



210-212 Center Street
Ithaca NY 14850
www.historicithaca.org

Position Title: Executive Director

Reports to: President, Board of Directors

Status: Exempt, full-time with benefits

Reporting to this Position: Preservation Services Director, Program Manager; Volunteers

About Historic Ithaca

Historic Ithaca is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit founded in 1966 and the leading voice for historic preservation in Tompkins County and the Finger Lakes region of Upstate New York. We advance the value, vitality, and sustainability of our built heritage through education, advocacy, and action.

With headquarters in Ithaca's Southside, we operate a community hub consisting of two historic buildings. What was once a neighborhood grocery store now houses staff offices, meeting space, and an accessible Library of the Built Environment. The other, an industrial building constructed in 1887, is home to **Significant Elements**—a 10,000-square-foot nonprofit architectural salvage store that keeps donated historic building materials in circulation. Adjacent to the store, a purpose-modified workshop space supports **Work Preserve**, providing valuable hands-on preservation skills training and retail experience for marginalized youth. Both of these programs support our preservation activities, which include offsite tours, events, an historic preservation awards program, and a wide array of preservation services for property owners, businesses, and municipalities.

Position Description

Historic Ithaca is seeking applicants for the position of Executive Director. This position works in close partnership with an engaged and experienced Board of Directors to provide overall leadership and strategic direction to advance Historic Ithaca's mission. Advocating for the built environment, the Executive Director is responsible for fundraising and revenue development, cultivating and sustaining key stakeholder relationships, supervising and supporting staff, ensuring the organization's fiscal sustainability, and overseeing day-to-day operations.

Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership & Governance

- Provide day-to-day leadership for a small, high-impact nonprofit—ensuring smooth operations, strong internal systems, and excellent service to the community.
- Partner with the Board of Directors to set organizational priorities and implement a strategic plan that advances the mission and defines clear goals and direction.

People & Culture

- Recruit, hire, coach, and manage a team of up to six staff, fostering a collaborative, high-performance culture grounded in learning, service, and quality.
- Create and sustain a safe, respectful, and welcoming workplace that supports accessibility (within facility limitations) and values people from diverse backgrounds.

Finance, Operations & Infrastructure

- Oversee the organization's financial health (with third-party bookkeeping support), including budget development and monitoring, cash-flow awareness, and strong internal controls.
- Ensure that staff have the technology, tools, and specialized third-party support needed to deliver programs and services effectively and efficiently.
- Ensure compliance with applicable laws and ethical standards; manage organizational risk; and oversee facility and property maintenance to protect Historic Ithaca's assets and reputation.

Fundraising

- Design and deliver a comprehensive fundraising program consisting of individual giving, corporate sponsorship, and grants to support operations and special projects.
- Partner with Board and committee members to coordinate timely, high-impact personal outreach.
- Oversee grant operations—building sustainable reporting frameworks and the systems needed for accurate progress tracking and compliance.

Communications & Community Relations

- Serve as Historic Ithaca's public representative—building partnerships with community stakeholders and using communications channels (e.g., website, e-newsletter, social media, media outreach, direct mail) to strengthen visibility and support.

Qualifications, Skills, and Competencies

- Leadership experience in a similar organization with the ability to inspire and support a team, set clear goals, and make thoughtful decisions.
- Nonprofit financial management, including budgeting and making the most of resources to support sustainable growth.
- Demonstrated fundraising success—cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding individual donors, foundations, and corporate partners.
- Strong writing and public speaking skills, and a clear, respectful communication style.
- Comfort representing the organization and building positive relationships with community members, partners, and the media.
- A steady, solutions-oriented approach—able to navigate unexpected situations, identify root causes, and collaborate on practical improvements.
- Enthusiasm for diverse histories and cultures, preservation, sustainability, and lifelong learning.
- A college degree in management or a related field is helpful; equivalent professional or lived experience is also valued.

- Experience and/or interest in one or more of the following areas is strongly desired: historic preservation, architecture, city planning, building trades, community and/or economic development, and retail sales.

Note: We know that no candidate will bring every qualification. If you're excited about our mission and feel you'd be a strong fit for this role, we encourage you to apply—even if your experience doesn't match every item listed.

Work Environment

Work is performed primarily onsite at 210 Center Street, Ithaca, New York. Typical hours are 9 am-5 pm, Monday-Friday with occasional weekend or evening work to support special programming. Work is primarily office-based with occasional lifting/moving up to 30 pounds (and heavier with assistance) and local travel.

Start Date

The position is open until filled.

Compensation

Starting salary: \$70,500-\$75,500 per year. Benefits include 10 paid holidays and 3 paid floating holidays per year; paid vacation and sick/personal days; health insurance (paid via a stipend); and the opportunity to participate in a non-matched 401(k) plan.

How to Apply

- Prepare a brief cover letter, resume, and writing sample (e.g., fundraising letter, advocacy position paper, press release).
- Submit by email (PDFs) to info@historicithaca.org with subject "Executive Director," or by mail to Human Resources, Historic Ithaca, 210 Center Street, Ithaca, NY 14850.
- No phone calls, please. Qualified candidates will be contacted within five business days for an initial interview.

We appreciate your interest in Historic Ithaca and look forward to learning more about you.

Historic Ithaca is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. We do not tolerate discrimination or harassment based on age, race, creed (including religion), color, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, military status, sex (including pregnancy-related conditions), disability, predisposing genetic characteristics, familial status, marital status, status as a victim of domestic violence, or any other status protected by applicable federal, state, or local law.

This commitment applies to every aspect of employment, including recruitment, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff/recall, transfer, leaves, compensation, and training. We also prohibit retaliation against anyone who reports or opposes discrimination or harassment.