

**Recruitment Profile**  
for

**Head of Impact**



***Rainbow Railroad***

**January 2022**

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

<b>Title:</b>	Head of Impact
<b>Organization:</b>	Rainbow Railroad/Rainbow Railroad USA
<b>Reports to:</b>	Executive Director
<b>Location:</b>	Flexible (current offices/staff in Toronto & New York City)

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**ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW:**

Rainbow Railroad stands at the forefront of the global movement to advance and protect the human rights of LGBTQI+ people wherever they are in the world. With a focus on helping those most vulnerable find safety from persecution and violence, Rainbow Railroad is internationally recognized for its work in providing support and resettlement assistance to individuals in some of the most virulently anti-LGBTQI+ locations in the world.

In this time when there are more displaced people around the world than any period since World War II, LGBTQI+ people are uniquely vulnerable due to systemic, state-enabled homophobia and transphobia. These factors can displace LGBTQI+ individuals in their own country and/or prevent them from escaping harm. In partnership with a global network of LGBTQI+ organizations and human rights defenders, Rainbow Railroad coordinates directly with individuals experiencing violence to get them out of danger.

Initially founded as an all-volunteer operation in 2006, Rainbow Railroad has since received formal charitable and nonprofit recognition in both Canada and the United States. Despite its relatively short history, Rainbow Railroad enjoys a strong and growing reputation for its work on behalf of LGBTQI+ individuals. Through its Emergency Travel Support programs, the organization has facilitated travel to a safe destination for more than 1,500 people. And while this work has tremendous impact, it is practically impossible to fully resettle every single person who reaches out to Rainbow Railroad for help. In response, the organization is expanding its programs and services to support thousands of additional LGBTQI+ individuals in the places they live. These expanded interventions include medical care; access to essential medicine; in-country relocation to safer housing; short-term financial aid; private sponsorship of refugees; and active partnership with other global LGBTQI+ and human rights organizations to provide lifesaving support.

Rainbow Railroad aspires to strengthen its social impact through its advocacy work with partners and stakeholders. Globally, Rainbow Railroad has been part of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' Roundtable on LGBTQI+ forced displacement. Domestically, Rainbow Railroad has invested significantly in advocacy efforts with both the Canadian and U.S. governments to build durable and sustainable pathways to safety for LGBTQI+ persons. It has also published key policy recommendations for administrations in both countries, outlining a call to respond this ongoing global crisis.

In addition to its on-going work, Rainbow Railroad has also developed a unique and critical ability to respond in real time to geopolitical crises and government crackdowns which threaten the lives of LGBTQI+ people as they arise. Recent examples include Chechnya in 2017, Tanzania in 2019, Uganda and Ghana in 2020, and the current crisis in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan alone, Rainbow Railroad has fully resettled 34 LGBTQI+ Afghan nationals whose lives were imperiled by the Taliban's return to power in mid-August, with dozens more to come shortly.



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With headquarters in Toronto and an office in New York City, Rainbow Railroad employs a dedicated and mission-driven staff of 17 full- and part-time employees and a network of 130+ volunteers in Canada and around the world. The organization is almost entirely funded through private donations and has a current revenue budget of more than \$6 million, representing an increase of 300% in just over three years.

### **Strategic Plan**

Rainbow Railroad has developed a three-year strategy emphasizing sustained growth and operational improvement. Through the 2020-2022 [Strategic Plan](#) Rainbow Railroad has defined a theory of change which seeks to improve LGBTQI+ people's ability to access lives free of persecution. Its strategic priorities include:

- Expand Service Delivery Mix: Goal is to help 1,500 people by the end of 2022, more than double the number assisted from 2017-2019.
- Diversify Demographics Served: Path to growth will focus on improving gender diversity and expanding regional footprint to help more individuals.
- Improve Social Delivery Model: To support growth targets, immediate focus will be placed on improving the operational efficiency of programs and outcomes through increased tracking and monitoring.
- Drive Social Impact Through Strategic Advocacy: Strengthen social impact through work with advocacy stakeholders.
- Build a More Sustainable Fundraising Mix: Increase pledges, increase monthly donors, secure new major donors, and secure new leadership donors.
- Enhance Organizational Capacity: Ensure right staff are in place to achieve organizational goals, ensure Board is equipped to support the organization, and emphasize resource development as a substantial board function.

Rainbow Railroad's ultimate goal is a world free of persecution based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or sex characteristics. Until then, Rainbow Railroad provides solutions for individuals in immediate danger of persecution or violence amidst a global refugee crisis.

*(For more information, please visit <https://www.rainbowrailroad.org>)*

### **REPORTING:**

Reports to the Executive Director. Manages two direct reports, the Director of Programs and the Director of Policy (to be hired). Leads a team of twelve, when fully staffed, including government relations, casework, monitoring and evaluation, and policy staff.

### **OPPORTUNITY:**

The Head of Impact (HOI) is a newly created position at Rainbow Railroad, reflecting the extraordinary growth the organization has experienced and the strategic importance of expanding senior leadership capacity and broadening programmatic efforts and impact. The new HOI will join a dynamic, high-growth organization and innovative global leader in providing life-changing and life-saving direct services.

The HOI will be a member of the senior leadership team with responsibility for continued organizational development across strategy, programs, and policy, and will function as a key strategic and thought partner to Rainbow Railroad's Executive Director, Kimahli Powell (he/him). This position will provide leadership and support to a passionate and experienced program staff, as well as oversee the development of a dedicated policy/advocacy team – part of Rainbow Railroad's vision for the future. This person will also play a critical role in operationalizing the goals and objectives set out in the strategic and annual plans to help Rainbow Railroad achieve a newly envisioned organizational structure.

A big picture thinker and a strong writer, the HOI will support partnership development, government relations, program development, policy, research, monitoring and evaluation, and publications. They will know Rainbow Railroad's programming inside and out and be ready to roll up their sleeves and provide direct assistance to Programs and Policy teams as needed.

**PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:**❖ **Strategy**

- With the Head of Operations, ED, and Board of Directors, co-lead annual and strategic planning processes;
- Maintain a forward-looking, strategic perspective for the organization, thinking about and planning for what is needed to support the organization's future growth;
- Act as an advisor and thought partner on all aspects of the organization's work, continually exploring ways to advance the organization's strategic goals and impact.

❖ **Partnerships & Policy Advancement**

- Develop and help steward relationships with external stakeholders including government entities, global refugee movement organizations and leaders, international NGOs, and for-profit partners and stakeholders;
- Support the Executive Director's advocacy in all countries where the organization is pursuing referral relationships;
- Develop a government relations strategy with the goal of securing commitments from multiple governments to create programs to receive LGBTQI+ refugees and asylum seekers;
- Provide briefing notes and evidence-based reports where appropriate.

❖ **Program Expansion & Research**

- Identify and support new projects, pilots, strategic initiatives, and partnerships to advance Rainbow Railroad's work and impact;

❖ **Board Relations**

- With the Executive Director, provide strategic updates on the overall direction of the organization;
- With the Head of Operations, co-lead the risk management process.

**CANDIDATE PROFILE**

Successful candidates for this position will likely come from the professional ecosystem in which Rainbow Railroad operates, (e.g., global human rights, international LGBTQI+ equality, refugee/resettlement, and directly related movements) and will bring content knowledge and expertise to help advance the organization's impact. They will almost certainly be a member of (or active ally to) the LGBTQI+ community; ideally with personal or professional experience with immigration, asylum, and/or refugee/resettlement programs. Regardless of identity, this person will have demonstrated passion for global human rights and will understand and operate with the sense of urgency this work requires.

**DESIRED SKILLS & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

- **Minimum** of 7 years of leadership experience in a nonprofit organization, government agency, or private sector;
- Knowledge, experience, and professional history in the global LGBTQI+ and/or human rights movement –ideally with content expertise around the international refugee movement and/or forced displacement, asylum, and immigration;

- Proven track record of successfully leading growth and innovation, including the creation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of strategic plans and program initiatives;
- Clear and strong writing skills – including formal research, reports, publications – as well as excellent verbal communication, presentation, and public relations abilities;
- Strong, solution-oriented leadership, strategic communications skills, project management abilities, and political acuity;
- Effective facilitation, influencing, and negotiation skills;
- Exceptional relationship building and conflict resolution skills;
- Proven ability to source and analyze data to solve complex issues;
- Undergraduate degree – preferably in immigration/refugee studies, law, public administration, political science, international development, or other related discipline – or equivalent lived/professional experience.

**PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS**

- Personality that thrives in a fast paced, start-up style environment, with the ability to pivot, shift gears, and/or re-prioritize seamlessly;
- Self-starter with a bias for action, but also able to work collaboratively with cross functional teams and with peers from a broad range of personal and professional backgrounds and identities;
- Energy, passion, and exceptional capacity for managing multiple, complex initiatives at once;
- Fair, honest, inclusive, and collaborative management style;
- Cultural competency and humility, including international lens and sensitivity;
- Professional maturity, diplomacy, and well-developed judgment when dealing with sensitive matters;
- Intersectional understanding of race, gender and sexual identity, socio-economic status, and ability;
- Ability/willingness to work non-traditional hours and to travel, including internationally.

**COMPENSATION:**

Rainbow Railroad is offering a compensation package that includes base salary in the range of \$90,000 to \$120,000 (commensurate with skills and experience) and a comprehensive benefits plan, appropriate to need and location of the successful candidate (e.g., Canada, US, or UK/Europe, etc.).

**CONTACT:**

Kevin Chase Executive Search Group has been retained to lead this recruitment effort on behalf of Rainbow Railroad. Kevin Chase Executive Search Group works only with equal opportunity employers. No applicant will be discriminated against because of racial or ethnic identity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, sex characteristics, or disability. Individuals of LGBTQI+, BIPOC, and/or immigrant or refugee experience are strongly encouraged to apply.

To apply, please submit a complete resume with full employment history and a cover detailing your interest in the position and the professional and/or lived experience you believe make you a uniquely qualified candidate for this role. All inquiries, applications, or referrals will be held in strict confidence.

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