staff.
- **Performance Reviews:** Establish structured 3-month, 6-month, and annual performance goals; cultivate a collaborative, accountable, and mission-focused work culture.
- **Operational Delegation:** Eliminate administrative bottlenecks by establishing clear operational protocols and delegating day-to-day logistics to the Operations Manager.

6. Stakeholder Engagement & Public Representation

(In partnership with Operations Manager)

- **Regional Ecosystem Engagement:** Serve as the chief spokesperson for RIVERE across regional coalitions, local governments within the Rappahannock watershed, state agencies, environmental education groups, tribal partners, and community members.

- **SmartRiver & Partner Initiatives:** Provide support to academic and technology partners in advancing the Rappahannock SmartRiver Initiative and local educators conducting environmental education at the RIVERE Ecological Center.
- **Marketing & Public Relations:** Oversee strategic communications, public announcements, and press relations to build regional visibility and brand awareness.

Required Qualifications & Experience

- **Executive Leadership:** Minimum of 7–10 years of progressive leadership experience in non-profit executive management, startup administration, or regional project management.
- **Fundraising Track Record:** Demonstrated success in major donor cultivation, capital campaign execution (\$5M+ campaigns preferred), grant acquisition, and institutional development.
- **Earned Revenue Strategy:** Leading expertise in earned revenue strategy for nonprofit organizations.
- **Financial & Operational Acumen:** Proficient in multi-year budget management, financial statement review, CRM systems, and business model execution.
- **Startup & Coworking Ecosystems:** Experience or strong familiarity with innovative space-sharing concepts (e.g., coworking membership models), facility operations, or business incubator frameworks.
- **Staff Leadership:** Proven ability to manage, mentor, and build staff teams in dynamic, fast-paced environments.
- **Communication Skills:** Exceptional public speaking, written messaging, and inter-organizational negotiation abilities across diverse stakeholder groups.
- **Educational Background:** Bachelor's degree required; Master's degree in Business Administration, Non-Profit Management, Environmental Science, Public Administration, or a related field preferred.

Preferred Qualifications

- Understanding of watershed science, environmental technology, or regional conservation policy in Virginia and the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- Experience managing capital construction projects, green building standards (LEED Platinum / Living Building Challenge), or facility lease management.
- Familiarity with the Fredericksburg region, regional government bodies, and mid-Atlantic philanthropic networks.

Work Environment & Logistics

- **Structure:** Exempt W-2 Employee with a 12-month limited-term initial contract, featuring the option for renewal based on performance evaluations and

campaign funding milestones.

- **Work Location:** Hybrid schedule combining remote work, on-site meetings in Fredericksburg, Virginia, and community stakeholder engagements. Expectation of 1 to 3 days per week on-site or in the office for meetings and site visits.
- **Schedule Requirements:** Occasional evening and weekend hours required for board meetings, community events, and donor cultivation functions. Travel across the regional watershed and mid-Atlantic region as required.
- **Performance Assessments:** Structured performance assessments will be conducted at 3-month and 6-month milestones to evaluate progress toward strategic and capital goals.

Compensation & Benefits

- **Compensation Range:** Competitive salary commensurate with experience and regional non-profit executive standards (Target Range: \$105,000 – \$125,000 annually, subject to final Board approval and compensation benchmark study).
- **Benefits Notice:** As RIVERE is currently operating in its startup growth phase, **no employee health, retirement, or secondary benefits are provided during this initial start-up phase.** Compensation is structured to reflect this startup phase status.

Equal Opportunity & Nondiscrimination Statement

RIVERE Ecological Center is an Equal Opportunity Employer. RIVERE does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, height, weight, physical or mental ability, veteran status, military obligations, or marital status in any of its operational activities, hiring practices, promotions, or administrative procedures. This commitment extends to all employees, volunteers, members, contractors, and public interactions.

Application Process

To apply, please submit a cover letter detailing your executive leadership background and alignment with RIVERE's mission, along with a current resume/CV and three professional references, to: development@riverecenter.org.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis beginning September 2026, with first-round candidate evaluations scheduled for late September 2026 toward a target start date of December 1, 2026.