

Recruitment Profile
for
Head of Operations



Rainbow Railroad
Toronto, Ontario

March 2022

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION | EXECUTIVE SEARCH | BOARD ADVISORY

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Title:	Head of Operations
Organization:	Rainbow Railroad
Reports to:	Executive Director
Location:	Toronto, Ontario (preferred)

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.

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 harm's way. Around the world, we are recognized for our efforts to support and protect the thousands of LGBTQI people living in countries which criminalize their existence.

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, a Director of Finance and a Director of H.R. & Administration. Supervises a team of six (when fully staffed).

OPPORTUNITY:

The Head of Operations (HOO) is a newly created position at Rainbow Railroad, reflecting the extraordinary growth the organization has experienced in recent years and the importance of expanding its senior leadership capacity and strengthening the systems, structures, and strategies that ensure operational excellence. The new HOO will join a dynamic, high-growth organization and an innovative global leader in providing life-changing and life-saving direct services.

The HOO will be a member of the senior leadership team with responsibility for continued organizational development across operations, finance, planning and administration, and human capital. They will function as a key strategic and thought partner to Executive Director, Kimahli Powell (he/him) and play a critical role in operationalizing the goals and objectives set out in Rainbow Railroad's strategic and annual plans.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES: *[NOTE: It is understood that no single candidate will have equal expertise in all these areas of responsibility. Successful candidates will possess a compelling combination of many of them and the self-awareness and wisdom to leverage existing and/or new resources for support in the area(s) where they lack personal mastery.]*

❖ **Organizational Leadership & Support**

- Work with the Executive Director to develop and implement organizational plans, strategies, and systems to accomplish growth objectives;

- Analyze, assess, and advise the Executive Director on financial and operational issues that could impact Rainbow Railroad’s pursuit of strategic goals
- Provide senior leadership experience and management perspective to Rainbow Railroad in scaling and expanding the organization;
- Advise on business risks and opportunities, provide assessments of organizational performance, and keep the Executive Director and leadership team apprised of progress on operational priorities;
- Drive the cultivation of a cohesive work culture and foster a success-oriented, accountable environment within the organization.

❖ **Financial Management & Oversight**

- Manage and support the Director of Finance and provide oversight/enhancement to financial operations, budgeting, and financial management processes;
- Lead and oversee organizational strategies for annual budget, resource allocation, and financial planning;
- Oversee financial activities, systems, and controls to ensure the immediate and long-term fiscal integrity of the organization;
- Ensure fiscal transparency and provide the Board with regular information about the financial health of the organization.

❖ **H.R. & People Operations**

- Manage and support the Director of H.R. & Administration and provide leadership to all People Operations;
- With the Director of H.R. & Administration, manage the development and implementation of human resource policies, procedures, and protocols to support staff and organizational growth and expansion;
- Up-level recruitment processes, establish staff performance and professional development goals, assign accountabilities, help establish work plans and priorities, and manage the annual performance review process;
- Help create an environment and culture that reflects the organization's values, encourages strong performance, rewards excellence and productivity, and ensures safety in all operations for staff and volunteers;
- Ensure policies, practices, programs, and processes are administered effectively and in compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

❖ **Planning & Administration**

- With the Head of Impact, co-lead the organization's annual planning process and act as steward of the plan – making sure the organization is on track to deliver on its goals and adjusting as needed;
- Manage the organization at the 10,000 feet level, ensuring that the financial processes, program support, financial management, and development systems match Rainbow Railroad’s needs at present and into the future;
- Look for ways to improve, problem-solve, and innovate on systems and tools, including case management systems, donor processing, website, etc.;
- Co-lead (with the Head of Impact) risk management processes for the organization, working closely with the Risk Management Committee of the Board.

❖ **Board Relations**

- Establish and maintain positive, productive, and transparent working relationships with Rainbow Railroad's Board of Directors;
- Assist the Executive Director in managing relationships and communications with the Board, including staffing committees, preparing and presenting information at Board meetings, and supporting individual Board members and projects as appropriate;
- Act as key operational liaison with the Executive Committee and standing Committees of the Board, supporting the Executive Director and the senior management team whenever necessary.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

A meticulous planner, the HOO manages the strategic planning, annual planning, staffing, and budgeting processes while innovating tools and processes that allow team members to meet and exceed desired results. The HOO will know Rainbow Railroad's finance, administration, and operational goals inside and out, and will be ready to roll up their sleeves and provide direct assistance wherever needed. Regardless of professional experience, this person will have demonstrated passion for global human rights and will understand and operate with the sense of urgency the work and organization require.

DESIRED SKILLS & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- *Minimum* of 10 or more years of leadership experience in a nonprofit organization, government agency, and/or private sector company;
- Professional track record of supporting organizational growth, development, and improvement;
- Exceptional operations, finance, systems development, and people management skills;
- Financial management experience and acumen and ability to make strategic financial decisions, oversee financial reporting, and build/manage budgets;
- Previous experience developing and implementing human resources systems, tools, and protocols;
- Excellent project management and problem-solving skills;
- Knowledge and experience in utilizing organizational development models and assessment tools;
- Demonstrated expertise in organizational design, job analysis/design, creation of staffing models, and development and stewardship of culture change initiatives;
- Understanding of anti-oppression frameworks;
- Previous experience in a startup or high-growth environment strongly preferred;
- Experience working effectively and collaboratively with a volunteer Board of Directors or similar governing body is also desired.

EDUCATION

University degree in business administration, organizational development, human resources, or related discipline – or equivalent combination of lived and professional experience – is required.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Personality type that thrives in a fast paced, start-up style environment;
- Self-starter with a bias for action, but also able to work collaboratively with cross functional teams;
- Energy, passion, and exceptional capacity for managing multiple initiatives at once
- Ability to pay keen attention to detail without losing sight of larger objectives;
- Nimbleness and flexibility to pivot, shift gears, and/or re-prioritize seamlessly without losing patience or focus;
- High level of comfort holding individuals and teams accountable to departmental and organizational goals;
- Fair, honest, inclusive, management style and ability to lead team members from a broad range of professional backgrounds and personal identities;

- Problem solver – able to identify bottlenecks and gaps and work towards solutions;
- Cultural competency and humility, including intersectional lens and understanding of marginalized individuals, communities, and populations;
- Professional maturity, diplomacy, and well-developed judgment when dealing with sensitive matters;
- Empathy and ability to nurture and support a team in a sometimes stressful environment.

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.

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 to search@kevinchasesearch.com.

Kevin Chase, Managing Partner
Kevin@kevinchasesearch.com

Catie DiFelice, Senior Associate
Catie@kevinchasesearch.com

Kevin Chase Executive Search Group

1800 Hi Point Street
Los Angeles, CA 90035

www.kevinchasesearch.com

All inquiries, applications, or referrals will be held in strict confidence.