

The logo for Freedom Reads features the words "FREEDOM READS" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. On either side of the text are stylized, wavy lines in a reddish-orange color, resembling flames or the pages of a book.

FREEDOM READS

Chief Development Officer

DESCRIPTION

Freedom Reads' mission is to inspire hope and confront what prison does to the spirit. A first-of-its-kind organization, we bring beautiful, handcrafted bookcases into prisons, transforming a part of a cell block into a Freedom Library. As a reminder of the millions of people incarcerated in America, Freedom Reads is opening thousands of Freedom Libraries inside of prisons, placing a 500-book micro-library in every prison housing unit in the United States. In the tradition of Freedom Schools and Freedom Riders, the libraries are named Freedom Libraries because of the organizational belief that freedom begins with a book. Founded in 2020 with a \$5.25 million grant from the Mellon Foundation, Freedom Reads is the only organization in the country using beauty and the transformative power of a library to honor the dignity of the lives of people in prison.

Since July 2022, Freedom Reads has opened 170 Freedom Libraries across 10 states and more than 34 prisons. This unprecedented success includes opening libraries in infamous facilities such as the Louisiana State Prison and Rikers Island Jail. The organization has also transformed a cell into a library at MCI-Norfolk in Massachusetts, the prison where Malcolm X once served time. The libraries are in solitary confinement units and protective custody units and in women's prisons, men's prisons, and juvenile detention centers. Since its founding, Freedom Reads has distributed more than 100,000 books to incarcerated readers in two dozen prisons and juvenile detention centers. In 2023, the organization will open 200 libraries across several states and will have served 250,000 Freedom Reads' patrons.

Located in New Haven, Connecticut and supported by foundations and private donors, Freedom Reads currently has a \$5 million annual budget and a growing network of full- and part-time staff and consultants. As Freedom Reads embarks on its next phase, it seeks a highly organized, talented, and experienced Chief Development Officer to help build this unique organization.

For more information on Freedom Reads, please visit <https://freedomreads.org/>.

THE POSITION

Freedom Reads is currently in a stage of accelerated growth and seeks an experienced organizational leader to serve as its Chief Development Officer. The Chief Development Officer will strengthen current fundraising strategies and develop new ones, primarily amongst institutional foundations and individual donors. Freedom Reads seeks a professional who can build on, and strengthen, the development department in a relatively new and evolving organization.

This is a full-time position that can be worked remotely. However, the Chief Development Officer's role requires a candidate to travel to the office on a quarterly and as needed basis.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Reporting to the Founding President and CEO of Freedom Reads, the Chief Development Officer will establish annual fundraising goals and develop the strategies to achieve and execute them with the help of the President and outside consultants, as appropriate. Further growth in development staff is anticipated as general support revenue increases.

Core responsibilities for this position include:

- Collaborating with the CEO to develop and implement fundraising concepts, plans, budgets, including but not limited to major gift campaigns, direct marketing campaigns, planned giving, and corporate sponsorship.
- Designing and implementing fundraising initiatives to set and secure revenue goals.
- Anticipating and identifying funding gaps and developing plans to address any projected budget shortfalls and priorities.
- Planning and overseeing Freedom Reads' fundraising and development-related events.
- Expanding and diversifying strategies that identify, educate, involve, cultivate, and steward both existing and prospective donors.
- Increasing the portfolio of individual gifts and maintaining active and productive relationships with major donors to deepen their engagement and grow financial support.
- Managing all aspects of grant writing and reporting.
- Fostering a culture of philanthropy within the organization by ensuring that the organization's work, systems, and procedures support fundraising.
- Managing and supervising development staff use of Freedom Reads' fundraising database and donor tracking systems to monitor fundraising efforts and ensure consistent data entry and gift and gift receipt processing.
- Setting clear goals and establish clear metrics and measurements.
- Evaluating the effect of internal and external forces on Freedom Reads' ability to effectively fundraise and deliver its message to prospective donors and recommending appropriate responses to any identified challenges.
- Discovering and assessing opportunities to cultivate new relationships and maintain existing relationships with donors, partners, sponsors, high-profile individuals, and foundations.
- Attending external events and meetings necessary to maintain, grow and strengthen relationships.
- Delegating relationship cultivation across the organization for maximum impact and effectiveness.

QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS, AND KNOWLEDGE REQUIREMENTS

- 10+ years of professional fundraising experience, including at least five years of experience at the senior management level.
- Demonstrated experience in fundraising leadership positions, with networks and a proven track record of securing six and seven-figure gifts from a wide variety of sources including corporations, foundations, individuals, family foundations, and fundraising events.
- Commitment to the organization's mission, values, principles, and practices is required.
- Strong analytical and consultative skills, and willingness to understand and adapt to the unique environment of the criminal justice system. Excellent writing, editing, and communications skills.
- Strong project management skills with the ability to administer multiple projects simultaneously, prioritize workload, and effectively manage resources.
- Demonstrated ability to set strategy and execute plans.

- Knowledge of and experience building and working with fundraising databases.
- Experience working productively with boards and/or other high-level volunteers.
- Collaborative, organized, and detail-oriented leader with experience in managing people, and ability to delegate.
- Versatile; a multidisciplinary and multi-constituency perspective with an ability to connect with people of diverse backgrounds and experiences.
- Sound judgment, a high level of integrity, professionalism, a positive attitude, and a sense of humor.
- Bachelor's degree preferred. Advanced degree in literature; education; criminal justice, public policy, education, or related field preferred. CFRE certification preferred but not required.

COMPENSATION

The salary range for this position is \$150k to \$175k and based on experience.

Freedom Reads is committed to the principles of justice and tries to build an environment where everyone is treated fairly and enjoys working together. The organization values new perspectives and does its best to make its positions accessible to people of any ethnic background, age, and sexual orientation, as well as women and other underrepresented communities – including communities most impacted by injustice.

Nominations and applications should be submitted to the attention of Justice Perez and at Justice@GEMtrainers.com.