

GoodCitizen

Friends of the Children – Seattle Executive Director

The Opportunity

[Friends of the Children–Seattle \(Friends-Seattle\)](#), is seeking a new Executive Director to lead the organization into our next phase of growth and impact. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the new Executive Director will join Friends-Seattle at an exciting time and be responsible for overseeing an ambitious growth plan that will allow us to expand the number of children and families participating in the program, while also leading the organization's efforts to nurture an anti-racist culture. The position is based in Seattle, Washington.

The Organization

[Friends of the Children–Seattle](#) is a chapter of a nationwide organization dedicated to positively impacting change to youth facing systemic barriers through salaried, professional mentoring. The [national organization](#) was founded in 1993 and the Seattle chapter in 2000.

Friends of the Children has redefined the youth mentoring field by creating the first and only long-term professional mentoring program in the country. Our professional mentors are experts in building consistent, empowering and nurturing relationships with youth. We specialize in working with youth who have faced significant adversity. We have the data to show that the benefit of mentorship is real and it works. Perhaps most importantly, we commit to every child for the long term, from kindergarten through graduation. 12+ years. No matter what.

The Role

The Executive Director has the opportunity to build on the strengths of the distinctive and unique mentoring model at Friends-Seattle. The Executive Director must provide experienced management of the team and operations, drive resource development, and oversee a new strategic planning process to set the course for the next 3 to 5 years.

Collaborating with an experienced Board and knowledgeable staff, the Executive Director will develop plans to build the organization's strength while ensuring stability, consistency, and exceptional program delivery in service to the mission. We expect the Executive Director will bring to the role an understanding for how to balance the complementary nature of fund development and programs, ensuring an integrated approach.

Friends-Seattle has recently embarked on a journey to become an anti-racist organization. It will be critical for the new Executive Director to step into this work from day one to nurture an organizational culture where racial equity is rooted in culture and daily practice.

Externally the Executive Director plays as an active spokesperson and ambassador to the broader community. They must bring both authenticity and a passion to partner with the communities that surround the youth and families served. In addition, the Executive Director will work closely with the Friends of the Children National CEO and staff to ensure effective collaborations. At the same time, they must ensure internal operations run smoothly, oversee the evolution of the organization's culture, and identify opportunities to innovate and strengthen systems so that Friends can easily navigate the disruptions that naturally arise from growth and change.

Key Priorities and Responsibilities

Team, Board and Operational Leadership

The Executive Director has the opportunity to dramatically impact the organization by demonstrating experienced, effective management and leadership principles. Critical priorities include:

- Developing a high performing, empowered team by committing to clear goals, communication, and lines of accountability: The Executive Director needs to effectively leverage the collective talents of the entire staff with effective coaching, best practice management, well-defined roles and expectations, and professional development.
- Leading anti-racism work: bringing a strong skill set and deep commitment to the work of transforming Friends-Seattle into an anti-racist organization, the Executive Director will have an action-oriented mindset and readily engage and support the staff and board in the anti-racist work underway and ensure it remains an organizational priority.
- Financial and operational management: Sound business judgment, proactive financial management, efficient practices, and standards of excellence to support the sustained financial and programmatic health of Friends-Seattle is critical.
- Engaging the 16-member Board: appropriate, effective, and clear channels of communication are essential elements of the executive director/board relationship. The Executive Director has an incredible resource in the Board's experience and support; by ensuring there is trust, transparency, and alignment around the mission, they can collaboratively co-create an exciting forward strategy for Friends-Seattle.

Fundraising

- Donors: Friends-Seattle relies on the support of generous donors and philanthropists in the greater Seattle community (individuals, foundations, corporations, and government agencies) to achieve its goals. The new Executive Director will spearhead fundraising efforts, identifying and engaging new and existing supporters by further developing and nurturing positive donor relationships, and asking for the support needed.

Relationship Building

- Family interactions: Families enroll their children in Friends-Seattle because they trust the partnership they have with mentors. The relationship the mentors, staff, and leadership have with families is critical to the organization's success. The Executive Director will need to authentically connect with families and caregivers. They should actively engage families and parents, getting to know them, listening to their concerns, and demonstrating dedication to their children's success.
- Community partners: The Executive Director will have an active role in building, supporting, and maintaining collaborative partnerships in and out of our community to help meet the needs of our mission. They will work closely with the leadership team to identify and target new partners.

The Ideal Candidate

Friends-Seattle seeks a compassionate, natural leader with a genuine passion and enthusiasm for our mission of impacting generational change by empowering youth who are facing systemic barriers through long-term relationships with professional mentors. We seek a leader who brings a deep, community-centered understanding of the challenges faced by our youth (94% of whom are youth of color), is an advocate for children, and who is prepared to bring all their energy and professional skills to lead the effort.

We are looking for candidates who are confident and effective in nuanced leadership positions that require exceptional interpersonal skills as well as strong business and financial acumen. An outgoing, professional demeanor that inspires confidence will serve the Executive Director well. We seek candidates who are friendly, caring, and welcoming. They should be comfortable and confident on their feet and in making the fundraising ask, with the warmth and spark to effectively engage with youth and families, and the track record to demonstrate this capability.

A high level of maturity, emotional intelligence, and professionalism is required, particularly as it relates to effectively working with our families and community, a nonprofit Board of Directors, generating new resources, and building collaborative, strategic relationships with our key partners (Childhaven, Seattle Public Schools, and Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families).

As a people leader, the ideal candidate brings the confidence and proven ability to build an inclusive culture and also the humility to empower staff and support them with structures for accountability that define progress and success. The Executive Director is an active listener who values honesty, transparency and integrity, actively fostering mutual respect at all levels. An approachable leader, the Executive Director demonstrates a deep commitment to equity and will nurture an open, trusting, and welcoming work environment that prioritizes advancing the organization's anti-racism work.

Desired Qualifications

- 10+ years' experience in progressively responsible leadership roles in a nonprofit of a similar size (\$3.5M+ annual budget).
- A deep passion for children facing systemic barriers and knowledge of communities we serve (whether local to South King County or elsewhere in the US).
- Previous experience working with and/or advocating for vulnerable youth populations.
- Fundraising track record across multiple funding sources.
- A demonstrated commitment to racial equity and social justice with a deep understanding of intersectionality.
- Financial management skills.
- Previous experience reporting to or as part of a governing and fundraising board.
- This is place-based work and a physical presence in Seattle/King County is required (the search is national and relocation support will be available).

The salary range for the Executive Director position is \$145,000 to \$155,000.

Friends of the Children Seattle EEO Statement

Friends of the Children--Seattle is an Equal Opportunity Employer, committed to addressing discriminatory practices, and to working toward racial equity. The equal employment opportunity policy of Friends of the Children--Seattle provides fair and equal opportunities for all employees and job applicants regardless of race, color, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, gender, pregnancy, sexual orientation, marital status, familial status, disability, or genetic information, in compliance with applicable federal, state and local law. Friends of the Children--Seattle hires and promotes individuals solely on the basis of their qualifications for the job to be filled.

To Be Considered

Please submit your resume and cover letter expressing your interest in the position and fit for the role via the **Become a Candidate** button. Letters may be addressed to Sarah Meyer.

The Search for an Executive Director of Friends of the Children Seattle is being assisted by a team from GoodCitizen:

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