



## Vermont Conservation Voters Seeks New Executive Director

### About Vermont Conservation Voters (VCV)

Founded in 1982, VCV works to elect environmentally-friendly candidates to public office, and then holds elected officials accountable for the decisions they make affecting our air, water, wildlife, land, communities, and health. Based in Montpelier, VCV, a 501(c)(4) nonprofit, shares an office and maintains a strategic partnership with Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

**With a mission to make environmental protection a top priority for elected officials, candidates, and voters, VCV undertakes a variety of activities:**

- VCV develops an annual Environmental Common Agenda. This comprehensive guide outlines our top legislative priorities to address the urgent environmental challenges facing Vermont. In 2024, 19 organizations signed onto the Agenda.
- VCV staff are advocates in the Vermont Legislature, presenting testimony to various legislative committees, lobbying lawmakers to support our positions, and providing strategic advice to coalitions on how to advance thoughtful policies.
- VCV keeps voters informed through regular media and member outreach, including weekly reports during the legislative session - the Democracy Dispatch podcast and the Climate Dispatch video series (produced jointly with VNRC) - which feature exclusive interviews with legislators and environmental allies, and goes deeper on policy initiatives.
- In election years, VCV endorses and works to help elect pro-environment candidates. As a nonpartisan organization, VCV has a long history of endorsing a wide range of candidates who share our values. Through political action committees, VCV conducts direct voter outreach to support these candidates.
- VCV closely tracks lawmakers' actions at the State House, including key votes on environmental bills via our Environmental Scorecard and sponsorship of legislation that advances top legislative priorities.
- In recent years, VCV has helped identify and train candidates through our collaborative LEAD-VT candidate training, and prepare newly-elected legislators through multi-day governance trainings.

VCV's work is carried out by a year-round staff of three, with administrative and operational support provided through our partnership with VNRC. VCV is financially sound with a reliable donor base. VCV is governed by a committed 8-member Board of Directors with significant experience in state politics and policy-making.

### Opportunity Going Forward

VCV's new Executive Director will step in at a time of great opportunity, challenge, and change. The pending outcomes of upcoming state and federal elections will influence our work, as will the growing impacts of climate change and other challenges. In 2022, 86% of VCV-endorsed candidates were elected, laying the groundwork for significant policy successes throughout the 2023-2024 legislative biennium - in clean energy, flood resilience, reducing toxic chemicals, land use reforms to better address housing and conservation, and more. While these wins provide a strong foundation to build on, VCV will need to maintain strong pro-environment legislative majorities to progress further.

### **Position Profile**

VCV seeks an Executive Director to lead this organization during a time of growth and expanding impact. The ideal candidate will be a seasoned and collaborative nonprofit leader who is familiar with electoral and legislative campaigns, environmental policy issues, environmental justice, and the Vermont political landscape. The position requires a person with exceptional communication and relationship-building skills who leads with vision and authenticity in a fast-paced and complex environment.

### **Position Responsibilities**

The Executive Director manages and coordinates all programs, generates organizational cohesion and sense of direction, keeps the Board of Directors informed and engaged, maintains and strengthens membership and development, and provides an articulate voice for VCV on all issues we work on. Through its strategic partnership with Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC), the Executive Director supports VNRC's work in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement and Resource Sharing Agreement between the 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations.

### **Core Duties:**

#### **Politics and Lobbying**

- Maintain expertise on both the political landscape and the state of environmental protection in order to identify opportunities for new programs or policies.
- Identify pro-environment candidates to recommend to the board for endorsement.
- Create coordinated or independent expenditure campaigns for key legislative or statewide candidates, including design and implementation of direct mail, phone, and digital lobbying programs and accountability tools.
- Build strong relationships with elected officials, appointed officials, and major political players in the state.
- Set organizational lobbying strategies and goals while supporting other organizations' lobbying efforts whenever possible.

#### **Fundraising**

- Lead all fundraising activities for the 501(c)(4) and PACs.
- Build relationships with major donors; manage asks and cultivate relationships.
- Convene and coordinate individual political donors who share the organization's goals.
- Earn the respect of foundation funders and serve as a political advisor to them whenever possible.
- Innovate new projects and match funder interests to the needs of the organization.
- Approve online and mail solicitations and participate in fundraising events.

## **Partnerships and Coordination**

- Strive to become the most trusted and impactful political partner to Vermont's environmental movement and the most respected and influential environmental partner to Vermont's political community.
- Facilitate change through partnerships with historically disenfranchised communities to protect Vermont's natural resources and advocate positively on environmental issues and in support of candidates.
- Build and maintain crucial partnerships with key allies.
- Work to strengthen relationships and learn from our national Conservation Voter Movement peers.

## **Organizational**

- Develop and implement strategic plans and budgets under the oversight of the Board and with the input of the staff.
- Coordinate with Vermont Natural Resources Council on annual budgeting, shared resource deployment, and providing support to VNRC's work in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding and Resource Sharing Agreement between the two organizations
- Design, fundraise for, and implement new programs to meet strategic goals.
- Recruit diverse staff, Board, and membership to accurately represent Vermont's communities.
- Communicate regularly with Board members and prepare materials for quarterly Board meetings.
- Serve as the face of the organization to the press and via other communications outlets, and approve communications to members, the press, and the public.
- Lead organizational commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice and work to expand the political and environmental communities' commitment to those values.
- Work with accountants and attorneys to ensure tax and legal compliance.

The ideal candidate will demonstrate the following capacities:

- Knowledge of and the ability to positively impact Vermont's political and electoral processes.
- Knowledge of Vermont's environmental and conservation issues and policy solutions.
- Political savvy, including the ability to provide strategic advice to coalitions navigating the legislative arena.
- Experience developing electoral campaigns, including identifying priorities and implementing a range of voter contact strategies such as direct mail, phone and text banking, and canvassing.
- Understanding of how policy impacts equity; a commitment to equity, inclusion, and diversity principles; and experience in environmental justice work
- Experience in nonprofit organizational management and in strategically managing an organization through growth.
- Solid understanding of nonprofit finances with complex budgets and multiple funding streams, and the ability to strategically align and maximize resources.
- Ability to foster collaborative relationships with and among community and policy partners.
- Ability to foster a positive organizational and staff culture that is equitable, diverse and inclusive.
- Experience leading strategic planning processes.

- A solid understanding of fundraising strategies and a track record of successful fundraising across all areas of development – including grant writing, planned giving, and soliciting and securing major gifts.
- A track record of building strategic and lasting relationships, networks, and partnerships with diverse groups of people.
- An exceptional and authentic communicator who can pivot quickly between different groups and styles of communication – legislators, community leaders, local citizens, media.
- Excellent writing skills.

### **Compensation and Benefits**

This is a full-time, salaried, exempt position with a salary range of \$75,000-\$90,000, commensurate with experience and qualifications, plus a \$20,000 annual stipend. The annual stipend is available for all permanent, full-time employees for pre-tax benefits (e.g., health care), with the remainder taken as salary. Other benefits include life and long-term disability insurance, a SIMPLE IRA with an employer match of up to 3%, a flexible schedule, and generous paid time off (18 days of accrued vacation per year with less than three years of service / 24 days accrued per year after three years, two personal days, 13 paid holidays, and sick time). Although VCV is a hybrid work environment, with a combination of remote and in-person work, the Executive Director will be required to maintain office hours on a regular basis.

### **Application Process and Additional Information**

VCV is an Equal Opportunity Employer and strongly encourages applications from candidates whose identities have been historically underrepresented in the environmental movement, including people who identify as Black, Indigenous, Hispanic or Latino, Asian or Pacific Islander, or people of color; people from marginalized economic backgrounds; and people living with disabilities.

To be considered, candidates must include a resume and a cover letter that describes how their qualifications and experience match the needs and mission of VCV. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Email required documents to [applications@vermontconservationvoters.org](mailto:applications@vermontconservationvoters.org) with the subject line "VCV Executive Director".