

POSITION PROFILE

On behalf of our client, the Loppet Foundation,
CohenTaylor Executive Search Services
is conducting a retained executive search for its

Executive Director



The Loppet Foundation

Based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the Loppet Foundation is a non-profit organization that connects people to the outdoors through experiences that grow community. Since 2002, the Loppet has worked to create high-quality programming for youth and adults, produce world class events, and strives to create a welcoming and inclusive community in its operations in Theodore Wirth Park. For more information on the Loppet, please visit their website at www.loppet.org.

Programs

The Loppet's diverse array of programming serves all ages and ability levels through programs in cross country skiing, mountain biking, trail running, orienteering, paddling, yoga, outdoor art, and more. The Loppet also provides year-round outdoor recreation programming at 17+ schools in North Minneapolis and beyond for elementary, middle, and high-school aged youth. The Loppet is committed to providing equitable access to its programming to all individuals. Click [here](#) to learn more about the Loppet's programs.

Events

The Loppet organizes 50+ Loppet events each year that attract over 20,000 participants annually, including the City of Lakes Loppet Winter Festival, annual all age and ability levels sport series, and the Luminary Loppet. Loppet events range from fun, community-centric gatherings that attract participants of all backgrounds, ages and ability levels to endurance sporting events, all in alignment with its mission to create community outdoors.

The Loppet is also widely known for organizing large-scale national and international sporting events which have shaped cross-country skiing globally, including the 2024 Stifel Loppet Cup, the 2018 Masters Cross Country Ski World Cup, 2011 and 2021 U.S. Junior Cross Country Ski Championships, and U.S. SuperTour races. More information about the Loppet's events can be found [here](#).



Mission

Connecting people to the outdoors through experiences that grow community.

Values

- **Anti-Racism:** Addressing and dismantling historical and systemic inequities in outdoor spaces, and evolving into an anti-racist organization.
- **Collaboration:** Recognizing that we are one piece of a broader community working together to create change. Building strong partnerships is vital to sustaining and living out our values.
- **Growth:** Challenging ourselves to grow, by creating an environment for improvement, performance and achievement.
- **Inclusion:** Committing to offering spaces, programming, and events that are inviting and accessible to all individuals seeking community in the outdoors.
- **Play:** Finding ways to add adventure, discovery and joy into all seasons.
- **Stewardship:** Providing mindful and responsible management of resources – including people, the land, and financial assets entrusted to our care.
- **Well-Being:** Knowing that a connection to the outdoors is crucial to mental, physical and social health.



Theodore Wirth Park, Trails & Trailhead

In addition to hosting races, clinics, lessons, events, and more, the Loppet also ensures there are great spaces for people to find community outdoors. In a public-private partnership with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, the Loppet maintains and improves miles of mountain bike and ski trails, and stewards the bordering land in its home base, Theodore Wirth Park, the largest park in the Minneapolis Park System.

In Wirth Park, the Loppet operates the Trailhead, a 14,000 square foot state of the art facility built to serve as the hub for a host of year-round outdoor recreation and community building opportunities and activities. In the past several years, the Trailhead has served as host to hundreds of Loppet sponsored and community sponsored events, such as the North High School Prom, Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ) gatherings, Urban Bird Collective activities, senior socials, and region wide high school ski and mountain bike races.

In 2024, the Loppet received a two-year State LCCMR grant for its Stories of Connection Project. The Stories of Connection Project brings together community groups and others to explore what Theodore Wirth Park means to people from the many different cultures that call Minneapolis home. This includes understanding points of inspiration and connection, as well as challenges faced by community members such as residents of BIPOC and lower income neighborhoods bordering the park. More information on the Stories of Connection Project can be found [here](#).

The Executive Director Opportunity

In support of the Loppet Foundation's mission and values, and in collaboration with a talented, highly dedicated team of staff, volunteers, Board members, and community partners, the Executive Director leads the vision and strategic direction for the organization and oversees its operations and programs.

As a leading public spokesperson for the Loppet, the Executive Director is responsible for cultivating new contributed support and managing multiple critical community partnerships, whether that's with six-year-olds or sixty-year-olds, artists, nature lovers, or elite athletes. The Loppet is a home for all who seek connection to the outdoors and are interested in co-creating programming to build community.

The Executive Director will assume leadership of a fiscally healthy non-profit and have the opportunity to advance the Loppet's mission and impact by leveraging momentum that has been created through both the renewed interest and belief in the healing power of the outdoors following the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as following the Loppet's recent hosting of a major international event, the Stifel Loppet Cup, in February 2024.

The Role

The Executive Director oversees the overall operations and management of the Loppet, including financial oversight, management of several lines of programming and business, supervision of the leadership team, board management, and providing strategic direction to the organization.

Compensation

\$135,000 – \$160,000

Location

The Executive Director works from the Trailhead located within Theodore Wirth Park in Minneapolis, MN.



Reporting Relationships

The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors and is responsible for a team of 27 staff, currently including 8 direct reports. The Executive Director will also manage relationships with various organizational consultants and external partners.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Oversees the development and implementation of the organization's strategic goals and business model in collaboration with the Board of Directors.
- Ensures alignment of the Loppet's programs, events, trails and facilities, and other activities with its stated mission, vision, and values.

Staff and Volunteer Development

- Motivates, develops, and empowers staff and a large volunteer base; leads and engages the Loppet's community of supporters in an inclusive and inspirational manner.
- Fosters an organizational culture founded in the organization's values.
- Oversees an effective staffing and volunteer model consistent with community and organization needs and within the constraints of the Loppet's physical and financial resources.

Communications, Outreach, and External Relations

- Builds collaborative relationships with a broad range of local and national partners, including communities within the Twin Cities metro area, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, all levels of government, other nonprofit organizations, partner businesses, and organizations throughout the state, region, country, and world that share programming goals with the Loppet.
- Serves as the organization's chief spokesperson and ambassador to enhance the visibility of the Loppet and represents the organization through appropriate committees, joint projects, and other networking opportunities.
- Articulates the Loppet's mission, goals, programs, and services through vehicles such as media appearances, website/internet, direct mail, email, and social media.

Fundraising and Revenue Development

- Oversees philanthropic fundraising initiatives that include strategies for engaging corporate and institutional foundations and individual donors in partnership with the development director.
- Identifies, cultivates, and builds relationships with new and existing sponsors and business partners.
- Maximizes earned revenue opportunities through continued development and expansion of fee-based programs, facilities, and service offerings.

Organizational and Financial Management

- Oversees the general management and administration of the organization's operations, including responsibility for developing and maintaining best practice administrative systems, policies, and controls.
- Ensures the continued financial health and stability of the organization through the development and oversight of operating and capital budgets.
- Develops, implements, and manages the organization's human resources operations.
- Ensures proper oversight and management of the Loppet facilities and equipment.

Programs & Events

- Provides leadership and innovation in developing programs and services, ensuring that the Loppet's programs are accessible, co-created, and sustainable to reflect community engagement and need.
- Demonstrates consistently good judgment in program planning, implementation, and evaluations.
- Provides leadership for the planning and execution of national and international sporting competitions.
- Supervises the management of all events, including permitting, communication, and planning.
- Oversees the maintenance and stewardship of world-class trails and facilities.

Board Governance

- Attends and participates in meetings as ex-officio member of all board committees, acts as a resource in board policy decision making, and keeps board informed of significant issues affecting the development and delivery of programs and services.
- Oversees development and implementation of orientation for incoming board members.





The Ideal Candidate

With a passion for the Loppet's mission and values, the ideal Executive Director candidate brings 7-10+ years of leadership experience that includes demonstrated experience working with inclusive organizing and program development through an equity lens, securing financial resources, developing and empowering a team, and managing complex relationships with external partners.

While no one candidate will possess all of the criteria below, the ideal candidate demonstrates many of the following professional and personal abilities, attributes, and experiences.

Proven experience as:

- An exceptional public spokesperson on behalf of an organization with the ability to inspire, connect, and engage a large, diverse community.
- A visionary and strategic leader with the ability to prioritize, motivate and align an organization around strategic goals, values, and continued growth.
- A successful leader, manager, and developer of people with the ability to empower staff and volunteer teams, foster a healthy organizational culture, and lead the professional development of staff.
- A leader with a strong business acumen, preferably with experience leading in a similarly complex organization (ex. a nonprofit with an enterprise component, facility operations, large scale events, etc.)
- A fundraiser and resource developer with demonstrated success identifying, securing, and cultivating revenue from philanthropic sources, as well as event, programmatic, and other earned revenue.
- A financially astute leader with skills for managing operating budgets with multiple revenue streams and capital budgets.
- An excellent communicator with the ability to build and maintain strong relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders, including a public-private partnership with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and key relationships with funders, vendors, volunteers, the Board of Directors, and the broader community.

An individual who is:

- Passionate about the outdoors and adventure sports with a commitment to the Loppet's mission and strategic goals.
- Committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts that center anti-racism and outdoor inclusion in the Loppet's work, and ensures that the Trailhead facility is a community asset welcoming to all.
- A team player willing to roll up their sleeves and get into the work.
- A listener, community builder, and placemaker.
- Kind, compassionate, humble, collaborative, transparent, and innovative.



Compensation & Benefits

The Executive Director is a full-time salaried employee. The expected salary for this position will be between \$135,000 – \$160,000. Benefits include paid time off; health, dental and life insurance; a professional development budget; and 401(k) retirement plan with 3% match.

The Loppet recognizes the need for a diverse workforce and understands that traditionally underrepresented communities must be centered in the work it does. As a Foundation, the Loppet is committed to building a blended team that reflects the community it serves. Hence, we strongly encourage BIPOC, Indigenous and Queer-identified individuals to apply.

The Loppet Foundation has exclusively retained CohenTaylor Executive Search Services to help conduct this search.

For more information, or to submit your resume as application, please email: loppet@cohentaylor.com.

All inquiries will remain confidential.

