

Recruitment Profile

Chief Executive Officer for



Equality Texas
Austin, TX

May 2019

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION | EXECUTIVE SEARCH | BOARD ADVISORY

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Title: Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Organization: Equality Texas

Reports to: Board of Directors

Location: Austin, TX

OPPORTUNITY:

The new CEO of Equality Texas will join this organization at a time of significant promise and potential for progressive politics in a traditionally very Red State. Due in large part to the efforts of Equality Texas, and its local and national partners, Texas is at a tipping point where public support for full LGBTQ+ equality is becoming a majority view across nearly all demographics. And the current session of the Texas Legislature includes a five-member LGBT caucus, the first in its history. After many years of being in a largely defensive position, Equality Texas has a chance to go on offense and drive state-level political change for good. This person will also come on board as the organization is preparing a series of events to celebrate its 30th anniversary in November; an extraordinary opportunity for marketing, fundraising, and engagement with Equality Texas' supporters and constituents across the state.

The new CEO will be empowered to build and lead a vital LGBTQ+ advocacy organization at a time when its work has perhaps never been more important.

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW:

Equality Texas envisions a Texas where all LGBTQ+ people and their families have full equality in the hearts and minds of their fellow Texans and in all areas of the law. Headquartered in Austin, Equality Texas is dedicated to securing full legal and lived equality for LGBTQ+ Texans through political action, education, community organizing, and collaboration. With tens of thousands of members across the state, Equality Texas is the state's leading state-wide organizing and advocacy organization for LGBTQ+ Texans.

Today's Equality Texas has a rich history. In the 1978, a group of lesbians and gay men recognized the critical need for representation in the 66th session of the Texas Legislature. Under the moniker "Human Rights Advocates," these activists were able to defeat an appropriations rider which would have mandated that state-funded colleges and universities discourage the formation of lesbian/gay student groups. In 1989, the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas was formally established and hired its first fulltime Executive Director. This group has now been fighting on behalf of LGBTQ+ Texans for three decades.

In 2006, the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas changed its name to Equality Texas, to better reflect the strength and diversity of a coalition that was galvanized during the campaign against Proposition #2, Texas' so-called "defense of marriage" amendment to the state constitution. Since then, Equality Texas has built political power and influence through coalitions with business and faith leaders, defeated hundreds of discriminatory bills, reached into the community to find and train advocates, and shared countless stories to deny and defeat the demonization of the LGBTQ+ community.

Today's Equality Texas is comprised of two connected nonprofit corporations:

- **Equality Texas Foundation**, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that provides educational programming on LGBT issues and conducts campaigns to build public support for equal rights, and
- **Equality Texas**, a 501(c)4 organization that conducts direct lobbying and advocacy efforts to advance pro-LGBTQ+ legislation and candidates and to defeat anti-LGBTQ+ legislation.

Each organization is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors; these Boards have 33 members in total who represent a cross-section of LGBTQ community, business, and philanthropic leaders and allies. Equality Texas had combined (c)3 and (c)4 revenue of roughly \$1.2 million in 2018. It has a current staff of nine fulltime and part-time employees working around the state.

Recently, Equality Texas led the charge to defeat a bathroom bill listed as the number one legislative priority of the anti-LGBT political powers. In its next phase, Equality Texas seeks to build an organization that is fully representative of the diversity of the whole of Texas' LGBTQ+ community and to expand on past success with a bold vision to achieve full legal and lived equality in Texas.

To learn more about Equality Texas's history and accomplishments, please visit www.equalitytexas.org

THE POSITION:

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the CEO will assume day-to-day leadership and oversight responsibility for Equality Texas, including Organizational Leadership, Fundraising and Donor Relations, Financial Management, Board Relations, Community and Public Relations, Legislative and Political Advocacy, and Team/Staff Management. In partnership with the Board of Directors, the CEO will lead Equality Texas to achieve its primary goal of full lived and legal equality for all Texans, with particular focus on the following strategic priorities:

- Raising Visibility, Awareness, and Understanding of Equality Texas' Work & Mission
- Expanding Fundraising Capacity & Results
- Maximizing the Impact of Legislative, Policy, & Advocacy Efforts
- Broadening and Strengthening Relationships with Partners & Allied Organizations
- Continuing Inclusion & Diversity Efforts at All Levels
- Rebuilding and Shoring Up Staff (after a period of turnover)

This CEO will function as a public representative of Equality Texas and will work to expand relationships with constituents, volunteers, allies, legislators, and other movement partners and allied social justice organizations. In addition, they will bring personal leadership to building an Equality Texas that represents all LGBTQ+ people and communities, all over the state.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:

Organizational Leadership

- With Board and Staff, envision and implement strategic direction and plans for Equality Texas;
- Solidify and communicate a clear, concise set of priorities and a roadmap to achieve them;
- Provide bold leadership and oversight to the organization.

Fundraising

- Work with the Development Director and Fund Development Committee to grow financial resources and strengthen Equality Texas' financial position through individual, corporate, and foundation giving, as well as special events, grants, and partnerships;
- Maintain positive, personal relationships with key individual and institutional funders;
- Help to expand the organization's base of membership and financial support.

Legislative Advocacy

- Continue efforts to impact policy and legislation, including developing strong, nonpartisan relationships with policy makers;
- Oversee advocacy efforts at the state level and ensure Equality Texas' continued visibility in the state legislature;
- Lead and expand programmatic and campaign efforts, with particular focus on field development efforts to extend support to all areas of the state;
- Act as an effective, trusted public advocate and spokesperson before public bodies.

Staff/Administrative Management

- Manage Equality Texas staff with an emphasis on mentoring, professional development, and alignment of workplans, skills, and job descriptions;
- Rebuild and revitalize staff after a period of change and turnover;
- Develop and implement performance metrics with clear accountabilities and measures for success;
- Establish an environment of trust, respect, openness, and collaboration.

External Relations

- Build strong working relationships with local, regional, and national LGBTQ+ and allied organizations, and work collaboratively to accomplish organizational goals;
- Strengthen partnerships and build alliances with local partners in the LGBTQ, QPoC, political, business, philanthropy, and faith communities;
- Act as a public advocate and media-ready spokesperson for the organization and its mission at both the local and national level.

Financial Oversight

- Provide transparent financial stewardship of Equality Texas;
- Work in close partnership with the Board and Finance Committee to develop resources sufficient to ensure the continued financial health of the organization;
- Manage the organization's resources within budgeted guidelines and in accordance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Make timely and accurate financial reporting to the Board of Directors.

Board Relations

- Support the operations and administration of the Board, including meeting logistics, meeting preparation and proceedings, documentation of Board-approved organizational policies, etc.;
- Support Board development efforts by identifying and recommending emerging leaders for Board service, and by leading or participating in Board training as appropriate/necessary;
- Attend all Board meetings and participate in ongoing executive and other committee calls as required.

[NOTE: It is understood that no candidate is likely to have equal expertise in all of these categories. Successful candidates will possess a compelling combination of strengths in many of them, and the self-awareness and wisdom to hire or leverage existing resources in the area(s) where they lack personal mastery.]

CANDIDATE PROFILE/REQUIREMENTS:

The CEO will be an experienced organizational leader who combines professional experience and stature with a heart for the mission of Equality Texas. Candidates for this position should demonstrate a capacity for change management as well as a collaborative, transparent, and inclusive leadership style, combined with strong emotional intelligence and the ability to act decisively when necessary.

Successful candidates should have an understanding of Texas' cultural, social, political, and policy landscape and a history that includes policy/advocacy, lobbying, electoral politics, capacity building, and/or community organizing. They should be a skilled and accomplished manager who enjoys developing and mentoring staff and who can foster an environment of teamwork and collaboration.

Preferred Experience:

- A track record of senior leadership and management of diverse teams in a mission-driven organization;
- Experience in LGBTQ+ or allied political/advocacy movement and a thorough understanding of LGBTQ+ communities' unique history and current issues;
- Successful track record of nonprofit revenue development including individual, foundation, corporate and special event fundraising;
- An understanding of the local and national landscape of LGBTQ+ organizations and their leaders, as well as other frequent coalition partners. (Understanding of the cultural, social, political, and policy landscape in Texas is strongly preferred);
- Experience building effective partnerships and coalitions among organizations and activists, from the grassroots to national levels;
- Demonstrated ability to build and sustain a culture of equity across the organization and provide a sophisticated intersectional analysis;
- Experience managing organizational growth and change;
- Previous experience managing both 501(c)3 and 501(c)4 organizations strongly preferred;
- Experience working effectively and collaboratively with a Board of Directors or similar volunteer leadership group strongly desired.

Preferred Qualifications/Attributes:

- Demonstrated commitment to achieving full legal and lived equality for LGBTQ+ people in Texas;
- Able to advance big, visionary ideas and to convert them into actionable plans and strategies;
- Outstanding written and oral communication skills and the ability to connect authentically with a diverse range of audiences and stakeholders;
- Strong interpersonal skills, and the ability to work effectively in coalitions and to maintain and grow key relationships;
- Strong political acumen and, ideally, an understanding of policy making at the state level;
- Excellent strategic thinking in a political and movement context;
- Adaptive leadership style with the ability to problem-solve, navigate complex situations and relationships, and take advantage of strategic opportunities;
- Compelling and persuasive public speaking abilities, presence, and media savvy;
- Experience managing organizational growth and change;
- Tenacity, grit, and resilience – doing this work in Texas demands it!

CONTACT:

Kevin Chase Executive Search Group has been retained to lead this recruitment effort on behalf of the Equality Texas. Kevin Chase Executive Group works only with equal opportunity employers. Equality Texas values the leadership of people of color and LGBTQ+ individuals, and strongly encourages people of all traditionally underrepresented identities to apply.

No applicant will be discriminated against because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, religion, national origin, disability, ancestry, marital status, veteran status, medical condition or any protected category prohibited by local, state or federal laws.

We are pleased to answer any questions or supply further information. Inquiries, nominations, or applications (including a cover letter and resume) should be directed electronically and in confidence, to:

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All inquiries or referrals will be held in strict confidence.

Please note that all education, dates of employment, compensation and other information provided will be verified prior to an offer of employment.