



**Point Blue Conservation Science  
Director of Institutional Relations  
Position Description**

***Painter Executive Search is supporting Point Blue Conservation Science in their search for an experienced manager to foster and grow relationships with foundations, agencies and other partners to increase funding for critical projects.***

Point Blue Conservation Science (Point Blue) is an internationally renowned nonprofit with over 160 staff and seasonal scientists. Their highest priority is to reduce the impacts of accelerating changes in climate, land-use and the ocean while promoting climate-smart, nature-based solutions for wildlife and people.

Point Blue advances conservation for wildlife and people through science, partnerships and outreach. Their scientists work closely with wildlife and habitat managers, private land owners, ranchers, farmers, other scientists, major conservation groups, and federal, state, and local government agencies and officials. They understand that real solutions come from working together.

Point Blue has more than doubled in size over the past six years and is expected to continue growing over the decade ahead in response to the ever-increasing demand for sound science to assess and guide conservation investments in our rapidly changing world.

**POSITION SUMMARY**

The Director of Institutional Relations will be responsible for organizational efforts to secure new and continued foundation and government agency funding for priority programs and manage all aspects of Point Blue's institutional relations. Reporting to the Chief Science Officer, the Director will collaborate with leaders across the organization including Development and Program Leadership to build and maintain relationships with key foundation and agency staff and understand and solicit support for strategic initiatives. This role will also monitor and produce required reporting for projects and grants, develop foundation proposals and reports, engage with staff scientists in the production of technical proposals, and support the advancement staff in formal communications to major donors.

The Director, along with the Science Grant writer, and in partnership with lead science staff, will maintain foundation and agency support at the current level of \$4 million annually and grow support among current and new funders. The current foundation and agency portfolio includes a robust mix of annual and multiyear grants that support a wide variety of programmatic needs. Continuing Point Blue's excellent relationships with funders and expertly communicating the results of current work and the requirements to accomplish future work will be an important focus of this role.

In addition to well-demonstrated interpersonal skills, this role requires significant project management, writing and editing skills, detail-orientation and the ability to learn Point Blue's conservation science and communicate it with passion and accuracy.

Point Blue has over 200 current conservation projects, approximately half of which are funded through contracts. Currently income by source is roughly 50% from contracts, 30% from foundations, and 20% from individuals. Much of Point Blue's work funded by contracts and government agency grants is secured by the science staff who are the primary contacts and producers of the contracts. This role plays an important role in supporting the development of matching funds when required by contracts or grants, and by supplementing funding for strategic, but underfunded research and outreach programs to

drive the organization's overarching goals. The Director will be expected to understand the work of Point Blue's conservation scientists and develop a fluency in describing their work clearly and accurately to inspire support through relationship building with key contacts in person, by phone and in written form.

### **Point Blue History**

Point Blue was founded as Point Reyes Bird Observatory in 1965 to study the birds migrating along the Pacific Flyway, and has conducted the longest running population study of landbirds in western North America. The bird ecology study methods they developed, tested and refined at their Palomarin Field Station (at Point Reyes National Seashore) are now used by scientists throughout the world.

Point Blue's long-term data sets provide a unique window on environmental change and climate impacts. In the early 1990's, The Nature Conservancy invited Point Blue scientists to evaluate their Sacramento River habitat restoration program using birds as indicators. Point Blue has been assessing, guiding and improving conservation actions across the west and beyond ever since, expanding its studies to include vegetation, soil, marine mammals, and zooplankton.

### **Point Blue's Work**

At the core of Point Blue's work is ecosystem science, studying birds, whales, vegetation, soil and other environmental indicators to sustain wildlife and nature's benefits (such as fresh water, carbon sequestration, and climate regulation) for wildlife and people. They advance nature's health through extensive collaborations with government agencies, private land owners, researchers and others. They work with all the major public habitat and wildlife managers, and with private interests – from ranchers and farmers to fishermen and the shipping industry. They are active science leaders in major regional, national, and international conservation partnerships. Point Blue not only does the science—they bring the science to wildlife and habitat managers, working hand in hand with them to improve conservation outcomes—for ecological and economic benefits.

Point Blue is a leader in community-based restoration and conservation, helping ecosystems and people adapt to rapid changes in the environment. They manage and interpret over a billion ecological observations from across the Americas, including their invaluable long-term bird ecology data, to understand natural and human-caused change over time, and catalyze climate-smart conservation. They develop sophisticated decision support tools to improve conservation today and in the future. Point Blue's information technology expertise is making their extensive data, as well as data from partners across the country and the world, readily usable by—and useful to—habitat and wildlife managers and decision-makers for climate-smart conservation. Point Blue brings the science needed by public and private wildlife and habitat managers to improve conservation outcomes for ecological and economic benefits.

Point Blue also educates school children and trains budding ecologists, having graduated over 1700 conservation science interns over the past several decades, inspiring the next-generation of conservation leaders. Founded in 1965, the core values of Point Blue's work are innovation, scientific rigor, collaboration, excellence, and integrity. They have earned a reputation for excellence in science and collaboration.

Point Blue is working to implement climate-smart conservation and disseminate what they are learning globally. Their efforts are organized around six strategic initiatives:

1. **Catalyzing Climate-Smart Restoration**: Restoration is key to reversing habitat loss and preparing for future environmental conditions. Point Blue empowers and develops innovative restoration approaches to help ecosystems and people prepare for and adapt to a rapidly changing world.
2. **Conserving Ocean Food Webs**: Point Blue scientists are addressing the growing threats to marine life from the California Current to the Ross Sea, Antarctica. They assess ocean health, reduce human disturbance, and guide protection of seabirds, seals, sea lions, whales and other marine wildlife to give them more time to adapt to a warming climate and ocean acidification.
3. **Informatics for Climate-Smart Conservation**: With over one billion ecological observations in Point Blue's care, they partner with natural resource management agencies (federal to local), NGOs and local government to advance climate-smart management using Point Blue tools and analytics.
4. **Protecting our Shorelines**: They are prioritizing the best places and practices to protect coastal habitats in the face of more severe storms and rising seas, and collaboratively guiding nature-based solutions that provide "green infrastructure" for wildlife and our communities.
5. **Securing Water and Wildlife on Working Lands**: They advance wildlife-friendly grazing, farming and forestry practices to increase groundwater storage and a resilient water cycle; increase soil carbon storage; sustain birds and other wildlife; and make working lands more economically productive. They are developing metrics to document, improve and replicate our successes.
6. **Training the Next Generation**: Point Blue is providing hands-on climate-smart conservation science training for future scientists and educators, equipping them with the knowledge and tools to study and protect nature's benefits for wildlife and people.

## **DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS ESSENTIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Develop, maintain, and execute a management plan for sustaining funding from agencies and foundations that includes viability assessments and probability of potential new prospects and expanded funding opportunities.
- Meet or exceed annually established foundation fundraising, relationship development, and stewardship goals to support strategic priorities.
- Prospect for new funders and new funding opportunities.
- Work collaboratively with the CEO, Chief Science Officer, Group Directors, Advancement Team members, and other staff leaders to identify, cultivate, secure support from and maintain regular follow up with existing and new funders.
- Strengthen the integration and coordination of Program, Administration, and Advancement departments by developing positive relationships and fluid internal communications.
- Increase successful grant solicitations, ensure accurate and informative reporting, and build strong long-term relationships with funders.
- Manage all aspects of Point Blue's institutional relationships while maintaining its reputation as an excellent partner and grantee of the highest integrity.

## **EXTERNAL DUTIES/SCOPE**

- Deepen and expand existing relationships with institutional funders through developing, enacting, and evaluating strategic relationship engagement plans that utilize the internal resources of the organization and lead to successful cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship.
- Create opportunities for funders to deepen their knowledge of Point Blue by arranging visits to research and program sites and facilitating conversations with key Point Blue leaders as appropriate.
- Research, identify, and engage new institutional funders to build a greater base of financial support for the organization.
- Personally engage in relationship development with new and existing institutional donors.

## **INTERNAL DUTIES/SCOPE**

- Work with the Chief Science Officer and the Advancement Team to develop institutional fundraising goals, strategy, and tactics.
- Manage, develop and write (as required) accurate and timely letters of intent, proposals, reports, regular correspondence, and other communications as needed.
- Manage the Science Grant Writer and external vendors as required.
- Work with Finance and Program staff to ensure project budgets for proposals and reports are well-constructed and reflect organizational guidelines.
- Ensure the continuity of information flowing to donors is consistent and reflects the most recent and accurate information available.
- Coordinate and track all proposals and reports to foundations and agencies in order to provide timely and accurate business decision-making information to the executive team and to ensure fulfillment of obligations to funders.
- Track matching funds grant requirements and facilitate appropriate development in collaboration with other internal partners including Finance staff.
- Coordinate the development of technical proposals and reports, as well as the creation of draft summary versions for lay audiences.
- Support the organizational fundraising goals by participating and providing guidance on donor recognition, and other fundraising activities, assist with the development of major donor solicitations and stewardship efforts.
- Maintain accurate and timely records of all relevant interactions with funders and potential funders in the donor database; monitor personal and departmental productivity.
- Develop the Institutional Relations annual budget and ensure timely and accurate expense management.

## **Experience**

A successful Director of Institutional Relations will likely have:

- Experience working with scientists or similarly technical professionals, supporting the dissemination of their work through strategic relationship building and written communication.
- Significant success growing financial support, ideally for another conservation or scientific organization.
- Experience cultivating new institutional relationships and deepening existing relationships through strong interpersonal skills and communicating the value and relevancy of programmatic work in effective proposals.

- Excellent written communication skills; clear, accurate and compelling writing and editing skills.
- Strong attention to detail while also able to see and communicate strategic, big picture vision and priorities.
- Proven ability to work well among other high-performing professionals and experience in high performance teaming or the like preferred.
- Ability to manage multiple, simultaneous projects and deadlines while maintaining a high level of accuracy.
- Proven project management skills; able to assemble information from a variety of sources to create a clear workplan and interpersonal skills to ensure successful implementation.
- Experience working in diverse, matrixed teams while focusing on strategic priorities.
- Knowledge of conservation community.
- Experience with fundraising database programs (Raiser's Edge preferred) as well as MS Office, PowerPoint, and other standard office software.
- Bachelor's degree or higher or comparable professional experience.

### **Attributes**

- Passion for the environment and nature.
- Knowledge of conservation science and ecology preferred.
- Strong interpersonal skills; enjoys working with people.
- Inspires confidence; demonstrates an affinity with the interests of scientists and conservation managers.
- Ability to manage deadlines, work collaboratively, prioritize and work under pressure.
- Reliability; someone who understands work flow and can manage expectations and produce at a significant level.
- Thrives in a fast-paced, goal-oriented work environment.
- Highly self-motivated and independent yet a consummate team player.
- Solicits and responds well to feedback.
- Demonstrates exceptional integrity and strong work ethic.
- Possesses a high degree of emotional intelligence and self-awareness.
- Dedicated; ability to attend occasional evening and weekend events and put in the extra effort and time sometimes required to meet deadlines.
- Positive, can-do attitude and sense of humor.

*Point Blue is an equal employment opportunity employer and does not discriminate against applicants or employees because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, citizenship status, disability status of an otherwise qualified individual, membership or application for membership in a uniformed service, or membership in any other class protected by applicable law and will make reasonable accommodation for applicants with disabilities to complete the application and/or participate in the interview process.*

For additional information or to be considered for this role contact:

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