



POSITION PROFILE

# Executive Director

## The Allentown Parknership

Allentown, Pennsylvania



# ABOUT THE ALLENTOWN PARKNERSHIP

The Allentown Parknership (“The Parknership”) is an independent, community-driven 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that collaborates with the City of Allentown to increase investment in its parks and develop recreation programs that meet the community’s diverse needs.

Together, the City of Allentown and the Harry C. Trexler Trust have been collaborating to explore the development of an organization that could enhance the City’s parks and programs. The Parknership has been listening to Allentown residents, Parks and Recreation staff, and civic leaders to learn more about the needs of Allentown’s parks and people.

With the guidance of some of the most accomplished parks and conservancy professionals nationwide, they arrived at a model that would best support the City’s operation. The Allentown Parknership builds on the long tradition of green space and recreation that is essential to the fabric of the community of Allentown. The Trexler Trust provided the guidance, management expertise and seed funding to bring the Allentown Parknership to life as an independent entity.

The Allentown Parknership will focus on unmet needs including capital projects like restoration of historic structures and building of and implementing new projects in response to emerging community needs. Programmatic efforts like youth-centered environmental learning, activities at underutilized parks, and programs targeting elders and women will be enhanced and enlivened. The Parknership board of directors will include residents from specific City areas, park users, civic leaders, business owners, and philanthropists. It will collaborate with the City to implement the priorities identified in a comprehensive plan currently under development. The model of The Parknership is currently being implemented successfully in cities across the country.

The Parknership will not assume any current responsibilities of the City or its employees, nor will it fund existing maintenance or programs. The Parknership will not reduce the City’s budget or excellent staff, rather it will function as a powerful tool and add significant value to the good work of the City and its employees.

The Allentown Parknership offers a new opportunity for people who love their parks to support them with their time and funds – even if they live outside the City. As a 501(c)(3) organization, contributions from individuals and foundations are tax deductible. The Parknership is eligible to apply for grants from government entities, private and public foundations and corporations. The Parknership will recruit and nurture volunteers. The Parknership will think and act creatively delivering programs and parks infrastructure that continue to engage all members of our community.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ALLENTOWN PARKNERSHIP

at [allentownparknership.org](http://allentownparknership.org)



# THE OPPORTUNITY

The ED will shape and build an impactful and sustainable organization by overseeing the development and implementation of The Parknership's initial vision and strategy. The ED will plan and implement The Parknership's operating model, fundraising strategy, projects, administration, staffing, marketing and community engagement.

The Executive Director will report directly to the Board of Directors. The Parknership's Board seeks a self-starter who will be empowered by the Board to lead this exciting initiative.

## ROLE OBJECTIVES

- Collaborate closely with the Board to build out the organization's strategy, structure and processes
- Establish the organization's mission, vision, and goals in partnership with the Board and committed partners
- Provide executive direction for daily operations, program strategies, compliance, and quality assurance
- Quickly establish trust with key stakeholders, including the residents and government officials of the City of Allentown
- Develop and execute annual and project/program specific fundraising plans and budgets in partnership with the Board and Development staff/consultants
- In collaboration with the City of Allentown, implement successful projects in its parks
- Serve as the organization's public face, enhancing its visibility, credibility, and brand
- Ensure a robust and inclusive work culture that attracts, energizes and retains talent

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

### Strategic Leadership

- In collaboration with the Board, develop the Allentown Parknership's founding vision, mission and goals
- As the organization has no employees today, develop an operating and financial plan to guide The Parknership's activities and that could include recommendations on organizational structure and eventual staffing models
- Work with stakeholders to identify, shape, and garner support for Park improvements and programs
- Serve as a thought partner to the City of Allentown providing innovative leadership to grow and guide The Parknership's expansion, engagement and impact
- Stay informed of activities and best practices from organizations similar to The Parknership to ensure successful implementation

### Fundraising, Revenue Generation and Fiscal Management

- Collaborate with the Board to understand the fundraising landscape and key players, leveraging their networks and insights to enhance fundraising strategies
- Conceptualize and drive fundraising efforts by identifying and soliciting donors, funders and corporate partners
- Secure grants for financial support from Federal and State funding agencies and private foundations
- Develop fundraising opportunities through new strategic partnerships

- Develop earned income opportunities where appropriate
- Design and implement a donor recognition plan to acknowledge and engage supporters, enhancing relationships and encouraging continued investment
- Give guidance, support and impetus to the fundraising efforts of the Board
- Monitor stewardship of gifts, grants and corporate sponsorships
- Administer and grow the organization's endowment
- Maintain fiscal integrity, meeting both internal and external controls

### **Relationship Management**

- Build a strong, authentic relationship with Allentown's Parks and Recreation Department and the City of Allentown elected officials
- Collaborate on executing strategic plans and agreements
- Ensure effective communication with elected and appointed leaders

### **Community Engagement**

- Create and maintain strong relationships with nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, businesses, and community leaders in the region to understand and articulate the evolving needs in the area
- Invest in outreach and authentic engagement with Allentown's many diverse communities
- Establish connections with community leaders and actively participate in Allentown's civic life

### **Administration**

- Partner with the Board to deliver a highly functioning organization
- Manage the day-to-day operations of The Parknership while ensuring compliance with all policies and legal and contractual obligations
- Potentially over time, build and retain a highly motivated, talented team to effectively implement The Parknership's mission, direction and policies, while fostering open communications and a collaborative spirit
- Ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion is inherent in the culture of staff, volunteers and the organization

### **Board Relationships**

- Maintain strong communication with the Board, providing leadership and support
- Implement Board policies and procedures
- Support the Board's development and its recruitment of members

## **REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS**

- Bachelor's or advanced degree desired
- Ten or more years in a strategic leadership position
- Knowledge of nonprofit leadership and volunteer/board interaction
- Understanding of nonprofit financial accounting and reporting
- Experience across nonprofit, public, or corporate sectors; some government relations experience is preferred
- Some experience advancing capital and operating projects of various scales related to green spaces preferred but not required
- Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)
- Passion for parks and greenspaces and demonstrated commitment/experience pursuing that passion

# CANDIDATE PROFILE

The Executive Director of The Parknership will possess the following professional and personal qualities, skills and competencies:

## An Experienced, Humble Leader

The ideal candidate will be an entrepreneurial thinker with high intellect, humility and emotional intelligence with experience producing real, measurable outcomes in previous professional chapters. The ED is a natural relationship builder with the ability to quickly develop trust to bring others together, build consensus, and create cohesive and well-supported plans. The ED will excel at developing partnerships with Board members to ensure the vision for The Parknership is developed and implemented effectively. Ideally, this leader brings experience from a mix of nonprofit, philanthropic, business and/or government settings. It is imperative that the ED be comfortable in a start-up setting with the ability to 'roll up their sleeves' and get the job done.

**It is critical that the Executive Director demonstrate a 'hands-on' leadership style and a 'roll-up your sleeves' mentality at all times to ensure active collaboration with staff and volunteers. This will be imperative to the success of the organization and its ability to build and sustain engagement across constituencies and achieve organizational goals.**

## A Strategic Thinker

The ideal candidate is skilled at working in close partnership with a Board of Directors to set the strategic direction of an institution. The ED brings the ability to summarize complex issues concisely and clearly convey recommendations across a range of stakeholders. In doing so, the ideal candidate will encourage ideation with others while bringing new ideas forth for consideration. The ED brings experience promoting the strategies needed to advance the work of a mission-based organization, from strategic planning and fundraising to mission delivery and execution. The ED is experienced in leveraging the skills and talents of a Board to develop and execute a strategic plan, while working closely with its various constituents on the plan's implementation. The ideal candidate knows how to balance being entrepreneurial and self-directed while also recognizing the importance of meaningful collaboration and partnership with stakeholders. The ED has the curiosity and drive to always be thinking of new and unique opportunities to serve the mission.

## An Enthusiastic Ambassador & Fundraiser

The ideal candidate brings a natural propensity for engagement to the role and a track record of success developing a powerful sense of shared purpose in others. The ED inspires confidence and trust in partners, builds collaboration and buy-in and generates support from existing relationships while engaging in a variety of activities to establish support from new partners, funders and donors. The ideal candidate will be capable of harnessing the power of relationships across sectors to advance the mission of the organization. The ideal candidate must enjoy fundraising and be committed to devoting significant time and energy to donor identification, cultivation, solicitation and stewardship and be comfortable seeking out opportunities where they do not already exist. This leader has exceptional interpersonal skills with the ability to build and sustain strong support across a wide range of stakeholders including staff, Board, donors, volunteers and the public by clearly and enthusiastically conveying the organization's value proposition.

## Business & Management Acumen

The ideal candidate brings sound operational, financial and project management experience. The ED enjoys building and inspiring a staff while providing a productive work environment and professional growth opportunities that result in team cohesion and camaraderie. The ideal candidate will understand and implement best nonprofit management practices and planning, including compelling communication messages and effective marketing strategies, management succession, and most importantly, ensuring that overall day-to-day operations are aligned

with strategic goals. The ED understands the importance of a robust partnership with the Board and will ensure fiduciary responsibility and sound financial management practices and accountability. The ED will also possess the knowledge and ability to ensure that the Board is achieving its primary responsibilities of best practice governance and fundraising.

### Passion for the Mission

Fully embracing the mission of The Parknership, the ED brings a sincere passion for public parks and greenspaces and a commitment to enhancing the enjoyment and wellbeing of Allentown residents. The ideal candidate will strive to create and sustain a sense of inclusion and belonging for community members and visitors while advocating for equitable and accessible public use of the park system. In service of this belief, the ED must be committed to fostering a workforce and organizational culture that is as diverse as Allentown itself and the community it serves. The ED will embrace the core values of the Parknership, and operate with sincerity, empathy, honesty and credibility.

## ABOUT ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

Founded in 1762 by William Allen, a successful businessman and the former mayor of Philadelphia, and named for him in 1838, Allentown transformed from a small community of Pennsylvania Dutch farmers into a marketing center for local farmers in the 1920s. The tradition still stands today at the Allentown Fairgrounds Farmers Market where farmers and merchants sell everything from produce to baked goods to candy.

Allentown was a key contributor to America's industrial economic boom of the early 19th century through its textile and automotive industries. Today, its diversified economy supports reinvented urban manufacturing and entrepreneurship through start-up incubators like the Bridgeworks Enterprise Center, which houses manufacturers in a former Mack Trucks plant. In recent years, downtown Allentown has seen a massive renaissance and development in its Neighborhood Improvement Zone, which continues to attract new businesses, luxury living spaces, developers, energy, and visitors into Allentown.

Pairing with that urban renewal, Allentown is teeming with cultural attractions; its many museums, historic sites, colleges (Cedar Crest College, and Muhlenberg College) and arts organizations contribute to its renewal. Well-known for its extensive parks system, Allentown boasts the highest acreage of any American city its size. Enjoy the greenery in the ArtsWalk, a vibrant new public space that connects the center city region of Allentown to the Arts Park at the Allentown Art Museum.

Allentown and the surrounding community possess a long-held tradition of philanthropy. Notably, the founder of the Allentown park system, Harry C. Trexler, bequeathed his estate for the benefit of the residents of Allentown and Lehigh County. Since 1935, more than \$83 million in charitable distributions have been made. The community also benefits significantly from the Air Products Foundation, the PPL Foundation, the Lehigh Valley Community Foundation, and many more private and corporate foundations as well as individual donors.

Allentown's affordable cost of living, paired with its robust job market and proximity to major cities like New York City and Philadelphia, make it an attractive destination for professionals and families seeking a high quality of life with a strong sense of community.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ALLENTOWN, PA AND THE LEHIGH VALLEY

please visit [www.discoverlehighvalley.com/cities-towns/allentown](http://www.discoverlehighvalley.com/cities-towns/allentown)

# COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The salary range for this role is \$140,000-\$175,000 and will be commensurate with experience. We expect to provide a competitive employee benefits package, recognizing the start-up nature of the Parknership.

## CONTACT

Koya Partners has been exclusively retained for this engagement, which is being led by Anne McCarthy, Nikki Lynch and Kaley Blasinski. Express interest in this role by [filling out our Talent Profile](#) or emailing the search team directly at [allentownparknershiped@koyapartners.com](mailto:allentownparknershiped@koyapartners.com). All inquiries and discussions are strictly confidential.

Koya Partners | Diversified Search Group is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to individuals living with disabilities. If you are a qualified individual living with a disability and need assistance expressing interest online, please email [NonprofitSearchOps@divsearch.com](mailto:NonprofitSearchOps@divsearch.com). If you are selected for an interview, you will receive additional information regarding how to request an accommodation for the interview process.

The Allentown Parknership is an equal opportunity employer and strongly encourages applications from people of color, persons with disabilities, women, and LGBTQ+ applicants.

## ABOUT KOYA PARTNERS | DIVERSIFIED SEARCH GROUP

Koya Partners, a Diversified Search Group company, is the nation's premier search firm dedicated to mission-driven leadership. Since its founding in 2004, Koya has had an exclusive focus on mission-driven clients and was founded on the belief that the right leader can transform an organization and have a deep and measurable impact on our world. Koya works with nonprofits & NGOs, responsible businesses, and social enterprises in local communities and around the world.

Diversified Search Group is consistently recognized by Forbes on its top 10 list of "America's Best Executive Recruiting Firms" and is an industry leader in recruiting transformational leaders for a changing world. The firm is deliberately different in its approach, with best-in-class teams who have decades of experience in cultivating inclusive leaders, understanding the dimensions of diversity, and building equitable teams.

*Learn more about Koya Partners | Diversified Search Group via the [firm's website](#).*