



Otsego Land Trust Seeks Executive Director

About Otsego Land Trust

Founded in 1987, [Otsego Land Trust \(OLT\)](#) seeks to inspire our human spirit by conserving the woodlands, farmlands, and waters in the northernmost Susquehanna River Watershed. This landscape, the mythic Leatherstocking Region of New York, nurtures our communities, supports wildlife habitat, and ultimately improves our collective health.

This area was first settled by the Haudenosaunee or Iroquois. OLT embraces their Seventh Generation Principle; *the decisions we make today should result in a sustainable world seven generations into the future*. Our future includes everyone. We believe that diversity and inclusion are interlinked with conscious conservation efforts as we strive to create a place:

- With clean air and water, family farms and business, as well as breathtaking panoramas;
- Where our children learn about wildlife by seeing it; and
- Where human beings live in relationship with nature.

After thirty years, OLT now protects over 11,000 acres in perpetuity and is poised to become a regional conservation leader. OLT's efforts include:

- [Donated Conversation Easements on privately owned lands](#) – Donated easements integrate landowner visions and needs for their properties as well as the mission of OLT. OLT has partnered with farmers, hunters, environmentalists, and other landowners to create the legal documents that protect their property and its unique conservation attributes.
- [Public Lands](#) – OLT maintains eight public access sites, including Brookwood Point, and is working to make more land available for the community to enjoy. Activities available on OLT lands include recreational hiking and paddling, bird watching, fishing, wetland restoration, and research
- [Trade Lands](#) – OLT has a fluctuating portfolio of properties donated to or purchased by the land trust that have significant conservation characteristics. Such lands are sold with easements to increase protected lands and add resources for our other programs.
- [Connecting Kids to Nature](#) – OLT facilitates outdoor education for children to build the next generation who will champion our sustainable landscapes.

Our offices are located in Cooperstown, NY. Otsego County is one of the places that the American conservation movement was born in the 19th century and is now home to the Baseball Hall of Fame, Fenimore Art Museum, Glimmerglass Opera, two colleges, the beautiful Butternut Valley, and the Bassett Health Care Network. OLT has an annual operating budget of approximately \$550,000, total assets of \$5 million, and a staff of five. OLT is governed by a 12-member Board of Directors comprised of local and regional representatives with deep commitments to conservation and

preservation. Since February, OLT has been led by its Interim Executive Director, David Diaz, who has been OLT's Director of Land Protection since 2017.

Opportunity Going Forward

The Executive Director will be a seasoned non-profit administrator and dynamic leader who is a patient and imaginative visionary as well as an effective spokesperson who can grow a well-respected land trust to the next level. Initially the Executive Director will create a revitalized organizational structure for OLT, which has experienced significant board and senior leadership transitions in the last few years. Ultimately, they will have the opportunity to work collaboratively with the board, staff, and partners to develop a compelling, forward looking vision for OLT that expands its impact within and beyond Otsego County. In addition to effectively and efficiently overseeing ongoing operations and managing the organization's finances, high priorities for the Executive Director include:

- Landing on a specific growth strategy to allow OLT to conserve additional lands.
- Considering creative land preservation strategies to complement OLT's traditional approaches.
- Expanding OLT's fundraising program and growing its donor base.
- Capitalizing on post-COVID revenue opportunities, including accessing new and varied sources of funds available from New York State and federal sources.
- Developing a strong partnership with the Board of Directors and establishing clear role expectations to maximize the board's contributions to OLT and its support of the Executive Director.
- Establishing a clear strategy for Brookwood Point to maximize its value while minimizing its impact on other OLT priorities.
- Considering partnerships and collaborations with other organizations to facilitate OLT's expansion within and beyond Otsego County.
- Creating and implementing a comprehensive public relation and marketing strategy that differentiates OLT from similarly situated and named nonprofits.
- Leading, empowering, and motivating a dedicated and experienced group of passionate professionals who are committed to advancing OLT's mission.

Desired Credentials/Profile of the Ideal Candidate

- A minimum of five years of senior leadership, or equivalent experience
- Knowledge of and passion for land preservation and/or conservation
- Prior experience partnering with and stewarding Boards of Directors

Skills and Experience

Networker and Collaborator with Exceptional Communication Skills

- Dynamic, energetic, and charismatic ambassador, advocate, and spokesperson with strong communication skills who is connected to and based in the community
- A strong networker with the desire to be OLT's public face to get to know people and sell OLT's vision

- A diplomat who is engaging and articulate, able to communicate with various groups and meet individuals and groups where they are
- Consensus builder who is honest, open, authentic, direct, and compassionate
- Eager and energetic collaborator internally and externally who makes clear decisions and follows through on commitments

Visionary and Strategic Mission-Driven Leader

- Courageous, visionary, and confident strategist who sees the big picture and is open to new ideas and definitions to reshape OLT and establish its priorities
- An opportunistic, risk-taking, and entrepreneur leader who is passionate about conservation and open to new and diverse approaches to preserving land
- Able to move thoughtfully, intentionally, and relatively quickly to engage and partner with others, understanding how to create the alliances inherent in land trust work
- Displays perseverance and a long-term commitment to OLT

Strong Nonprofit Administrator and Board Partner

- Nonprofit leadership experience with the knowledge of how to grow an organization's footprint and impact
- Capable of establishing budgets and assuming the primary responsibility for OLT's fiscal oversight and financial health
- Experience working with boards, with the ability to work collaboratively to establish appropriate governance and management boundaries
- Able to serve as a trusted partner to the board to help it improve its cohesion, dynamics, skill sets, and contributions to OLT
- A well-organized multi-tasker

Experienced and Effective Fundraiser

- Skilled fundraiser, who can attract, steward, and retain donors
- A salesperson who can close the deal, securing agreements, contracts, and donations
- A diplomatic negotiator who can interact equally well with landowners, farmers, hunters, partners, and donors
- Displays soft selling skills

Empowering and Trusted Team Leader

- Able to build the organizational framework and staffing structure required to ensure OLT's current and future success
- A team builder and motivator who is trustworthy, honest, and transparent
- Strong recruiter and manager of staff, who holds self and others accountable to high standards
- Decisive, yet fair, with the willingness to lift up and share credit with others

Application Guidelines

This is a full-time, salaried, exempt position with a starting salary range of \$90,000 to 125,000, commensurate with experience and qualifications and within the framework of the organization's

annual budget. Candidates should include a resume and a cover letter that describes how their qualifications and experience match the needs and mission of OLT. Applications will be accepted until the position has been filled. Submit required documents at:

<https://eostransitions.applicantpool.com/jobs/>

OLT is an Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer which encourages applications from candidates from diverse backgrounds and cultures, particularly candidates of color and/or candidates who know and/or represent the communities OLT serves.

This executive search is being conducted by Eos Transition Partners consultant John Tarvin. All submissions will be acknowledged and are confidential, and any questions must be submitted to John at: jtarkin@eostransitions.com.