

# **Executive Director**

## **New Canaan Land Trust**

### **About the New Canaan Land Trust**

The New Canaan Land Trust (NCLT) is a nationally accredited non-profit land conservation organization, operating in New Canaan, Connecticut. Founded in 1967, NCLT protects nearly 400 acres of open space, ranging from single-acre wetlands to 45+ acre preserves with diverse habitats and active stewardship programs and events. NCLT is the largest private landowner in New Canaan, and continually works to add to its portfolio of protected lands through donation and strategic acquisitions. In 2024, NCLT purchased an historic home in New Canaan which serves as NCLT headquarters.

NCLT is driven by its mission to engage the New Canaan community in the conservation and stewardship of open space. Approximately half of NCLT's acreage is open to the public, with over 6 miles of trails across 10 of NCLT's largest preserves. Events, internships, volunteer opportunities, and other community programs help to strengthen the New Canaan community's connection with NCLT's special places.

### **About the Executive Director Position**

This position is well suited for an experienced non-profit or land conservation professional looking for a unique opportunity to lead and grow a well-established community land trust. NCLT will also consider applications from candidates looking to make a start in the conservation field.

The Executive Director (ED) reports to the Board President, and is responsible for advancing the mission of NCLT. The ED manages all aspects of the organization including land acquisition; land stewardship; community engagement; staff management/development; financial management; fundraising; and development. The ED also supports the Board, assisting with strategic planning, policy development, and providing vision and leadership for the organization. The ED will support the Board with the execution of a successful Capital Campaign.

### **Key Responsibilities**

#### Fundraising and Development

- Build and cultivate relationships to secure the resources needed to carry out NCLT's annual and long-term goals.
- Grow and broaden a funding base from individual donors, foundations, government sources, and businesses. Maintain, and be the primary administrator of, this information in NCLT's donor database.
- Develop an annual fundraising plan, including appeals, annual reports, and other seasonal touchpoints, in collaboration with the Outreach and Development Committee.
- Write grants for acquisition, maintenance, and operational funding.
- Provide support for any specific fundraising initiatives outside of annual development activities for operating revenue.

### Community Outreach and Relations

- Serve as the lead spokesperson for the organization to supporters, the public, and media, projecting a clear and professional persona for the organization.
- Develop newsletters and communicate updates and opportunities to partners and supporters, in collaboration with the Outreach and Development Committee.
- Host 2-4 “tentpole” events annually and more frequent smaller events that engage the community with NCLT’s mission, in collaboration with the Events Committee.
- Advocate for federal/state/regional land conservation initiatives and related legislative activities, as approved by the Board.
- Proactively partner with a variety of community, regional and conservation organizations, including but not limited to New Canaan Community Foundation, New Canaan Library, New Canaan Nature Center, local Boy Scout and Girl Scout Troops, Connecticut Land Conservation Council, Land Trust Alliance and neighboring Land Trusts.
- Actively manage regular website updates with Annual Impact Reports, monthly newsletters, ongoing events and happenings.

### Leadership and Strategic Planning

- Provide vision and strategic insight to the Board for fulfilling the mission of the organization.
- Monitor the organization’s progress against its strategic plan, and lead the Board through a revision/update process of this plan.
- Ensure compliance with Land Trust Alliance accreditation requirements, and lead with future accreditation renewal processes.

### Management and Operations

- Inspire and motivate a highly skilled and committed team, including volunteers, staff, and Board.
- Recruit, hire, and manage staff, based on organizational staffing plan and budget. Evaluate staff biannually, based on a set of measurable goals.
- Oversee day-to-day operations and ensure that appropriate management systems are in place, including accounting, risk management, human resources, legal, and technology;
- Develop with committees, and review with the Board an annual operating plan and budget, progress reports, financial performance, and the annual audit.
- Oversee and ensure compliance with state and federal non-profit corporation requirements. Ensure required returns and reports are filed.
- Assist in the management, maintenance and future renovations of NCLT Headquarters in collaboration with staff and the Board of Directors.

### Land Conservation, Acquisition and Stewardship

- Identify and pursue new land conservation opportunities, in collaboration with the Open Space Committee, and guided by NCLT’s 2020-2040 Strategic Conservation Plan.
- Continue to enhance the conservation values on NCLT preserves through the implementation of habitat restoration projects, trail construction and improvement, and other land stewardship projects.
- Maintain, update, and revise management plans, in compliance with LTA-approved practices, and in collaboration with the Land Stewardship Committee

- Oversee the annual inspection and monitoring of NCLT's 49 preserves and 12 conservation easements. Work to resolve encroachments or other violations with the Land Stewardship Committee

### Governance

- Assist in developing, maintaining, and supporting a strong Board of Directors, committees and Advisory Council in collaboration with the Governance Committee.
- Work with the board to recruit new directors who bring a variety of perspectives and experience; engage and strengthen board committees; and promote effective governance practices.
- Ensure that the Board has access to all information needed to carry out its governance responsibilities, including regular reports on the activities of the organization and progress toward meeting annual goals and strategic objectives.
- Work closely with the Board to ensure compliance with NCLT's bylaws, policies, directives, audits, and the legal requirements of a 501(C)3 organization.

### **Desired Experience and Skills**

- A demonstrated passion and vision for land conservation, and passion for the mission of the New Canaan Land Trust.
- A clear and demonstrable understanding of conservation and stewardship practices in New England, especially as it pertains to land trusts and private land conservation.
- A proven track record of effective leadership skills, including a collaborative management style and experience working with a non-profit Board.
- Demonstrated fundraising experience, especially with individual donor cultivation and family foundations.
- Ability to communicate the organization's mission to supporters, the community, public officials, and foundations through written materials, and public presentations.
- A sound understanding of non-profit finance, budgeting, legal requirements, and the Board's role in legal and financial oversight.
- The ability to work collaboratively with the Board, Committees, and Staff to build trust, strengthen organizational effectiveness, and encourage programs in support of NCLT's mission.
- A bachelor's degree is required. An advanced degree in a related field or equivalent relevant work experience is preferred.

### **Position Details and Benefits**

- This is a full-time salaried position. The salary offered to the successful candidate will be \$90,000 - \$110,000 commensurate with experience and qualifications.
- Schedule: Flexible work schedule, to average 40 hours per week. Occasional evening and weekend work may be required. Generous and flexible paid time off.
- Location: NCLT headquarters is located on Valley Road in New Canaan, CT. ED may work remotely up to 20% of the time..
- Benefits: Simple IRA contributions with employer matching, health insurance and opportunity for future housing.

### **How to Apply**

Please send a resume and cover letter to [admin@newcanaanlandtrust.org](mailto:admin@newcanaanlandtrust.org). Only complete

applications sent to this address will be considered. Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis. Applications will be confidential. No phone calls, please.

*The New Canaan Land Trust is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive work environment for all employees, interns, volunteers, and board members.*