

Job Announcement: Development Director

Status:	Full-time exempt
Reports to:	Executive Director
Salary:	\$75,000 - \$85,000
Location:	Tucson, Arizona with remote work
Apply:	Cover letter and resume to careers@skyislandalliance.org We'll begin reviewing applications on May 26.

About Sky Island Alliance

Sky Island Alliance is a 35-year-old conservation nonprofit dedicated to protecting and restoring the diversity of life and lands in the Sky Islands of the U.S. and Mexico. The Sky Island region encompasses 55 mountain ranges rising out of arid grassland and desert that provide critical habitat for a vast diversity of plants and wildlife. We're working to ensure the Sky Islands are a place where nature thrives, open space and clean water are available to all, and people are connected to the region and its innate ability to enrich our lives. We maintain binational programs to study the location and movement of wildlife in the region, advocate for and restore connected open space, study spring ecosystems and develop protection and restoration efforts to sustain them, engage the next generation of conservationists in the U.S. and Mexico, and bring back safe habitat for key wide-ranging wildlife species.

In 2026, Sky Island Alliance has a 1.5-million-dollar annual budget, a staff of 16, four of whom are located in Sonora, Mexico, and an engaged board with 16 members. Sky Island Alliance has experienced recent growth in staff and seeks to sustain this growth by further developing our tools and approaches to raise unrestricted funds from individual donors. We also seek to continue to shift our funding mix away from dependency on federal grants. We are in an exciting period of binational development as we work to incorporate our NGO in Mexico and expand our board — efforts that will improve business practices and fundraising opportunities for the organization in Sonora.

Sky Island Alliance is committed to cultivating a culture that embraces differences. Our programs and employment are open to all. We value diversity and do not permit any discrimination against applicants, employees, or volunteers on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, gender, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, disability, ethnicity, marital status, familial status, gender identity, economic circumstances, and/or veteran status. We believe the most productive workplace is one in which employees are appreciated and supported, and where the organization continually improves and grows.

For more information about our current work and the Sky Island Alliance team, visit our website (www.skyislandalliance.org).

The Opportunity

Sky Island Alliance (SIA) is seeking a full-time Development Director to lead overall fundraising and donor communication strategies with the Executive Director and Development Coordinator, to raise \$700,000+ annually in individual and philanthropic donations. We are a close-knit team of ambitious, collaborative professionals who care deeply about the Sky Island region and its inhabitants. Sky Island Alliance has a strong philanthropic culture. You will fit right in with us if you are self-directed, enjoy working both independently and in a team setting, and seek out creative solutions. We are looking for someone who will be excited to:

- Maintain and enhance a well-established annual giving program with support from the Executive Director, Development Coordinator, and Communications Manager.
- Work with the Executive Director, development team, and board of directors to develop a more sophisticated and personalized major giving and legacy program.
- Be a key leader on the team envisioning and executing a special fundraising campaign to raise \$1,000,000 to scale up vital conservation work to save springs in the face of climate change.
- Support the organization with strategy and vision to increase the portion of our revenue coming from individual donations over the next four years.

The fundraising team currently includes: Executive Director, Communications Manager, Development Coordinator, Program Directors for the U.S. and Mexico, and the board of directors. This position will be a member of the leadership team, which ensures the health and efficacy of the organization and provides strategic direction and vision. This includes developing annual fundraising, communication, and organizational budgets and plans, and monitoring performance in collaboration with our Finance, Executive, and Program Directors.

Position Summary

The ideal candidate will have a passion for engaging with people, bringing them closer to Sky Island Alliance and building strong relationships that positively impact our revenue generation. We seek an enthusiastic person with experience in organizational leadership, data-driven fundraising, and cultivation of major gifts. To be successful in this position you will need to be able to work collaboratively across departments, stay abreast of current organizational initiatives and news, and engage with and provide energy and direction to our board of directors to help them steward donors, be ambassadors for the organization, and make community connections. You will also need to meet Sky Island Alliance where we are in terms of size and resources and help us grow our fundraising work over the coming years in a thoughtful, data-driven, sustainable, and strategic way.

Key Responsibilities

Fundraising Strategy — In partnership with the Executive Director, Program Directors, and Development Coordinator, develop forward-looking fundraising strategies to: increase major donor qualification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship; engage program staff and board

of directors to steward donors, maintain our stellar track record of donor retention and donor re-engagement, and continue to raise the profile of Sky Island Alliance locally and nationally.

- Have a comprehensive understanding of the priorities of SIA and make persuasive oral and written cases for support of key projects, effectively matching the interests of prospective donors to specific programs.
- Develop donor segmentation and management approach to steward donors according to current giving and giving potential.
- Ensure organizational storytelling and communications support donor engagement.

Staff and Organizational Development — Work with current development staff and board to grow their leadership and oversight of our annual campaign and donor data management, as well as their skills and confidence to interact with donors.

- Envision and work toward putting in place the team and tools needed to support strategy, growth, and our special fundraising campaign over the coming years.

Annual Campaign — Work with development coordinator and design/content contractor Abeja to plan and ensure execution of an annual campaign through:

- Topically relevant appeals typically including: Arizona Gives Day, spring, fall, and end-of-year snail mail and email series, and occasional special campaigns. Ensure appeals are supported by web and social platforms, and marketing/outreach as appropriate and secure matches for campaigns to inspire giving.
- Ensure donors are thanked and acknowledged in a timely fashion that honors their preferences and keeps them engaged.
- **Major Gifts** — Work in partnership with Executive Director, development team, and board of directors to ensure execution of an annual major gift campaign:
 - Use donor and wealth data to identify major-donor prospects and move them through a qualification process.
 - Develop portfolios of major donors to be stewarded by staff and board with individual cultivation plans. Maintain your own portfolio of 30-50 major donors.
 - Develop donor materials such as cases for support, web interfaces, and brochures.
- Represent SIA with the public and at hosted and regional events, as appropriate.
- Establish and grow relationships with community foundations and similar organizations.

Legacy Giving Campaign — Develop strategies and at least one annual appeal approach to continue to grow our ~\$100,000 Forever Fund quasi-endowment and legacy giving program including: review and update Forever Fund goals and plans to match donor data and outlook, develop approaches to ensure donors are hearing about our Forever Fund on the regular and those most interested are engaged to make a gift or legacy commitment.

Special Fundraising Campaign — Work in partnership with Executive Director and external consultant to plan and execute a \$1,000,000 special fundraising campaign to save spring ecosystems over the next three years.

- Ensure prospective donors are communicated with regularly and moved through a cultivation plan, organizational communications support the campaign, the board is trained and engaged in donor cultivation, campaign donors are specially stewarded.
- Work collaboratively with board and program staff to further develop campaign and implement.

Internal Collaboration — Engage and manage staff and board of directors in fundraising, through major gift stewardship and solicitation, event participation, and general donor activities.

- Work with Mission Control Team (Finance Director, Executive Director, Program Directors) to review revenue/expense projections, monitor financial status, and develop an annual budget for fundraising and communications.
- Work with board of directors to ensure their engagement in fund development.
- Staff the board's external committee. Work directly with committee chair and Executive Director to enable board members to fulfill fundraising commitment by keeping them informed, giving them meaningful work to do, and educating them about fundraising.

Qualifications and Competencies

- Commitment to conserving wildlife, water, and connected open space through science and volunteer-driven actions.
- Experience identifying, cultivating, and soliciting high-capacity donors to secure significant funding.
- Possess understanding of philanthropy, ethics, motivations for giving, research and cultivation practices, and best practices of fundraising.
- Demonstrated ability to successfully see projects through in a timely manner, working both independently and collaboratively.
- Ability to lead and motivate a team of direct reports and peers working asynchronously.
- High level of organization and ability to track, manage, and simultaneously see multiple projects through to completion without close supervision.
- Strong relationship building and communication skills, including clear and effective written and oral communication, and the ability to engage and inspire.
- Proficiency in EveryAction or similar nonprofit fundraising/donor management software.
- Ability to work respectfully with diverse staff and public. Spanish fluency and experience in binational/multicultural work a plus.
- Commitment to continuous improvement, learning, and taking on new challenges, as well as staying abreast of current philanthropic and nonprofit trends and opportunities.

Benefits

Medical, dental, and optical insurance coverage; generous vacation, health and wellness leave, 401(k) with a 3% discretionary organizational match, flexible schedule, option to work primarily remotely, and holiday benefits provided. The organization supports professional development and engagement in relevant professional societies.