



JOB DESCRIPTION: Executive Director, Virginia Horse Center Foundation

Virginia Horse Center Foundation (VHCF), established in 1985, provides a world-class facility hosting regional, national, and international equestrian events. We envision a unique, bucolic landmark to honor and celebrate the timeless, special bond between mankind and horse through safe, fair and spirited equestrian competition. The facility is located outside of Lexington, Virginia on 600 acres with 750 permanent stalls in 8 barns, 19 indoor and outdoor show rings including a 4,000-seat indoor Coliseum as well as a 5-mile cross country course for eventing competitions.

Based on a 2019 study, the total economic impact of the VHCF in Virginia is estimated to have reached \$94.9 million in 2019 and supported 896 jobs across the state. In Rockridge County, the total economic impact (direct, indirect, and induced) is estimated to be \$47.7 million, supporting 518 jobs. VHCF generated an estimated \$7.4 million in economic impact in the city in 2019, supporting 67 jobs.

We are now looking for a mission-driven and experienced business leader who is skilled in executing strategic plans, developing and leading staff and fostering a positive and empowering culture. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will be based full time in Lexington and have overall responsibility to manage and successfully grow the business activities of this not-for-profit equestrian competition facility, which has a \$4.5 million annual operating budget, and up to 60 employees during peak season.

POSITION OVERVIEW:

The position reports to a hands-on and knowledgeable Board of Directors. The Executive Director has full responsibility to oversee, administer and plan all the facility's business activities and staff on a daily basis. They are also tasked with setting the strategic vision with the Board in order to take the facility to a new level of prominence and visibility in the equestrian world, all in a financially prudent manner, over the next five to ten years. This position requires a dynamic leader who is passionate about horses and things equine; someone who can both lead the team hands-on at the Center and push the organization forward within the realms of organizations governing the equestrian sport and disciplines. They will enjoy working with local, state and federal governments and their representatives and cultivate new and existing donor relationships to further establish the VHCF as one of the top multi-discipline equestrian facilities in the United States.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- To develop and refine the strategic direction of VHCF that will propel the Center forward as the leading multi-discipline equine facility in the region, in collaboration with Board of Directors and key staff.
- To use an entrepreneurial mindset to translate that strategic direction into operational plans and new business development goals. This includes adding key performance indicators and accountability, so that the Center can develop within budget and best meet the needs of the equestrian community.
- To be a visible and available resource at events, including at weekends, championing clients, and working with show managers to ensure their needs are met. The Executive Director is expected to keep their finger on the pulse of the organization at all levels and to continue to develop the welcoming culture in which clients, competitors and staff succeed.
- To organize, motivate, and mentor staff to grow the organization's impact with innovative thinking and effective performance measurement. To foster a culture that encourages collaboration between all levels of staff within the organization, and to recognize positive contributions made by the respective parties. The Executive Director will naturally endorse a collaborative work environment, encourage professional development, and champion accountability amongst staff and management to ensure the center is run by a motivated and proud team.
- Furthermore, the Executive Director has the oversight of hiring processes, ongoing staff development, performance management, and determining compensation and benefits.



- To engage in fiscal management in cooperation with the CFO and Controller; to routinely report performance and financial activities to the Board and to plan, actively manage, and oversee the organization's programs, fundraising, and operations.
- To oversee the day-to-day operations of the organization and ensure its overall long-term success. The Executive Director will develop fundraising in collaboration with the Development Director, and leverage the Board as needed. The Executive Director and their team will provide reports and updates on relevant activities at the VHCF at board meetings.
- To effectively represent the organization and promote a positive image to relevant parties in the equine world as well as to local authorities, elected officials, donors and supporters, other foundations etc, and to ensure adequate community representation.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

The ideal candidate for this role embraces servant-leadership and has a hands-on approach to day-to-day operational management, strategic planning, and organizational leadership.

Ideally, the successful candidate should bring:

- At least seven years of prior executive experience as a successful leader of a similarly sized business or non-profit organization, with a track record of growing organizational success. The candidate will have knowledge of the competitive and dynamic market for equestrian facilities and must have the motivation to show VHCF as a clear leader in the competitive landscape. They will be experienced in fundraising and business development and know how to empower and enable their team to excel in this.
- A passion for VHCF's mission, for horses and equestrian sports, and the will to build an organization that brings the enjoyment and use of the Center to a wide audience. The incumbent will excel at leading an organization towards positive growth and designing and directing strategies that enhance and support the Foundation's operations.
- A proven ability and experience in linking strategic direction to operational goals, objectives and financial outcomes. The Executive Director will routinely secure Board approval for annual budget, and enjoy creating and establishing clear, measurable business goals.
- Outstanding communication skills - an ability to work well with staff, show managers, elected officials of Lexington, Rockbridge County and the Commonwealth of Virginia, state and national equestrian associations and the media.
- A track record of fostering an environment of accountability, healthy work relationships and inclusivity among staff to maintain a positive and collaborative work environment and culture.

COMPENSATION:

Starting compensation includes a basic salary which may be between \$125,000 and \$145,000, dependent on background and experience. In addition, the successful candidate will participate in VHCF's group medical and dental plans.

HOW TO APPLY:

For immediate consideration please send your resume and short cover letter to Rosa von Fürstenberg on rosa@rosavf.com.

Review of applications and expressions of interest will begin immediately and continue on a confidential basis until an appointment is made.

Virginia Horse Center Foundation is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages diversity and equity in all facets of the organization's work. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other protected class.