



FREE SPIRIT MEDIA

Opportunity Profile

Executive Director

Free Spirit Media NFP
Nichols Tower, 906 South Homan Avenue, Floor 5
Chicago, IL 60624

Prepared By:



Mortén Group

About Free Spirit Media

Free Spirit Media (FSM) provides youth and young adults on Chicago's West and South sides with a comprehensive foundation in media literacy/production through digital media arts, journalism, and creative workforce development programs. It transforms media and society by providing opportunities for emerging creators, primarily from communities of color, to produce and distribute original content and to pursue artistic, personal and professional aspirations. FSM pursues this mission by providing an engaging learning environment that stimulates meaningful media creation, fosters an entrepreneurial and visionary culture, and understands that social transformation is most viable when individuals promote and practice equity, inclusion, and solidarity.

About the Opportunity

Free Spirit Media is seeking a visionary, passionate, and strategic leader as its next Executive Director. The Executive Director drives the strategic, programmatic, and fundraising vision for Free Spirit Media, directing and managing the organization toward its strategic goals under the oversight of the Board of Directors. Representing the organization to both internal and external audiences, the Executive Director ensures that FSM's activities and programs are mission-driven and youth-centered. The ideal new Executive Director will have deep familiarity with the communities and young people that Free Spirit Media serves. The Board seeks candidates who have experience and/or understanding of positive youth development and career pathways, as well as the creative sector (arts, performance, media, journalism, communications, etc.).

Essential Responsibilities and Functions

Organizational Leadership and Strategy

- Develop and communicate long-range strategic plan and goals for the organization, assuring alignment with Free Spirit Media's mission.
- Lead strategic planning and change management processes.
- Oversee annual budgeting and resource allocation.
- Oversee program development and operations to ensure they are being executed in accordance with the organization's mission, policies, and priorities.

Fundraising/Business Development

- Serve as the lead fundraiser for the organization; act as Free Spirit Media's primary liaison with key donors (individual, corporate, and foundations); manage a select portfolio of high-impact partner, funder, and prospective-partner and funder relationships.
- Provide guidance to the Development Office regarding key donor and communications strategies.
- Actively seek new opportunities for funding and partnerships.
- Represent programs and the mission of the organization to external agencies, organizations, donors, press/media and the general public.
- Leverage the power of Free Spirit Media's current community partners and develop collaborations among new partners.
- Participate in local and national creative-industry networking activities.

Program Oversight and Staff Supervision

- Lead the staff to develop and implement renowned youth-centered programs grounded in best practices for positive youth development.
- Nurture a healthy staff culture that is mission-focused, dynamic, and communicative.
- Manage direct reports and oversee the management of all full-time staff to ensure operations run smoothly.
- Serve as Executive Producer of media products and programs, especially Free Spirit PRO and advanced production projects.

Governance

- Work with the Board Chair to inform Board input into long-and-short-term strategic objectives.
- Advise the Board of key matters requiring input or action; ensure role-appropriate communications between staff and Board.
- Work with Board committees to ensure that the Board is effectively organized with a system of board recruitment and succession planning.

Essential Qualifications

The successful candidate will possess the following essential qualifications:

- Proven commitment to racial equity and community development.
- Demonstrated ability to provide leadership both internally and externally.
- Excellent managerial skills and proven track record of building a successful team.

- Significant experience with high-quality youth development and career pathway programs.
- Strong knowledge and understanding of the creative sector required; media production and distribution a plus.
- Ability to build and engage in collaborative partnerships with Free Spirit Media's stakeholders and community members.
- Ability to lead and manage fundraising efforts, including but not limited to: foundation grants, corporate sponsorship, individual giving, and government grants.
- Previous experience working with a Board of Directors.
- 10 years of experience in nonprofit management, fundraising, and fiscal oversight preferred.
- Experience with education and/or the creative sector (media, journalism, communications, theatre, etc.) preferred.

Compensation and Benefits

The salary range for the Executive Director position is mid-\$110-\$120,000, along with a robust and competitive benefits package.

How to Apply

Free Spirit Media has retained Morten Group, LLC to conduct this search.

Applicants should email a cover letter and resume in PDF format to executivesearch@mortengroup.com with the subject line "Free Spirit Media – Executive Director Search." Cover letters will be evaluated as a writing sample and should include the applicant's salary requirements. Application materials must be directed to the email address above. No phone calls, please. For best consideration, applications should be received by **Friday, January 22, 2021**. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

Free Spirit Media is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), gender identity and/or expression, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, membership in an employee organization, retaliation, parental status, military service or other non-merit factors. Applicants from historically underrepresented communities, including but not limited to, people of color, LGBTQ individuals, and women, are strongly encouraged to apply.