



## **GRAD BAG**

### **Executive Director Position Description**

#### **Background**

**Grad Bag** has a twofold mission: to support underserved college-bound students and to advance sustainability. Grad Bag accomplishes its mission by collecting, refreshing, and repackaging lightly used dorm room essentials and distributing these to first-year college students who need them most.

Grad Bag began in 2012 as a small grassroots project in Scarsdale, New York. The two founders were troubled by the waste accumulating in dumpsters as they helped their children move out of their college dorms. They noticed that many of the discarded items were in fine condition and these items could help to ease the college transition for students who couldn't afford to purchase them. Furthermore, this could serve an important recycling mission as these items would otherwise end up in landfills. With this dual purpose in mind, they began collecting, cleaning and packaging these dorm room items in their homes.

Over the years Grad Bag's operation expanded onto 17 college campuses with distribution to more than 20 not-for-profit organizations in New York, Connecticut and Boston. Recognizing that the organization couldn't continue its growth trajectory with its current volunteer leadership, it became a 501 (C) 3 not-for-profit in Fall, 2019. A small board was recruited, and planning began to determine Grad Bag's future. The COVID-19 pandemic forced Grad Bag to cease operation on college campuses for the 2020 and 2021 academic years. During this time, the Board worked on a strategic plan that will position the organization for future growth and success. Successful operations resumed in both Boston and New York in 2022.

This is a pivotal and exciting time for Grad Bag. With equity and access for low-income students top of mind for so many and the future of our planet hanging in jeopardy, Grad Bag's mission is important and relevant. The organization is well-respected by colleges, students and donors. There is significant opportunity for growth and expansion. To ensure its continued success, Grad Bag seeks a dynamic leader to serve as its first Executive Director.



## **The Position**

The Executive Director should have an entrepreneurial mindset and skills that will enable the organization to grow within the Board's vision. The new leader will be responsible for Grad Bag's expansion which includes creating campus and other strategic partnerships, executing both traditional and innovative fundraising strategies and recruiting and managing a team of professionals.

The ED must be a self-starter and effective leader who is committed to Grad Bag's dual mission. In addition, the ED must be a hands-on manager, strategic thinker, problem-solver and relationship-builder. Excellent communication skills are critical, and this includes the ability to work closely with the Board to promote an open, inclusive environment with the highest integrity and a sense of humor.

## ***Specific Responsibilities***

### Operations and Management

- Create and implement the organization's operation plan, including a development plan.
- Provide leadership and supervision to the staff and evaluate performance.
- Lead efforts to enhance Board effectiveness by building and maintaining a strong partnership with the Board members while actively recruiting new Board members to create a more diverse Board.
- Manage budgeting, financial controls, reporting and resource allocation.
- Establish and maintain partnerships with colleges, regional and national organizations, corporate and community partners, foundations, and individual donors.

### Fundraising and Partnership Development

- Create and implement a comprehensive development strategy to secure individual gifts, corporate and foundation grants and special events to financially sustain the organization.
- Identify and personally cultivate new funding streams.
- Engage the board in fundraising and network building on behalf of the organization.
- Develop and oversee all major grant proposals and coordinate grant reporting.



- Plan, market and execute fundraisers and special events.
- Represent Grad Bag effectively with donors, campus partners and other stakeholders across a wide variety of settings.

#### Program Development

- Develop and execute the strategy for recruitment and retention of new college partners.
- Develop the strategy and tools for recruitment of grantee organizations.
- Supervise program operations, including storage (identifying a facility), inventorying (identifying a system), laundry services and transportation.
- Develop the metrics for measuring impact and the tools for data collection and reporting.
- Develop a robust program for the recruitment, training and recognition of volunteers.

#### Financial Management

- Ensure that Grad Bag maintains sound financial practices.
- Work with the Board Treasurer to prepare budgets and manage the budget to ensure the organization operates within guidelines.
- Oversee annual audits and ensure the timely annual filing of financial statements and the Form 990.

#### Marketing and Communications

- Facilitate the development and distribution of promotional materials, newsletters and other marketing pieces that increase the organization's visibility.
- Ensure the efficient maintenance of the Grad Bag website.
- Oversee the development, implementation and management of social media campaigns and other communication channels.
- Advocate for and represent the organization at various colleges, conferences, speaking engagements and the media.



### Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree required; relevant master's degree preferred.
- Minimum of three years of proven leadership experience.
- Accomplished fundraiser at ease in the role of seeking and asking for individual and major gifts and grants.
- Solid experience working with and supporting a board of directors and/or high-level committees; ability to motivate both board members and staff to succeed.
- Ability to develop and execute a high-functioning business, financial and operations plans that will support a financially stable and sustainable organization.
- Dynamic leader who is visionary, ethical and innovative.

### The Ideal Candidate Will Also Have...

- Strong commitment to the mission of the organization
- Mature emotional intelligence with comfort in managing relationships across all levels of an organization.
- An entrepreneurial spirit with excitement to build and expand a small non-profit. A strong can-do attitude with the willingness and flexibility to wear multiple hats.



### Other Information

The Executive Director will work remotely but sporadic travel throughout the Northeast is required.

- The ED will need a valid driver's license and access to a car.
- This position is full-time.
- Salary is commensurate with experience. Range - \$110,000 - \$125,000.
- For more information about Grad Bag, visit [www.gradbag.org](http://www.gradbag.org)

To Apply:

Please send cover letter, resume and salary requirements to **jobs@gradbag.org** and include Grad Bag ED in the subject line of your email.