



PHILADELPHIA
OUTWARD BOUND SCHOOL

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION DESCRIPTION

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Background

Founded in 1992, the Philadelphia Outward Bound School (POBS)'s mission is to change lives through challenge and discovery. A robust \$3.4M nonprofit educational organization headquartered and committed to the City of Philadelphia, POBS engaged more than 8,500 youth and adult participants in 2022 in experiential single and multi-day programs that foster character development, leadership and community service. All programs are designed to inspire participants to realize their true potential and stay in compliance with Outward Bound USA (OBUSA) National Safety Standards. POBS is one of 10 regional OBUSA's schools and serves Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and northern Delaware from its Philadelphia headquarters at The Discovery Center in East Fairmount Park near the Strawberry Mansion neighborhood. POBS is the only Outward Bound school accredited by the Association for Experiential Education (AEE).

POBS uses an experiential learning framework based on [Kurt Hahn's educational philosophy](#) to inspire students to discover innate capabilities, develop character and leadership skills, and engage in service to others to improve their lives and their communities. Our one-day programs and multi-day expeditions are held in urban and wilderness areas throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and northern Delaware. While we welcome a range of program participants, our target audience is youth attending public middle and high schools, and we have a robust alumni network. POBS relies on philanthropy to underwrite the experiences of these participants.



Our delivery model is based on long-term partnerships with schools and nonprofit organizations that result in deep, personal growth for individuals and culture change for organizations. Our partners value us for our commitment and creativity, and for the results we achieve. Our programs are of the highest quality and adhere to strict safety standards. We recruit, train, and retain skilled staff, field instructors, and trustees, and regularly measure the effectiveness of our programs. We are driven by a desire to be a catalyst for change, and we work with our partners to create pathways, from one-day programs to deeper sustained engagement, including multi-day expeditions. By 2030, our goals include meaningfully increasing the number of Philadelphia youth who participate in Outward Bound, and opening a satellite site to broaden our geographic range.

Our core values include a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We live these values every day—in our programs and our staff and board composition—at The Discovery Center, in the surrounding

neighborhoods, and everywhere we deliver our programs. Please see our Racial Justice Statement and Action Plan [here](#) and our 2021 annual report [here](#).

Vision for Impact by 2030

POBS is currently operating under a [strategic plan](#) developed in 2019 to fulfill a ten-year vision with an implementation focus on the period 2020-2022. Given disruptions to service related to the pandemic, work towards goals has been extended through 2023. The strategic initiatives outlined in this plan focus on five pathways - program & evaluation, recruitment & retention of effective staff, program partnerships & community engagement, sustainable business model, and diversity, equity & inclusion. Relevant organizational accomplishments to date include:

- Increased students served from 5,000 in 2018 to over 8,500 in 2022 on approximately 12,000 “student program days”
- Completed an organizational culture audit as part of commitment to JEDI (justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion)
- Launched new public facing programs in The Discovery Center to demonstrate POBS’s commitment to its nearest neighbors and expanded staff capacity to include community engagement focus
- Expanded contractual relationships with the School District of Philadelphia to include service to the 9th Grade Academy High School and K-8 and middle schools
- Began systemic partnership with association of parochial schools
- Supported The Discovery Center’s evolution as a public green space drawing thousands of visitors annually
- Increased revenues (earned and contributed) from \$1.3M in 2018 to \$3.4M in 2022
- Adopted a Racial Justice statement and action plan
- Made significant progress toward goals to diversify the POBS Board of Trustees (race, age, gender, profession)

The organization’s leadership will build on these accomplishments and begin working on a new strategic plan for 2024-2026.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OPPORTUNITY

Overview

POBS is seeking an Executive Director (ED) with extensive leadership experience, preferably with a background in experiential education and/or youth development, and a proven track record in fundraising and building partnerships.



The ED of POBS serves as the senior staff member holding single point accountability for the successful execution of strategy, mission, vision, operations (i.e., student programming, safety, logistics, and administration), fiscal management and funding development for a \$3.4M annual budget, and other functions and policies. The ED is the public face of the organization and responsible for leading a staff of approximately 30 full-time employees and 25 seasonal instructors.

The Executive Director reports and is accountable to the POBS Board of Trustees. The ED works collaboratively with board and staff members to assure the organization is delivering the highest caliber programs that are responsive to regional community needs and demands for the Outward Bound program.

As a chartered member of OBUSA, the POBS ED plays a leadership role in collaborative work across the network, and benefits from knowledge and experiences shared among peer EDs.

Essential Duties & Responsibilities

Strategic Planning & Vision

- Establish and implement annual and strategic operating plans, organizational goals, objectives, and programs to achieve the mission of POBS - to change lives through challenge and discovery.
- Provide energetic and visionary leadership to POBS staff and volunteers to enable the school to stay focused on the mission and deliver relevant and enriching programs to a wide spectrum of participants from POBS' geographical region of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and northern Delaware.
- Explore growth opportunities, including opening satellite sites and/or expanding partnerships.
- Provide leadership to the POBS JEDI (justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion) task force and implement Racial Justice Action Plan.

Leadership & Executive Responsibilities

- Identify, hire, train, and supervise senior staff.
- Oversee programming, operations, human resources, and partnership development in collaboration with the leadership team.
- Provide leadership and inspiration to POBS staff and volunteers.
- Play a pivotal leadership role within the OBUSA network, including promoting POBS's partnership program model, which is growing in popularity among peer schools and is a priority in OBUSA's new strategic plan.
- Serve on the Board of Directors of the East Park Leadership and Conservation Center (EPLACC), a 501c3 supporting organization that operates The Discovery Center where POBS is located; ensure POBS's commitment to the responsibility that comes with operating in a public green space.
- Partner with Audubon Mid-Atlantic leadership to support public-facing collaborative programming and supervise senior staff assigned to The Discovery Center.
- Coordinate and engage board activities with a focus on fundraising, networking, and partnerships.
- Facilitate internal communications (between departments, individual staff, Discovery Center partners, and the board) to ensure that important information is shared in a transparent and accessible way.



THE DISCOVERY CENTER
Discover yourself in nature



Fundraising & Partnership Development

- Lead or support as appropriate all of POBS's fundraising initiatives for individuals, foundations, corporations, government agencies, community leaders and schools.
- Engage the assistance and support of the Board of Trustees and other resources to meet annual fundraising objectives and cultivate long-term sources of funding.
- Identify and establish partnerships with local and regional youth development and outdoor activity organizations that can add capabilities and experiences to enrich POBS programs.

Finance, Accounting & Administration

- Prepare annual and long-term plans and budgets and oversee the financial reporting process
- Plan for and manage POBS operations and facilities efficiently and effectively to control costs and optimize quality program delivery.

- Continually examine and evaluate organizational infrastructure to be sustainable, equitable and forward thinking.

Qualifications & Commitments

Required:

- Visionary leader with demonstrated leadership skills and an ability to build and sustain staff morale (see [Kurt Hahn's five pillars](#) for an articulation of Outward Bound's philosophy).
- Experienced manager who is able to work in a collaborative environment that requires team-building, flexible multi-tasking, and skillful organization/time management.
- Ability to represent POBS effectively and build relationships with diverse stakeholders (e.g., staff, board of trustees, foundations, school district leadership, corporations, government agencies, elected officials, community leaders).
- Experience effectively communicating key data to share stories of impact.
- Ability to interpret and analyze core financial reporting (e.g., statement of financial position; statement of activities; statement of cash flow) and oversee an annual budget and the audit process.
- Commitment to supporting the use of technology effectively (POBS's current systems include Google Suite and shared drives, Slack, Salesforce, social media platforms, etc.).
- Alignment to POBS's core values - [see linked here](#) - and demonstrated commitment to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Preferred:

- Knowledge of PA-NJ-DE state and local elected officials and educational leaders.
- Knowledge of communities, school districts, and organizations in POBS's geographic region.
- Knowledge of nonprofit accounting practices.

Education & Work Experience

- Bachelor degree required. Master's degree preferred.
- Experience serving in a leadership position. Executive leadership experience preferred.
- Experience with outdoor education/experiential learning or other urban education or youth development organizations is preferred.
- Experience and proven track record in fundraising from both individuals and organizations.

Compensation and Benefits

- Anticipated salary is approximately \$150k, plus participation in a discretionary performance bonus.
- This position is eligible for benefits including Medical, Dental, and Vision Plan, Paid Time Off, Paid Holidays, and an employer matching contribution to a 403b retirement plan.

How to Express Interest

Interested candidates should submit a letter of interest and resume to Andrew Wheeler, Lincoln Leadership at awheeler@lincolnleadership.co or 267.257.1910. All submissions will be held in strictest confidence.

Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

POBS is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, age, sexual orientation, religion, creed, national origin, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, financial aid program or other administered programs.