



North Carolina Aquarium Society

Position Title: Director of Major Gifts

Department: Development

Job Classification: Director

Job Type: Full Time

Summary:

The North Carolina Aquarium Society is seeking experienced applicants for the position of *Major Gifts Director*. This position is based in the Aquarium Society's Raleigh, N.C. office.

The NC Aquarium Society is the nonprofit support arm for the state-owned NC Aquariums. Based in Raleigh, the 501(c)3 nonprofit Society supports the NC Aquariums by generating funds for conservation, education and research through membership, retail sales, advocacy, and philanthropic engagement.

This is an exciting time to join the NC Aquarium Society in Raleigh as we grow the team to nimbly respond to the needs of the NC Aquariums and our shared mission to inspire appreciation and conservation of our aquatic environments. In 2025, we will launch the public phase of the Campaign for the NC Aquariums with gifts of more than \$57.5 million. In 2026, the NC Aquariums will celebrate 50 years of service to our state with plans to open new exhibits at the NC Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores and the NC Aquarium on Roanoke Island while major renovations take place at the NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher.

The *Director of Major Gifts* plays a strategic role for the organization focused on cultivation and relationship building with major donors statewide in support of the four NC Aquarium sites in Manteo, Nags Head, Pine Knoll Shores and Wilmington. The *Director of Major Gifts* joins a 6-person philanthropy team that is led by the Chief Philanthropy Officer and includes annual giving, capital campaigns, sponsorships, planned giving, membership and communications.

The Society works in partnership with the NC Aquariums and does not provide administrative or programmatic oversight for the four locations that cover the coast of North Carolina. Employees of the NC Aquarium Society are not state employees.

Opportunity:

The *Director of Major Gifts* is a recently created position that is central to the Society's evolving major gift and campaign fundraising efforts. Major gifts for the Society are defined as gifts of \$10,000 and above to exclude large state and federal grant requests.

The *Director of Major Gifts* is an important part of the Society's Philanthropy team and acts as a liaison to statewide donors with a special focus on supporters in Carteret, Dare, and New Hanover counties. The Philanthropy Team is comprised of the President, Chief Philanthropy Officer, Strategic Fundraising Counsel, Board of Directors, and other support team members. Each member of the Team contributes to this highly-collaborative group that is ultimately responsible for securing the contributions necessary to allow the Society to reach its fundraising goals and fulfill its mission.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

- Develop and execute a comprehensive major gifts program that also includes constituent relations, capital campaign management and supervision of major gift donor stewardship efforts.
- Collaborate with the Chief Philanthropy Officer, President and Board of Directors on all major gift fundraising activities and effectively engage board and volunteer leaders in making fundraising contacts.
- Support the major gift solicitations processes for volunteer solicitors and the President.
- Prepare fundraising materials, donor proposals, and grant applications to corporations, foundations and other charitable enterprises.
- Assist with the planning and execution of highly successful, resource-conscious cultivation and stewardship events of varying sizes with support from Society team members.
- Ensure that all relevant information on current and prospective donors is added to donor database system in a timely manner.
- Provide direction on the Society's marketing, branding, strategic print and online communications as it relates to major donor cultivation and stewardship.
- Maintain proficiency in the landscape of philanthropy, database and communications technology.
- Budget administration for the major gift activity. Ability to develop, manage and critique budget results.

Required Qualification/Experience:

- An affinity for the goals and mission of NC Aquarium Society.
- Bachelor's or advanced degree from four-year college or university; or five to seven years related experience and/or training; or equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Minimum of five years or more of demonstrated success in fundraising, preferably in a non-profit setting in a related organization such as education, cultural attractions, or the environment.
- Demonstrated success in coordinating and managing a capital campaign.
- Knowledge of "moves management" and the ability to strategically craft and implement a successful major gift plan, involving key players and influencers in the process of raising major gifts.

- Must have excellent interpersonal skills and a demonstrated record of completing assignments.
- Strong strategic and analytic skills demonstrated problem-solving ability.
- Must be articulate, assertive and have excellent communication skills, both verbal and written.
- Collaborative self-starter who is adept at outreaching to constituents and relationship building.
- Act in a lawful, ethical, and professional manner in carrying out the duties of this position and in maintaining confidentiality of sensitive information.
- Willingness to travel regularly and available on weekends periodically.
- Strong computer skills; Excel, Word, DocuSign, Adobe, and fundraising software experience desired.
- Must possess a valid driver's license.
- Pass a criminal background check.

Salary:

This is an exempt position with a hiring range of \$75,000 - \$90,000.

Benefits:

- Medical, dental, vision insurance
- Health reimbursement and flexible spending accounts
- Life and AD&D insurance
- Short and Long-Term Disability
- Paid time off for 16 vacation days and 12 holidays plus a floating holiday
- Eligible to participate in the Aquarium Society's retirement service plan and 401k program with employer matching after a waiting period.
- Employee Assistance Program
- NC Aquarium Family Membership & Discounts

To Apply:

The North Carolina Aquarium Society is an Equal Opportunity Employer. This position is open to all qualified applicants without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or status as a covered veteran.

Send cover letter and resume to societyhr@ncaquariums.com with "Director of Major Gifts" in the subject line.