



**Olympic Coast
Exploration Center**
Water connects us all

Director of Philanthropy Position Prospectus

This is an opportunity for an experienced advancement professional to join an organization with substantial fundraising momentum at the point where it can be transformed into a lasting culture of philanthropy.

[Learn More About Our Location and Community](#)

The Olympic Coast Exploration Center

Our organization is entering one of the most exciting chapters in its history. Building on the 45-year legacy of the Feiro Marine Life Center, and in collaboration with NOAA Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, we are transforming into a world-class destination for marine and coastal exploration, conservation, education, and community connection.

- Opening 2028
- Part of a waterfront campus with Field Arts & Events Hall and planned Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe Cultural Center
- Projected to welcome 75,000 visitors a year
- Goal of Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) accreditation

The Opportunity

The Director of Philanthropy joins a fundraising program with meaningful momentum. Following five years of leadership by the organization's Director of Development, the position is opening at an important inflection point. The departing leader has helped establish the systems, donor relationships, and practices that support the organization's advancement work today. The next Director will inherit that foundation at precisely the moment when it can be leveraged for something bigger: completing a transformative capital campaign, stewarding the donors who are making the new Center possible, and building the

enduring philanthropic program that will sustain the organization for decades to come.

Campaign & Fundraising Snapshot

The complete campaign goal is \$37M, with \$35M for building construction. We have secured \$26M as of September 1, from a mix of government (\$19M) and private gifts (\$7M). Prior annual fund performance over the past five years has seen growth from \$125,000 to \$400,000, moving from 11 donors at the major gift level to more than 55. The campaign continues to have momentum in the Seattle area with major donors, along with active public phase engagement in Clallam County. Fundraising budget projections for the Olympic Coast Exploration Center in 2028 are roughly equivalent to 2027 annual fund fundraising goals, \$500,000, with major revenue expansion projected for earned income (admissions, programs, retail, etc.).

Advancement Infrastructure

Bloomerang is our primary CRM, which we have been using successfully since 2018. Records are maintained and reports are pulled by the Development Assistant, who has been in her current position since 2015. We have existing individual and business major gifts programs (Ocean Leaders), which will transition to Olympic Coast Exploration Center, plus additional recognition groups as documented in the Public Phase Campaign Plan. Board members are actively involved in our donor recognition programs, including monthly and annual phone calling. We host an annual donor recognition event (Legasea; October) and one annual fundraising event (Making Waves; May).

Current and Future Organizational Structure

The organization is undergoing a major transition in 2027, with existing staff moving into new roles, and new staff being hired, supported strategically through contractor/consultants as needed. We currently have campaign-supported staff (Executive Director, Project Coordinator, Campaign Director-Seattle and Social Media Assistant), and operations-supported staff (Associate Director of Operations, Education Manager, Guest Services & Facilities Assistants, and Development

Assistant) and contractors as needed to execute mission-based programs and projects.

The Board of Directors developed a Transition Plan in 2025, which is in active implementation, culminating in the Olympic Coast Exploration Center opening in 2028. There is opportunity to engage current and new Board and committee members in a re-envisioned Development Committee in alignment with the Transition Plan.

Details about Transition Plan timing, new staff positions, activities, etc. will be made available during the interview process.

What You'll Bring

The person who will be most successful in this position is entrepreneurial, curious, quick to learn, and exceptionally skilled at building relationships. They are energized by opportunity, comfortable navigating change, and confident asking donors to make transformational investments—including personally soliciting gifts of \$100,000 and above. This person must be able to leverage and develop both staff and volunteer talent as the organization changes.

Hiring Process

We want the hiring process to be thoughtful, transparent, and respectful of candidates' time. We anticipate the following process:

Application Review | September–October 2026

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. We encourage interested candidates to apply early, as we may begin interviews before the application period closes.

Initial Conversation | October 2026

Selected candidates will participate in a 30–45 minute introductory conversation with the Executive Director to learn more about the role, the organization, and the candidate's experience and interests.

Finalist Conversation | October–November 2026

Finalists will participate in a more in-depth interview process in Port Angeles with organizational leadership and key members of the advancement team. This stage will include an opportunity to meet members of the team and learn more about the Olympic Coast Exploration Center's fundraising priorities and future plans. Candidates invited to participate in an in-person finalist interview who are traveling from outside the Olympic Peninsula may be eligible for reimbursement of reasonable travel expenses, including transportation and lodging. Details and reimbursement limits will be provided when finalist interviews are scheduled.

References & Selection | November 2026

References will be requested from finalists before a final offer is extended. The offer is contingent upon the completion of a successful background check.

Anticipated Start Date | December 2026–January 2027

We are flexible on the start date for the right candidate and will work with the selected candidate to support a successful transition.