



The Children's Literacy Foundation Seeks Executive Director

About The Children's Literacy Foundation

The [Children's Literacy Foundation \("CLiF"\)](#) is a nonprofit organization that serves children up to age 12 throughout New Hampshire and Vermont who are at higher risk of growing up with low literacy skills. Founded by Executive Director Duncan McDougall in 1998, CLiF's mission is to inspire a love of reading and writing while providing equitable access to literacy resources, activities, and presentations. During its first year of operation, CLiF hosted 500 children at six events and donated \$7,000 in books. Over the last quarter century, CLiF's impact has expanded dramatically in the Twin States. In 2021, despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, CLiF hosted 788 events, with a total attendance of 52,753, and gave away almost \$1 million in new, high-quality children's books. Collectively since its founding, CLiF has served over 350,000 children in 90 percent of all communities across VT and NH and given away over \$10 million in books.

CLiF partners with over 60 professional authors, illustrators, poets, graphic novelists, and storytellers who give inspiring in-person literacy presentations to children on the organization's behalf. These fun and interactive presentations are designed to spark excitement around reading and writing. At the close of each event, every child in attendance is invited to pick out new books from a wide selection of titles to keep for themselves. CLiF also donates significant collections of new, high-quality children's books to school libraries, public libraries, classrooms, shelters, community centers, early childhood education programs, affordable housing developments, and other locations that serve children and families.

CLiF provides a wide variety of literacy resources, and support to parents, caregivers, and staff members at organizations that serve its target audience. CLiF also hosts periodic conferences for educators and librarians. Each year, CLiF selects at least 10 schools—divided equally between New Hampshire and Vermont—for its flagship Year of the Book grant, which provides recipients with \$25,000 in new books and literacy programming. Additional Information about all of CLiF's programs can be found [here](#).

CLiF has a staff of six (including the Executive Director), an \$800,000 annual budget, and net assets of more than \$3 million. In March 2023, the organization will transition to a new, purpose-built headquarters in Waterbury Center, VT. CLiF is overseen by a highly engaged and experienced twelve-member Board of Directors composed of business and nonprofit leaders, and benefits from the expertise of an active Board of Advisors. Since its founding, CLiF has been very successfully led by its Executive Director, Duncan McDougall, who will step down from his leadership role once a successor is hired. Given his unwavering commitment to CLiF's ongoing success, if the next leader would find it useful, Duncan would be willing to support CLiF in a variety of ways: volunteering, supporting fundraising, making introductions, troubleshooting, etc.

Opportunity Going Forward

The Executive Director will have the opportunity to lead an innovative, well-respected, award-winning, mission-driven literacy program that has inspired children throughout New Hampshire and Vermont to fall in love with books, reading, and writing. In addition to overseeing all staff and operations of the nonprofit, priorities for the Executive Director include:

- Navigating the transition from a founding leader, ensuring that existing external relationships are transitioned to the new leader so current programming and support are sustained and future expansion is possible.
- Creating strong connections to and relationships with existing funders, partners, and presenters.
- Developing and implementing a plan to continue CLiF's program growth, both through breadth and depth.
- Leading, empowering, and mentoring a collaborative team of highly skilled, mission-driven professionals, some of whom will be relatively new to their positions.
- Completing the transition of CLiF to its new headquarters and maximizing the use of that space.
- Partnering with the Board of Directors to document and implement governance best practices.
- Advancing CLiF's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in its programs, operations, and governance.
- Diversifying the board and donor base with an emphasis on engaging younger supporters and securing larger dollar donations.
- Ensuring that standard and effective operating processes and procedures are in place particularly regarding human resource practices.

Desired Credentials/Profile of the Ideal Candidate

- A minimum of five years of senior leadership, or equivalent experience, preferably at an organization of comparable size and scale.
- Experience with nonprofits, either as a staff member or active Board member.
- Knowledge of and passion for books, reading, writing, and literacy.
- Understanding of the educational landscape and how schools operate, particularly in VT and NH.
- Knowledge of the character of the rural communities and children served by CLiF.

Skills and Experience

Strategic and Collaborative Business Leader

- Strategic, visionary, and innovative leader able to see the big picture, take advantage of opportunities, and willing to try new things.
- Strong business sense with excellent organizational skills and the ability to wear multiple hats and multitask.
- Enthusiastic leader who inspires others, has an easy and unassuming demeanor, and is an approachable collaborator committed to collaborative decision making.
- Displays an interest in and understanding of the financial operations of a nonprofit of CLiF's scale.
- Technology forward leader willing to consider and incorporate new systems and processes.

Mission-Aligned Champion

- Commitment to, belief in, and alignment with CLiF's mission.
- Demonstrated love of books, literacy, and kids with knowledge of how literacy is taught in VT and NH.
- Inspired by, understanding of, and deeply committed to the diverse populations served by CLiF.
- Able to marry the "feel good" nature of CLiF's programs with data to support the evaluation of program efficacy.
- Knowledge of VT and NH with the ability to capitalize on the geographical location of CLiF's new headquarters in Waterbury VT.
- Able to expand CLiF's local geographic awareness to a regional one.

Consummate Communicator, Networker, and Relationship Builder

- Exceptional interpersonal skills with the ability to employ a personal touch and connect one to one with others.
- Inspired by and skilled at being the public face of CLiF with a willingness to be present throughout VT and NH.
- Able to create and sustain long-term relationships with funders, presenters, partners, community leaders, etc.
- Experienced and fearless fundraiser with particular skill at individual giving and making an ask.
- Able to expand the donation size beyond the historically successful written annual appeals by expanding gifts from foundations and institutional donors as well as CLiF's on-line fundraising capabilities.
- Grant writing experience a plus.

Empowering Leader of CLiF's People

- Able to maximize and empower the contributions of a small team, placing trust in their expertise and abilities.
- Skilled at assessing staff roles and responsibilities and making adjustments where needed.
- Understanding of staff training, onboarding, and evaluation to professionalize the human resource function.
- Commitment to work-life balance with the ability to navigate the impact of the pandemic and creating and supporting the ideal hybrid/remote environment for CLiF.
- Knowledge of nonprofit governance to support the board's evolution to create a more professional nonprofit infrastructure.

Compensation and Benefits:

This is a full-time, salaried, exempt position with a starting salary range of \$80,000 to \$90,000 commensurate with experience and qualifications. Benefits, including health insurance, are also offered for this position.

Application Process and Additional Information

CLiF views diversity, inclusion, and cultural competence as vital guiding principles in all our work with clients and communities. We welcome and encourage applications from visible minority group members, Indigenous persons, members of the LGBTQ community, persons with disabilities and others who may contribute to the diversity of the organization and reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.

Candidate must include a resume and a cover letter that describes how your qualifications and experience match the needs and mission of CLiF. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Upload required documents to: <https://eostransitions.applicantpool.com/jobs/>.

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