

Position Announcement – May 2024
Executive Director
Thrive Asheville
Asheville, NC



Do you want to help shape the future of one of America’s most dynamic small cities? Thrive Asheville seeks an innovative and experienced Executive Director to lead our work as an incubator for community solutions.

Thrive’s mission is to collaborate with local residents and leaders from diverse perspectives to understand our city’s challenges, forge new relationships, and act on the best solutions together.

The Area

When people think of Asheville, the word that comes to mind first is 'beautiful.' It is a culturally rich region that is both economically and geographically diverse. Its quality of life makes it highly attractive as a place where lifestyle complements professional opportunity. It is difficult to find a top ten list that doesn't include Asheville. Whether the list is touting our virtues for outdoor recreation, restaurants, breweries, or a place to vacation or retire, the area continues to rank highly in people's opinions.

Less well-known is that we have dramatic gaps in equity - the majority of Black or brown households make less than half of the area median income and our local school system has the fifth largest racial opportunity gap in the nation. We face cross-cutting challenges including a significant affordable housing deficit and a cost of living that outpaces wages.

The Organization:

Thrive Asheville envisions a place where all thrive—we share in the beauty and prosperity of our city because we are equitable, sustainable, and connected. Thrive Asheville brings together local community advocates, policymakers, and professionals from diverse fields and backgrounds to find equitable solutions to our city's toughest challenges.

Larger successful cities have multi-stakeholder leadership groups like Thrive Asheville to guide their growth. We are modeling those efforts and since our launch in 2019, we have worked with community members and leadership to spotlight core issues related to development and change. We promote learning about these issues and surface effective and appropriate solutions. We advocate for implementation of solutions by bringing the right people to the table to get things done.

An independent nonprofit since 2021, Thrive Asheville is led by a diverse board of directors made up of 14 members who reflect the range of perspectives that shape our city - business, nonprofit, and civic leaders, long-term residents and new arrivals. Thrive has a dedicated staff including three full-time and one part-time position.

Even though Thrive is a relatively new nonprofit, we have developed effective organizational structures, and are in a strong financial position. We have recently finished our first strategic framework that will guide Thrive decision-making and work for the next three-to-five years. See the [Thrive Asheville Impact Report 2023](#) for more information about our accomplishments.

The values that guide us include:

- **Place** - Thrive's approach is place-based. We understand local issues, interconnections and relationships and coordinate action and investment to improve the quality of life for our community.
- **Equity** - Thrive applies an equity lens to our work, and engages with those most impacted on our issues.
- **Impact** - We envision a transformed community and we work for change that significantly improves life conditions for local residents.
- **Collaboration** - Thrive brings people together with diverse perspectives and backgrounds to engage in deep connection, understand complex problems, and identify shared solutions – accomplished by building trust over time.
- **Innovation** - We find new strategies for moving the community forward, in order to create greater equity and address systemic and interrelated challenges.
- **Integrity** - By operating in a way that is open, trustworthy and inclusive, Thrive helps bridge differences and builds a stronger, more unified community.

Position Summary

Thrive Asheville seeks a dynamic, innovative and experienced leader to guide our vital organization from rapid growth to maturity, ensuring that Thrive Asheville becomes a preferred partner for collaborative, cross-sector efforts that significantly improve our city and county. The Executive Director will build on the organization's vision, mission, values, strong early results, and the new strategic plan to establish Thrive's agenda for action on issues that shape our community's future, including housing, tourism and other challenges to be identified.

Thrive's Executive Director will be a key player in building a more equitable and resilient community, operationalizing the organizational values of equity, integrity, collaboration, innovation, and impact. As Executive Director, you will be responsible for ensuring the organization's financial and operational health while overseeing partnership and community engagement, outcomes, strategic growth, and board management.

The Executive Director reports directly to the Board of Directors and supervises the Deputy Director (responsible for program implementation) and the Community Development Coordinator (administration, communications, and fundraising support).

Priorities for the new Executive Director

The new leader will lead the organization in focusing on the following priorities within the first 12-18 months of their tenure:

- Lead the organization's process of selecting and managing issue areas
- Help implement sustainable funding model
- Increase key stakeholder and community's awareness of Thrive
- Increase board effectiveness via committees and a deeper partnership with staff
- Build an annual workplan that balances capacity and resources with an eye towards future organizational needs

Primary Responsibilities

Organizational Strategy and Leadership

- Maintain alignment between the overall vision, mission, and core values of the organization and our plan of education, implementation, and advocacy.
- Lead as a strategist to expand Thrive's relationships, influence and impact on pressing challenges facing our community.

- Ensure effective systems are in place to track progress to goals, evaluate program components, and communicate outcomes to the board, funders, and constituents.
- Develop, maintain, and support a strong working relationship with the Board of Directors to define and implement governance best practices.

Fundraising and Development

- Refine and enhance Thrive's fundraising strategy, including short and long-term goals for individual donors, business support, and grants.
- Partner with staff and board in the achievement of fundraising goals.
- Manage, cultivate, and retain a solid donor base through quality relationships.

Communication and Advocacy

- Be the lead spokesperson for Thrive Asheville via excellent verbal and written communication skills and experience.
- Lead the development of outreach to varied audiences (citizens, leaders, partners, etc) that promotes the learning and actions being pursued by Thrive.
- Oversee the development and distribution of excellent communication materials that articulate the goals, challenges and accomplishments of Thrive.

Systems and Operations

- Manage Thrive's annual operating budget of \$450K+
- Ensure that effective operating processes and procedures are in place for delivering on organizational goals and responsibilities.
- Manage the systems and processes related to human resources, staff benefits, payroll, etc.

People Development and Cultural Leadership

- Hire, manage, lead, retain, and empower a diverse and high-performing team enabled by a culture rooted in the mission and values of the organization.
- Invest in and support talent to build successors for key roles, contributing to the sustainability of the team and organization.
- Create policies and practices that foster diversity, equity, and inclusiveness to ensure inclusive and equitable staff experiences.

The strongest candidates will have these qualifications:

- **Commitment to and passion for the Thrive Asheville vision, mission, and values**
- **Strategic nonprofit leader** - Experience as a nonprofit senior leader who has managed staff and used global thinking to navigate organizational complexity and evolution.
- **Successful fundraiser** - Proven track record in diversifying funding streams and donor portfolios to include both institutional and individual donors.
- **Extraordinary relationship-builder and constituent manager** - Skill in developing deep and influential relationships with community leaders, board members, donors, and other key stakeholders and constituencies (eg, elected officials, business leaders, etc).
- **Effective communicator** – Strong leadership presence and expertise as a strategic communicator who distills complicated information into compelling messages across platforms that increase understanding and organization support.
- **Experienced convenor/facilitator** - Experience in design of meetings and group facilitation processes that build agreement and action.
- **Finance and human resource manager** - Budgeting, investment and human resource allocation expertise.

- **Equity leader** - Deep knowledge of disparities and the role of history and systems in perpetuating inequities. Aptitude for leading and managing others through a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- **Results-orientation** - Past record of effective planning, tracking and achieving outstanding results.
- **High level of emotional intelligence** – accurately perceive and express yourself, personal humility, empathy, develop and maintain social relationships, adapt to challenges, and use emotions in an effective way. Professional and personal style consistent with the supportive, open, collaborative team-oriented culture of Thrive Asheville.

Additional desired skills and experiences:

- Advanced degree in a relevant field - or other relevant business, public or nonprofit sector experience.
- Experience with the interconnections of government, public policy, business, and civic life is helpful.
- We prefer applicants with local knowledge but we also welcome transplants with civic leadership expertise who have experience with the challenges and opportunities that need addressing in Asheville.

Compensation:

- Salary: \$85,000
- Benefits:
 - Discretionary health and wellness stipend: \$7,200/annually
 - Full-time flexible, hybrid work schedule and location
 - Paid Holidays: 10 days
 - Paid Time Off: 18 days
 - Sick leave: 5 days (accrues up to 15 days)

To apply:

To apply, please send a resume and a detailed cover letter, that demonstrates the fit between your qualifications to the skills and experience above, in one pdf file using the following naming convention: “Your Last Name-Your First Name.pdf”, via email only to:

Thrive Asheville Search Committee
search@thriveasheville.org

Please, no phone calls, faxes, or snail mail.

The hiring process:

Review of applications will begin May 1 and continue until the position closes May 30. Selected candidates may be invited to multiple interviews conducted on Zoom and in-person in June and July. Ideally the new Executive Director will start work on or before September 1, 2024.

Finalists will be required to complete a criminal background check.

Candidates from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Studies have shown that candidates that are female and/or BIPOC are less likely to apply for jobs unless they meet all of the qualifications they find in the job description. We are seeking the best candidate for the job, and that candidate may be a person who comes from a less traditional background. We encourage you to apply even if you don't meet every minimum qualification described or are unsure if your experience could be considered related experience.