The Opportunity: A New Era at the Vancouver Aquarium

In 2017, the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre will complete a multi-year transition from an aquarium with a rich mixture of education, research and conservation programs to a new and expanded leading organization engaging millions of people globally in support of ocean conservation.

Building on six decades of success, our primary role in the global quest to help sustain our oceans and freshwater environments will be by engaging more and more people sparking interest, curiosity and awareness that we are all connected to what is happening in and to our oceans. It follows that we need to build more relationships locally, nationally, and globally. As we launch this essential and unique global organization, we are seeking a senior leader with the experience, vision and drive to develop, lead and manage the overall fundraising strategy for the entire new entity.

The new Senior Vice President will be a key leader in the new organization, and will have responsibility for the relationship building needed to acquire the resources necessary to accomplish our mission with strategic processes of cultivation, solicitation and stewardship for individuals, corporations, foundations and various arms of government.

Reporting to the President and CEO, and leading a passionate team, the Senior Vice President will be a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and will work collaboratively across all units in the new organization, and in particular with the Vice President, Engagement; Vice President, Research; and Vice President, Education.

The Senior Vice President will be a key external ambassador for the new organization, building relationships and networks to grow and steward our donor pool, as well as providing leadership, vision, and direction to the Development team with a focus on achieving operational, financial and strategic goals and objectives.

About the New Global Ocean Conservation Organization

Currently, the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre is a self-supporting, charitable, non-profit society dedicated to effecting the conservation of aquatic life through display, communication, public programming and education, research and direct action.

Our current Vision is: A sustainable world where aquatic life is diverse and flourishing.

Going forward, as one of the world’s best aquariums, the Vancouver Aquarium facility in Stanley Park will continue to be an amazing venue to connect 1.2 million visitors annually with our natural world. It will continue to serve as the headquarters for the new organization, and will continue to be an integral part of our expanded public engagement goals. The additional engagement work we have developed over the past decade –
along with the expanded research, education and direct action programs – have been repositioned to form their own pillars under a new overarching organization, with a new name, that will form the foundation of our global leadership in ocean conservation.

Based in Vancouver, this new organization will be comprised of four key component parts:

1. Public Engagement
2. Coastal Ocean Research Institute
3. Aquarium Operations, including Vancouver Aquarium and Oceanogràfic in Valencia, Spain
4. Ocean Education

We will be generating more support for conservation activities by expanding already impressive public engagement, broadening our conservation-focused scientific research, expanding education for students and non-school audiences, and growing our national and international scope. Direct-action conservation programs, such as the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup®, Ocean Wise® sustainable seafood program, citizen science programs (e.g. BC Cetacean Sightings Network), a new Ocean Plastics Initiative, and our work with endangered species are also being expanded.

Most significantly, while we expect the 1.2 million people who visit the Vancouver Aquarium to continue connecting with us in our galleries, we are committed to giving them an even more engaging experience. We are also committed to expanding our reach in the digital universe from the current 58 million annual touch points, to 100 million by 2020 and a billion by 2025.

By connecting people to the oceans’ secrets, and the animals that depend on their ecosystems, we know we can engage more and more people to first become interested, and then to care about helping protect our world’s oceans.

**About The Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre**

The Vancouver Aquarium has come a long way in our 60 year history. A “hit” from opening day (over 10,000 people lined up on June 10th 1956), the Aquarium remains Vancouver’s single largest visitor attraction. This fact enables us to operate without an annual subsidy from any level of government – unique for a cultural institution in Canada. We boast a diverse and passionate member community over 75,000 strong, over 1,200 volunteers, over 500 employees and a $40 million operating budget.

The Vancouver Aquarium is an institution that is known by scientists and conservationists around the world as a valuable contributor to both scientific research and the broader community through our commitment to conservation, research and educational programs. Leading aquarium professionals generally place the Vancouver Aquarium among the top three in the world due to our innovative programming, superlative animal care, and a strong commitment to aquatic research. Aquarium research projects extend world-wide and the Aquarium is internationally recognized for our successful Marine Mammal Rescue Program.
The Vancouver Aquarium has always been entrepreneurial – in our business dealings, with our mission-related activities, and now through a growing focus on building visibility, brand, and expanded community engagement. In the fall of 2012, we commenced a multi-year transformational project to expand both our physical facilities in Stanley Park, as well as throughout the overall organization and our work to effect the conservation of aquatic life. Our goal is to engage an increasing number of people in raising awareness about issues in the natural world and inspiring them to become involved. The Aquarium also provides programs for people to get personally and often physically involved in helping reduce the impact of a variety of environmental issues. These are only a few of the growing number of efforts to engage people in new ways to become part of the environmental solution.

Admissions, memberships, programs, retail operations and food services account for 85 percent of our operating budget, while charitable contributions, donations and restricted grants comprise the remainder. The Aquarium has non-profit, charitable status in both Canada and the United States.

We currently raise about $4.5 million in operating funds per year from our supporters – individuals, corporations, foundations, members, and others who support our work to engage more and more people in conservation efforts.

About two-thirds of this support comes from foundations, major gifts and corporate support. We receive just over $1 million from annual giving and special events. These events, including Toast to the Coast and Night at the Aquarium raise about $550,000 per year.

**The Senior Vice President: Summary of Responsibilities**

The Senior Vice President is responsible for the development and implementation of the expanded organization's fundraising strategy including its priorities, goals and budgets. The Senior Vice President will take the lead in developing new ways of connecting the work we are doing through different channels with potential donors. This means development of a fundraising plan with an expanded geographic focus (national, continental, and global), use of any and all productive techniques, and mobilization of anyone or everyone in the organization as appropriate for the particular program or activity and prospect.

The Senior Vice President researches and identifies potential donors, oversees proposals to obtain grants and prepares presentations to deliver to potential donors and key stakeholders.

Through effective networking, partnerships, alliances, outreach and internal teamwork, the Senior Vice President, leads and manages the strategic planning process for the development group and encourages the development, implementation and evaluation of innovative initiatives that engage public interest and support for the new entity.

The Senior Vice President will define and communicate goals, strategies and associated metrics as part of the Senior Management Team to enable the organization to achieve this success. Additionally, the Senior Vice President will ensure the infrastructure is in place to support a successful development program, including human resource
management, maintaining donor databases, overseeing donor relationship coordination, working with the Board of Directors as necessary, and overseeing event planning and campaigns as needed.

Responsibilities

Organizational Leadership:

As a member of the Executive Management Team (SLT) the Senior Vice President provides overall leadership and operational direction to the new organization and its employees by:

- Collaborating with the Board and the SLT, participating in the development of a strategic plan that charts the overall future course of the new entity. Specifically, the Senior Vice President articulates the issues, strategies and objectives relating to all aspects of fundraising strategy;
- Helping foster an environment within the organization which encourages creativity, innovation, continuous learning and improvement;
- Ensuring a visible presence throughout the organization, in the community, and elsewhere as necessary;
- Ensuring the SLT is kept informed and involved, where appropriate, of all relevant information and actions regarding the new organization’s external engagement strategy;
- Developing and presenting recommended courses of action relating to the fundraising portfolio to the CEO, SLT and/or Board for its consideration; and
- Ensuring the development and overall adherence to operating policies, processes, and practices in order for the new entity to achieve its objectives, while meeting its commitment to the highest level of integrity.

Strategic Planning and Team Leadership:

- Ensuring congruency with the organization’s strategic plan, developing and implementing the fundraising strategic plan including goals, objectives and metrics to monitor and measure the achievement of the plan;
- Collaborating closely with SLT peers in priority-setting initiatives; specifically, helping structure and focus new or proposed programs and activities so they will be more attractive to potential supporters.
- Working in partnership with the VP, Engagement on membership initiatives and public outreach;
- Developing and maintaining an effective organization structure, including work plans that reflect operational needs and clearly articulating the accountabilities and responsibilities of employees;
- Ensuring team effectiveness through goal setting and performance management, including coaching, training, and professional development;
- Leading by example in all people management expectations; and
- Ensuring accurate and effective budgets are established and adhered to.
Fundraising Leadership:

- Defining, monitoring and updating the new organization’s positioning and fundraising goals, strategies, tactics and metrics in collaboration with the SLT and the applicable Committees of the Board;
- Ensuring the fundraising strategy and tactics connect with the mission of the organization and its strategic needs;
- Ensuring fundraising goals are clear and effectively communicated across the organization;
- Establishing and overseeing the execution of priorities and plans for all fundraising activities;
- Providing timely, accurate and consistent information and documentation on the new entity’s activities that impact the relationship with governments, corporate and individual donors, funding agencies, members and the community; and
- As required, acting as the representative for the new organization, locally, nationally and internationally, and representing the organization at speaking engagements.

Fundraising Management and Administration:

- Developing and maintaining a systematic framework (including CRM, database, etc.) across the organization, aligned with the fundraising strategy and short and long-term revenue targets;
- Developing strategies to advance donor development and engagement;
- Ensuring that the cost of raising money is managed in a manner that remains within industry standards and organization budget targets;
- Effectively managing capital campaigns and project-specific fundraising initiatives;
- Developing strategies for partnerships and strategic alliances with corporations and foundations where there is an allegiance with the new entity’s mission;
- Developing highly effective donor and partner recognition and stewardship programs, including ensuring that appropriate systems and processes are in place to manage the stewardship requirement of all gifts to the new organization; and
- Keeping abreast of trends in the field and recommending new and innovative approaches.

Organizational Leadership:

- Maintaining organizational safety standards;
- Promptly aiding in Emergency protocol;
- Continually improving our impact on the environment and greening of operations through support of EMS protocols; and
- Actively demonstrating the Aquarium’s values and expectations for conduct.
The Ideal Candidate

The new Senior Vice President will be an experienced leader, an energetic builder, and one who relishes engaging the passions and commitment of our broad constituency to help this exciting new organization thrive. The ideal candidate will be a dynamic action-oriented leader who will chart an ambitious and achievable course for our new organization.

The new incumbent will be a strategic fundraising professional with proven skills in developing a sustainable, multi-faceted fundraising plan and will have a track record in exceeding expectations. An accomplished strategist with significant executive management skills, the Senior Vice President will have previous success working within a complex, multi-stakeholder environment.

A communicative and collaborative colleague, the new incumbent will partner with the SLT, Board, and staff to marshal resources in the proactive development of our fundraising strategy. With perseverance, assertiveness and tenacity, the Senior Vice President will possess the drive needed to build and implement an effective and successful fundraising program.

The new Senior Vice President will heighten the new entity’s stature locally, nationally, and globally by driving forward initiatives that emphasize our brand as Canada’s leading marine science centre and on the Aquarium’s history of success. A natural relationship-builder, the ideal candidate will successfully oversee and lead all donor engagement activities. With perseverance and tenacity, the new incumbent will ensure that relationships with volunteers, donors, prospective donors, and key partners are prioritized.

The successful candidate will be an energetic team player, keen to learn, as well as to share their knowledge and expertise. Tactful and diplomatic, the Senior Vice President will have the credibility and fortitude to foster a culture of philanthropy among the SLT, Board, and across the organization as a whole. The ideal candidate will be a confident and inspirational manager who will guide and support staff and volunteers alike. The Senior Vice President will be an inspiring leader who has a proven ability to lead and motivate a team of professionals by demonstrating passion and drive to succeed. The new incumbent will empower and encourage the Development team to achieve its full potential.

A compelling storyteller and articulate communicator, the successful candidate will work collaboratively to develop appropriate messaging for donors and prospects with the goal of connecting caring individuals with the new organization. The Senior Vice President will be authentically mission-driven with a passionate interest in marine life and ocean conversation.

Qualifications

- Significant experience in leading and building an organization’s fundraising capacity.
• Deep executive leadership experience with demonstrated financial, administrative and business acumen.
• Experience leading multiple multi-disciplinary teams would be a significant asset.
• A degree is required; post-graduate work is encouraged, with a preference for a MBA, with a focus on marketing and communications.
• Ability to travel and attend meetings and functions outside of standard office hours.
• Demonstrated passion for the globe’s oceans and their conservation would be an asset.
• Capacity to tour donors through galleries and behind the scenes spaces.

For More Information

KCI (Ketchum Canada Inc.) has been retained to conduct this important search on behalf the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre. For more information about this leadership opportunity please contact Christoph Clodius, Vice President, Search Practice by phone at 778-331-8865 or by email at VancouverAquarium@kciphilanthropy.com.

To formally apply, please send a resume and letter of interest to the email address listed above by March 20, 2017.

You can also view the full Executive Brief at: www.kciphilanthropy.com

All inquiries and applications will be held in strict confidence.