

South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust
Executive Director
Job Posting 6/21/2018

Our Founding, History & Values

The [South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust \(SSCFLT\)](#) was founded 21 years ago by a group of farmers, community planners and activists committed to using the Community Land Trust model to support local small scale farm enterprises as well as the long-term economic viability of local food production in our region. Community Land Trusts differ from other land trusts. Community Land Trusts are focused on acquiring or preserving occupied or working land for economic and social purposes that help meet specific community needs--such as affordable housing or small scale working farms. Community Land Trusts use shared-equity community/private-owner land tenure strategies to make land affordable--*in perpetuity*--for social and economic equity purposes. Land value is based on current, rather than speculative, uses.

Since its incorporation as a 501(c)(3) non-profit serving Thurston, Mason, Lewis and Grays Harbor Counties, SSCFLT has created land-tenure legal agreements that assure that farmland *remains actively farmed forever and the farmland is kept affordable for each new generation of farmers*. This commitment to land security and affordability for small scale local farming is also a commitment to provide this opportunity to all members of our community, regardless of social status. And, at the same time, we can help assure more established and older working farm owners that they can both receive a well-deserved retirement income and leave their farm as a working farm legacy in perpetuity as new and perhaps younger farmers have affordable access to their land and experience.

Our Current Status

In the past five years, after many years of partnership-building and organizational capacity-development led by a hard-working volunteer Board of Directors, we have acquired two farm properties (100 acres at Scatter Creek Farm and Conservancy and a critical urban Olympia acre for GRuB) with subsequent 99-year Agricultural Ground Leases (AGLs). Last year we also completed an Agricultural Conservation Easement (ACE) with Oyster Bay Farm. Both of these forms of land tenure agreements assure that the farmland will be in active production in perpetuity--and that they will be affordable to future farmers at agricultural land values forever.

All three of these working-farm properties are well established. We have additional farm acquisition prospects under consideration. Our working Board of Directors includes founders, organizational and financial expertise and several new board members from like-minded community organizations. But our long-time Director of Farmland Preservation has retired, and the Board of Directors realizes that this is an ideal time to hire our first Executive Director. This position, with initial support from a half-time Office Manager, is very ambitious in its expectations. *But*, with our history of an engaged working board and financial reserves to support several years of staffing reorganization, we are excited to offer this Executive Director opportunity to help guide us into the next phase of our organizational maturity. Our 2018 operating budget is just under \$200,000, and our farm project management revenues are revenue neutral.

Our Future

Of course we face challenges. We need more outreach to and engagement with our members, young or beginning farmers and collaborating organizational partners. And we need new and creative funding strategies or initiatives for both our farm acquisitions and our organizational sustainability.

Now we seek our first Executive Director, an individual who will help lead the organization into its next phase of development. This includes nurturing a vibrant membership organization of beginning farmers seeking secure affordable land, small farmers who wish to preserve farming on their land, and the broader community of residents desiring healthy local food. This also includes strengthening partnerships with like-minded non-profits and agencies to further our mission of sustainable community-focused agriculture, developing new sources for funding to broaden the Trust's fiscal base, and acquiring land to be farmed in perpetuity for the community--the beneficiary of our Trust.

Essential Personal Qualifications

- A passion for sustainable economic development, sustainable agriculture and social equity;
- An inspiration for innovation and for finding new ways of working with challenging issues to support our ideals as a Community Land Trust;
- A drive to work in partnership in networks of producers, consumers and funders;
- A drive and interest to continually learn new skills and strategies that support our mission;
- Active empathy for social equity and the challenges that rural communities face.

Required Education, Skills and Experience

- Bachelor's Degree in sustainable agriculture, sustainable economic development, natural resources management, non-profit management, community planning, community organizing or related fields;
- A minimum of 4 years of relevant professional experience;
- Demonstrated success in developing relationships and partnerships with community organizations and funders;
- Demonstrated success in fundraising;
- Demonstrated excellence in written, oral, and interpersonal communication;
- The ability to think broadly and strategically;
- Demonstrated financial management experience;
- The ability to work independently and as a team member with people of all backgrounds and ages;
- A valid driver's license and personal vehicle with evidence of insurability.

Preferred Experience

- Work in sustainable economic development or community-based planning
- Strong connections with local food systems' concepts and practices;
- Experience working effectively and collaboratively with a Board of Directors;
- Demonstrated leadership through open communication and engagement of others' creativity;
- Real estate acquisition or land management experience.

Salary Range: \$54,000 - \$60,000 commensurate with experience

Location: Tumwater, WA

Status: Full-time, Exempt

Benefits: Generous paid vacation, holidays, sick and family leave; stipend related to health care costs; beginning in 2019 retirement (2% of annual salary.)

Deadline: Applications submitted by Friday July 31, 2018 will receive priority consideration.

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Duties and Responsibilities

Although the Executive Director works in partnership with the Board of Directors and reports directly to the Chair of the Board, we are looking for an individual who will provide inspiration and leadership. So this job description is an outline of general expectations. We imagine it will be refined and further defined in collaboration with the Executive Director we are seeking.

Leadership and Management (30%) Working with the Board Chair & Executive Committee

- Builds a positive relationship with the Board of Directors, collaborating on refining the mission and vision of the organization to meet the needs of the community as well as to assure adequate funding for the organization;
- Develops and oversees all operations to create a well functioning and efficient infrastructure;
- Manages the HR functions of the organization--hires, leads, manages, evaluates and supports staff and volunteers;
- Monitors finances and ensures fiscal accountability. Works with the Treasurer and Finance Committee to develop and implement the annual budget;
- Provides timely, accurate, and complete information to the board to ensure transparency and accountability;
- Ensures compliance with all legal requirements of a nonprofit corporation.

Community Engagement & Financial Support (30%) Working with the Membership, Outreach and Development Committee

- Recruits and develops relationships with members and supporters--including beginning farmers, small farmers, landowners, local businesses and community consumers of local agriculture;
- Builds effective partnerships with other organizations with complementary missions--National Young Farmers Coalition, Northwest Community Land Trust Coalition, TESC, WSU Extension, Conservation Districts, and so forth;
- Seeks to develop innovative alternatives to promote the economic viability of small scale farming -- farmer coops for sharing land, equipment and resources, producer-consumer associations, etc;
- Writes grants to seek out, capture and renew ongoing funding for operations and property acquisition.

Farmland Preservation (30%) Working with the Farmland Preservation Committee, Legal Committee and Trust Attorney

- Develops and implements Annual Farmland Preservation Work Plans;
- Works with the membership to have a robust "pipeline" of farmland to acquire to meet the needs of the community of farmers;
- Leads the assessment of potential properties for their agricultural value;
- Leads the process for recruiting and evaluating farmers for long-term Agricultural Ground Leases;
- Manages all aspects of property acquisition negotiating Agricultural Ground Leases or Agricultural Conservation Easements, including meeting the requirements of funding entities, providing baseline documentation and facilitating property closing documentation.

Public Relations and Communications (10%) Works with Board Chair & Executive Committee

- Serves as the SSCFLT representative at the Washington Association of Land Trusts meetings and actively participates in the WALT Farmland Affinity Group;
- Participates in building local and state coalitions to fulfill the SSCFLT Mission and Vision;
- Serves as the primary spokesperson with decision makers, partners and media;
- Oversees the design and implementation of outreach events and promotion materials.

Interested?--How To Apply

Apply via email to communityfarmlandtrust@gmail.com--subject heading Job Application: Executive Director and your last name (no phone calls please).

Please include a cover letter addressing how you believe you meet the vision, expectations and requirements for our new Executive Director of SSCFLT as articulated above.

In addition to your qualifications, feel free to suggest how you would dedicate your first six months of learning and planning in this position.

In addition, include a resume with at least three (3) references that support your qualifications for this position.

You are welcome to attend any of our committee or board meetings to meet us and observe how the Board of Directors conducts its business in our pre-Executive Director era. Please ask via email for opportunities for committee or board meeting schedules.

SSCFLT welcomes all people without regard to race, creed, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, physical or mental ability, veteran status, military obligations, and marital status. This policy applies to employment, development opportunities and treatment of staff; to services we provide; and in our dealings with the general public.