



## **DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT**

### **Job Description**

Equest is seeking a Director of Development to support its mission to enhance the quality of life for children and adults with diverse needs by partnering with horses to bring hope and healing through equine-assisted activities and therapies. The ideal candidate is a relationship builder who connects quickly with donors and volunteers, an organized strategist who plans ahead, and a leader who will coach a small team toward excellence.

A successful Director of Development at Equest is committed to its mission and values and thrives in a relationship-driven organization. They focus their time on major donor relationships, delegate with clarity and confidence, and represent Equest with professionalism at every level, from a barn visit to a gala stage. This role offers the chance to join a beloved 45-year-old organization at a moment of growth, with a new strategic plan, a strong CEO partner and an engaged board.

Equest is Dallas County's only therapeutic equine center accredited by PATH International. From its campus at the Texas Horse Park in southern Dallas, Equest's herd of more than 30 horses and team of certified instructors, licensed therapists and counselors serve more than 2,700 children and adults each year through therapeutic riding, carriage driving, physical and occupational therapy, equine-assisted counseling, literacy programs and community outreach. With an annual budget of \$3.4 million and more than 800 volunteers, Equest is supported by a loyal community of individuals, foundations, corporations, and a dedicated board and Women's Auxiliary group.

The Director of Development leads a team of three, including a donor relations manager, an events and communications manager and a development associate, and works closely with Equest's grant writing partner. This is a full-time exempt salaried position reporting to the CEO and based in person on Equest's campus, with occasional evening and weekend events.

### Director of Development Expectations

- I. **Drive Fundraising Revenue and Major Donor Relationships:** Lead Equest's fundraising strategy to achieve the annual contributed revenue goal, with a primary personal focus on cultivating, soliciting and stewarding major donors. Build meaningful relationships that connect donors' philanthropic priorities with Equest's mission and opportunities for investment. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) include:
  - a. Achieve Equest's annual contributed revenue goal (\$3.3 million in 2027)
  - b. Manage a portfolio of 75 to 100 major donors and prospects, complete at least 10 substantive donor visits, calls or tours monthly and retain at least 85 percent of donors giving \$5,000 or more
  - c. Meet Equest's top 25 donors, all board members and key advisory board members within the first 90 days and maintain documented cultivation strategies for assigned donors and prospects



- II. **Lead Fundraising Strategy and Engagement:** Own implementation of Equest's Fund Development Plan, using data and forward planning to maintain a diversified revenue strategy. Partner effectively with the CEO, board, Development Committee, Women's Auxiliary, event leadership and grant writing partner to strengthen Equest's fundraising reach. KPIs include:
- Grow Equest's active donor base while maintaining a diversified mix of individual, event, foundation, corporate, sponsorship and government revenue
  - Meet net revenue and retention goals for annual campaigns and signature events, including increasing the gross revenue to expense ratio for the annual Blue Ribbon Gala
  - Equip board and volunteer leaders with specific and actionable cultivation assignments, donor briefings and talking points, and manage each assignment through completion to advance donor relationships and board giving
- III. **Lead a High-Performing Development Team:** Lead and coach Equest's three-person development team so the Director can maintain an external focus while ensuring strong fundraising operations, donor stewardship and data management. KPI's include:
- Set annual measurable goals aligned with the Fund Development Plan and provide regular coaching, performance feedback and skill development for each direct report
  - Maintain a shared development calendar and clear processes that keep campaigns, events, acknowledgments, donor data and other fundraising activities accurate and on schedule
  - Delegate responsibilities based on role and capacity to develop and retain a capable team

#### Qualifications

- Five or more years of progressive fundraising experience, including a track record of securing five- and six-figure gifts from individuals or an equivalent portfolio of experience;
- Two or more years of supervising and developing staff;
- Experience partnering with boards, committees and volunteer event leadership;
- Experience leading major fundraising events and annual giving campaigns;
- Proficiency with Raiser's Edge or a comparable donor database;
- Bachelor's degree preferred;
- CFRE credential preferred;
- Demonstrated connection to, or enthusiasm for, Equest's mission;
- Comfort working on an active equine campus required;
- Valid driver's license or reliable transportation, with a Texas license obtained within the legally required period, and successful completion of a background check.

#### Our Commitment, Compensation and Benefits

Equest is an equal opportunity employer committed to building a team that reflects the community it serves. Equest provides equal employment opportunities to all applicants and employees without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.



The salary is competitive and commensurate with experience. Equest offers health insurance 100 percent covered for employees, dental and vision insurance, 401(k) with employer match, paid time off and paid holidays.

#### Application

Wise Resource Development (WISE) has been retained to lead the recruitment of Equest's Director of Development. To apply, submit a cover letter describing your interest in Equest's mission, a resume and salary requirements to [jobs@wiseresourcedevelopment.com](mailto:jobs@wiseresourcedevelopment.com). No phone calls, please. Only candidates selected for interviews will be contacted.