



Executive Director Wild Seed Project

The board of directors of Wild Seed Project in Portland, Maine, has launched the search for a new executive director to succeed founder Heather McCargo and lead the organization beyond the successful startup phase. The organization's mission is to inspire people to take action and help increase the presence of native plants grown from wild seed. Dedicated staff, board leaders and volunteers share a vision of newly created and repopulated landscapes abundant with native plants that safeguard wildlife habitat, support biodiversity, and mitigate the effects of climate change. To this end, Wild Seed Project ethically collects and sells seeds of wild and uncultivated forms of native plants and educates the public through its interactive website, events, and publications.

Organization Overview

Wild Seed Project was incorporated as a nonprofit organization in 2014 with the goal of building awareness of the importance of native plants and giving people the tools to restore biodiversity. With 30 years of experience in plant propagation, landscape design, horticulture, and conservation, Heather McCargo brought tremendous expertise to the project; and with a deeply engaged board and a dedicated corps of volunteers the organization grew quickly. Today, Wild Seed Project employs three professionals apart from the executive director, and annual revenue exceeds \$220,000.

Recent research by University of Delaware professor Douglas Tallamy underlies the project's ambitious plan for the coming decade. A minimum of 70 percent native plant biomass is necessary, Tallamy showed, for a landscape to support the insects that support the birds that indicate ecological health and resiliency. Wild Seed Project thus established achieving this minimum threshold as its overarching goal for the next ten years. Through its work, by 2030, at least 70 percent of Maine landscapes will be populated with native plant species. Wild Seed Project's Impact Plan for 2020-2030, *Rewilding Maine Landscapes*, identifies the following areas of focus:

- Expand access to native seeds and plants
- Broaden outreach
- Leverage partnerships
- Measure success

In accordance with the plan, McCargo will transition this spring into a new role as manager of the Seed Program, where she can leverage her experience and expertise in service to this crucial initiative, while entrusting organizational leadership and day-to-day management to her successor.

The unusual circumstances of the global pandemic contributed to a swell of interest in Wild Seed Project in 2020, as many Mainers spent more time than ever at home, exercising their green thumbs and making connections between their own health, the health of their landscapes and the health of the planet. With such increased awareness, the project is poised for continued growth in the months ahead.

More information about Wild Seed Project can be found at <https://www.wildseedproject.net>.

Role and Responsibilities

A comprehensive set of skills and abilities is required to lead Wild Seed Project during this exciting period of organizational development. The new executive director will partner with the board in strategic planning, oversee all aspects of the project's operations, drive development and serve as the primary spokesperson. This individual will be responsible for the management and development of the project's staff, programs and partnerships; the financial health of the organization; and the strength of its relationships with stakeholders. The executive director will also provide leadership in building a culture of equity and inclusion, aligned with the project's core values of respect and kindness.

The board expects that the successful candidate will bring to the role:

- A strong track record of organizational leadership in the nonprofit sector, including financial management and planning
- Passion for the project's mission and understanding of the organization's history
- Keen interest and fluency in prominent environmental and ecological issues, and deep curiosity
- Demonstrated ability in creative problem-solving, strategic planning and efficient execution
- A collaborative management style that leverages individual and team strengths
- Experience in successfully attracting, developing, rewarding and retaining strong talent
- A high degree of comfort in motivating, mobilizing and managing an essential volunteer corps
- Experience building effective external relationships and enduring partnerships
- Demonstrated strength in developing and executing a multifaceted fundraising strategy and promoting a culture of philanthropy across the organization
- Exceptional verbal and written communication skills and the ability to synthesize complex concepts and tailor messages to various constituencies individually and *en masse*
- Demonstrated understanding of cultural competency and the value of diversity in the workplace, the environmental sector and the community at large
- Facility with leading software and web-based technology and the capacity to identify and embrace new technological tools as appropriate to increase efficiency and support communication

Compensation

Wild Seed Project's executive director will earn a competitive salary commensurate with experience and the size of the organization. Reporting directly to the board of directors, the successful candidate can expect a formal review after the initial six months, and an annual review thereafter.

Nondiscrimination

Wild Seed Project does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, national origin, ancestry, public assistance, ethnic background, religion, marital status, economic class, age, disability or handicap (mental or physical), sex, creed, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression and any other legally protected characteristics in admission or participation in its programs, services and activities, or in employment. The project complies with all applicable national, state and local laws pertaining to nondiscrimination and equal opportunity.

To apply

Interested candidates should send a cover letter and resume to Starboard Leadership Consulting at the following address: search3@starboardleadership.com.

Paper copies may be sent to Taylor Rouillard, Starboard Leadership Consulting, 84 Harlow St., Bangor, ME 04401, but electronic submissions of material are preferred. No phone inquiries, please. The application deadline is February 26, 2021, and review of all submissions will begin immediately thereafter.