

AFRICAN LIBRARY PROJECT

Seeks Executive Director

About African Library Project

Founded in 2005, the [African Library Project \(“ALP”\)](#) changes lives by creating, improving, and sustaining libraries in African communities. As it approaches its twentieth anniversary, ALP has created and improved over 4,000 small libraries and donated four million books across thirteen English speaking African countries including in its current active countries of Ghana, South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Uganda, Malawi, and Kenya as well as in Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Cameroon, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Eswatini.

ALP’s model depends on a network of volunteers to create a new library in a local community. Dedicated Country Liaisons in the U.S. coordinate with [African Partner Organizations](#) which solicit and assess library applications from schools and communities. Applications are shared with ALP’s Container Managers who help recruit and match each library applicant with a [Book Drive Organizer \(BDO\)](#). Once matched, U.S.-based volunteers organize book drives to collect approximately 1,000 gently used books, pack, and mail them to a centralized shipping company. Once all the libraries for a country are received, they are then shipped by sea to that designated country. African-based partners coordinate the receipt of goods and the transportation and distribution of books to the school or community receiving each library. In-country partners also provide library set-up and management training. The school and/or community provides space for the library, including furniture, staffing, and engaging local readers. This unique and inclusive, volunteer model is represented in the illustration below:



Although ALP annually engages a cadre of experienced and dedicated volunteers and BDOs, at this time, the Executive Director, who reports directly to ALP’s ten-member Board of Directors, is ALP’s sole paid employee, though it is anticipated that additional staff will be added in the coming years.

Operating virtually, ALP’s operating budget, including the value of book donations, is approximately \$400,000 on average over the last five years.

Opportunity Going Forward

The Executive Director of ALP will have the opportunity to lead an international network of partners, volunteers, and community supporters to create, improve, and sustain intimate, yet highly impactful, libraries throughout Sub-Saharan Africa established to improve childhood literacy and provide additional educational opportunities for African youth. ALP seeks an entrepreneurial and creative leader with a strong connection to ALP's mission, a deep passion for literacy and education, and the cultural competency to navigate relationships in Africa and with the diaspora. High priorities for the Executive Director include:

- Spearheading the development of ALP's long-term strategic vision and plan, one which considers the evolution of the organization's model and practices, provides clear direction based on informed consensus-driven decisions, sustains past growth, and considers future expansion.
- Developing and executing a comprehensive fundraising program that expands grant funding and individual giving to increase staff capacity, offset program costs, and provide supplemental resources to volunteers.
- Providing stable, consistent executive leadership and working collaboratively with the board of directors to strike the proper balance between governance and management, to clarify the authority of the board versus other volunteers, and to finalize the transition from a founder-led organization where influence and authority are firmly held by the Executive Director and the board.
- Balancing the capacity of U.S.-based volunteers and paid staff so impact is maximized, and accountability is assured.
- Refining measurements and developing tracking systems to quantify mission impact to reinforce fundraising, volunteer engagement, and partner recruitment.
- Ensuring ALP's operations comply with all relevant laws and regulations as well as developing and maintaining risk management strategies and safeguarding ALP's reputation and assets.

Profile of the Ideal Candidate

Preferred Background:

- A minimum of five years' experience in senior leadership, preferably as an Executive Director, ideally at a nonprofit with prominent levels of volunteer and board engagement and where organization change was required.
- Prior experience and cultural competency serving diverse communities.
- Knowledge of literacy, education, and/or youth development practices as well as a passion for Africa combined with experience working on the continent would be advantageous.

Skills and Qualities:

Strategic and Entrepreneurial Nonprofit Leader

- Strategic thinker with the ability to evaluate and refine ALP's organizational model, set strategic direction, and inspire others to participate.
- Highly organized, with the ability to delegate and manage multiple moving parts in a fully remote environment.
- Creative problem solver who can handle complex situations and adapt to change.
- Able to oversee volunteers and operations while keeping a big-picture view.
- Experience with nonprofit finance and compliance with the ability to oversee budgeting and financial reporting, ensure ALP is compliant with all relevant financial regulations and best practices, and make strategic financial decisions to support organizational growth and sustainability in conjunction with the board.

Skilled and Determined Fundraiser

- Passion for fundraising with the ability to inspire others to support and participate in fundraising.
- Able to develop a comprehensive fundraising plan and execute targeted strategies to raise the funds needed to ensure ALP's financial stability.
- Experienced in donor cultivation and engagement to recruit and sustain long-term, major donors.
- A demonstrated commitment to diversify ALP's revenue streams.

Change Agent with Governance Experience

- Skilled at organizational transformation including questioning the status quo, gaining "buy-in", and aligning others around a shared mission and vision, all while tending to growth.
- Able to inform discussions on governance and management, assisting the board and the organization as it finalizes its transition from a founder-led one to a board-led one.
- Commitment to working in partnership with the board to maximize its contributions to ALP.
- Able to wear many hats, prioritize tasks, and be the "glue" for the entire organization.

Passionate Relationship and Partnership Builder

- Strong people and diplomacy skills to connect with and foster strong relationships with African communities and diaspora groups.
- Skilled at developing, building, and nurturing partnerships, both U.S.-based and in Africa.
- Able to leverage one's personal network and the organization's connection to support past and future growth.
- Possess the cultural competency to regularly engage with stakeholders to understand their evolving needs and challenges and to ensure all ALP activities are culturally sensitive and appropriate.

Charismatic Communicator with Strong Interpersonal Skills

- Highly developed communication and listening skills to engage volunteers, board members, donors, and diverse audiences.
- Inspired to be the public face and spokesperson for ALP, advocating for its mission and representing its interests to policymakers, the media, and the public.
- Consensus builder who maintains positive relationships among diverse stakeholders.
- Able to inspire confidence and build excitement about ALP and its mission.

Compensation and Benefits:

This is a full-time, salaried, exempt position with a starting salary range of \$100,000 to \$125,000, commensurate with experience and qualifications. ALP also offers a \$6,000 health insurance stipend annually. Travel cost to the biennial summit in Africa are fully paid by ALP. ALP is a fully remote organization.

Application Process and Additional Information

ALP is an equal opportunity employer and views diversity, inclusion, and cultural competence as vital guiding principles in its work. ALP welcomes and encourages applications from visible minority group members, Indigenous persons, members of the LGBTQ community, persons with disabilities and others who may contribute to the diversity of the organization and reflect the diversity of the communities served.

Candidate must include a resume and a cover letter, both in PDF format, which describe how qualifications and experience match the needs and mission of ALP. A background check will be required of finalists.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Upload required documents to:
<https://eostransitions.applicantpool.com/jobs/>.

This executive search is being conducted by Eos Transition Partners consultant, John Tarvin. All submissions will be acknowledged and are confidential, and any questions can be submitted to John at:
jtarkin@eostransitions.com.