

Position Announcement — Development Director

The Ausable Freshwater Center (AFC), a nonprofit environmental conservation organization based in Wilmington NY, seeks an experienced development director to advance the organization's mission and maximize the engagement of people that care about freshwater systems and their value for communities. Working with board and staff, the development director will plan and execute annual fundraising strategies (major gifts, foundation grants, campaigns, appeals, and events), nurture donor relationships, and expand awareness of AFC's mission and programs.

Position Overview

Status:	Full-time, exempt.
Location:	Wilmington, NY based with some telecommuting possible.
Compensation:	\$75,000 – \$90,000 anticipated starting range depending on experience, with excellent health, dental, vision, retirement, and paid time off benefits.
Timeline:	Applications due by June 1, 2026.

About Us

Ausable Freshwater Center builds a better future for the Adirondacks through effective, science-based stewardship of freshwater systems. We restore streams, build community flood resilience, safeguard water quality, and monitor and protect the habitats of native species. We share our technical knowledge and our passion for our work widely. We open people's eyes to the complexity of healthy freshwater systems and how to live respectfully with them.

A staff of eleven conservation professionals work from offices based in Wilmington and Lake Placid, New York. AFC's 2026 budget is just over \$2 million. Income is realized through federal and state contracts and grants, fee for service contracts, foundation and individual donations, and native plant sales.

Responsibilities:

Working closely with the executive director, the operations director, and the finance and grant administrator, the development director is primarily responsible for growing and sustaining our vital private revenue streams. They will also support and advise the executive director's public funding advocacy, helping to devise actionable strategies, build broad support networks, and targeting opportunities.

Fundraising strategy: Design and implement comprehensive plans covering major gifts, annual campaigns, corporate giving, and capital and endowment campaigns.

Donor relations: Identify, cultivate, and steward relationships with supporters and donors to foster long-term, recurring support.

Operational leadership: Create, monitor, and analyze fundraising budgets and goals to ensure financial sustainability.

Event management: Design, plan, and execute fundraising events, campaigns, and community outreach initiatives.

Data management: Oversee donor databases and use wealth screening tools to track engagement.

Communications: Working with the communications team, craft compelling narratives and consistent messaging that translate the organization's mission into donor action that drive fundraising, stewardship, and brand visibility.

Collaboration: Work with the executive director and Board of Directors to align fundraising efforts with organizational goals.

Required Skills and Qualifications

Experience: Five or more years of experience in nonprofit development or fundraising with a track record of acquiring, engaging, and retaining donors and experience in managing successful capital campaigns.

Communication: Excellent interpersonal, written, and verbal communication skills; a capacity to articulate the AFC cause and an empathetic and active listener willing to take the time to build credibility and foster trust with individual donors.

Leadership: Strong ability to manage small teams, work closely with board members and other volunteers, and collaborate with staff.

Technical Skills: Proficiency with donor management software (Bloomerang), Excel, Word, and digital marketing tools.

Strategic and Creative Thinking: Entrepreneurial mindset with the ability to turn strategic plans into creative, actionable campaigns.

Focus: A passion for science-based protection of fresh water and native ecosystems.

Mindset: Curiosity about people's passions, a sense of humor, a desire to identify and solve problems, and the ability to work with, and serve, a small, dedicated group of professionals is essential.

Goals

Create an ethic of gratitude and infrastructure for giving that permeates AFC relationships.

Increase overall AFC public visibility and reputation to build strong communities of support.

Annually transition first-time donors into long-term supporters and increase retention rates.

Work with the executive director to diversify revenue streams and create a web of active funding sources.

Generate new ideas that increase revenue and donor engagement.

How to Apply

Please email a resume, a cover letter addressing the qualifications above, and contact information for three professional references to hire@ausablecenter.org. Please type the position title "Development Director" in the subject line. Review of applications will begin immediately. Applications will be kept confidential upon request.

The Ausable Freshwater Center is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We are committed to creating opportunities and a respectful, fair, and open environment for all of our employees, volunteers, and project partners.

Learn more about our work at ausablecenter.org.