

ACLU OF MICHIGAN SEEKS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

About the ACLU of Michigan

For nearly 100 years, the ACLU has been at the forefront of every major civil liberties fight in our country's history. Whether it's reducing the prison and jail population, achieving full equality for the LGBTQ community, reducing immigration detention, or ending unjust laws that strip people of their fundamental right to vote, we take up the toughest civil liberties issues to defend all individuals from government abuse and overreach. With ACLU affiliate offices in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico, we fight tirelessly to defend our rights in the courts, influence public policy, and empower communities to advance rights for all. The ACLU of Michigan, founded in 1959, is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, public interest organization dedicated to the defense and expansion of civil liberties and civil rights in Michigan. We are a passionate, highly motivated group of 34 lawyers, public policy experts, lobbyists, community organizers, communicators, and fundraisers, and we're looking for exceptional talent to join our team.

The ACLU is deeply committed to racial equity and social justice and is driven to act on these core values. Applicants must be able to recognize ways our identities intersect and play out in the work, especially with communities we serve, and must demonstrate the cultural competency to work with a diverse team and effectively partner with historically marginalized communities.

The Opportunity

ACLU-MI is seeking an experienced, strategic and visionary Executive Director to lead the organization's statewide advocacy agenda during this important moment when civil liberties and civil rights are front and center across the nation and in Michigan. The Executive Director has a proven track record of incorporating equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging (EDIB) principles in all aspects of an organization, building and maintaining partnerships with communities most impacted by civil liberties and civil rights injustices (including Black, indigenous, and people of color, and low-income communities), strong organizational acumen, is an outstanding communicator, is able to develop and maintain relationships that ensure financial health and stability, build important partnerships that maximize the organization's influence and effectively convey the mission and activities of the ACLU to a variety of constituencies and broader public.

In addition, the Executive Director is adept at balancing internal management with external impact and visibility. The position requires that the Executive Director be a collaborative and driven leader with a broad range of knowledge and significant commitment to the furtherance of civil liberties and civil rights.

Candidate Profile

The ideal candidate will provide leadership, vision, and strategic planning necessary to address civil liberties and civil rights issues in Michigan as they emerge and to advance these liberties and rights in the decades to come. Key elements of the role include:

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EDIB) Leadership

- Champion and value equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB) on the Board of Directors and staff as the organization increasingly strives to reflect the communities it serves.
- Exhibits a high-level of cultural competency to work with a diverse team and effectively partner with historically marginalized communities.

- Provides a personal approach that values the individual and respects differences of race, ethnicity, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and socio-economic circumstance.
- Creates a work environment that recognizes and respects the diversity and individuality of each employee.
- Regularly assesses how the ACLU-MI is incorporating EDIB principles and best practices internally and externally.

Organizational Management

- Implement best practices for effective organizational management, including practices that assess the effectiveness of projects undertaken by the ACLU-MI, as developed and tested by other ACLU affiliates and similar advocacy organizations.
- Oversee fiscal planning, budgetary planning and oversight and human resources.
- Ensure that revenue streams are diverse and replenished.
- Ensure that the Board is kept fully informed on the condition of the organization and that Board meetings and Board committees operate effectively and efficiently.

Staff Leadership

- Motivate and maintain a cohesive staff, ensuring that there is strong internal communication, coordination, and accountability.
- Proven track record of developing staff to take on managerial and leadership roles.
- Recognizes and commits to providing staff with regular professional development opportunities.
- Supervise, lead, inspire and mentor the staff to meet its priorities, strategic initiatives and fulfill the organization's mission.
- Foster an environment of continuous improvement, learning and effectiveness on all levels such that the ACLU-MI is recognized as a leading organization in all respects.
- Establish a culture that motivates the staff to come to work each day to provide the best service, growth opportunities and value for the ACLU-MI members.
- Foster a supportive team-oriented environment where independent thinking is encouraged, and staff are held accountable to specific metrics and goals.
- Recruit, train and lead a diverse staff that serves civil liberties/civil rights with enthusiasm and deep understanding of the mission of the ACLU-MI.
- Work with staff members to establish goals for their respective departments and encourage and motivate the staff to focus on the organization's mission.
- Support teamwork and ensure that the staff has the resources needed to accomplish their goals.
- Create an open, transparent inclusive culture that invites conversation, enables staff to bring their true selves to work and ensures personal growth and development.

Leadership and Vision

- Build on past successes by inspiring the creation and implementation of new strategies that advance civil liberties/civil rights in the context of a challenging state and national political climate.
- Assume the lead role in reaching out to like-minded peer organizations and leaders to develop strategic partnerships that advance ACLU's core mission.
- Serve as an articulate marketer, fundraiser, communicator and spokesperson for the ACLU's mission and programs.
- Grow and expand the ACLU's reputation and influence, provide clear vision and direction to guide programs.
- Develop, collaborate and maintain relationships with senior staff at the National ACLU and affiliates.

- Work closely with the Board and staff to develop and periodically update the organization's priorities, strategies and policies, and to design and implement campaigns that support the successful achievement of strategic goals.
- Continue and build on the use of integrated advocacy by which civil liberties/civil rights issues are addressed in a cross-disciplinary approach that embraces litigation, lobbying and public education.
- Exhibit courage and clarity when addressing highly controversial and complex issues and lead the Board through thoughtful consideration of conflicting positions on those issues.
- Guard the organization's integrity, credibility, and non-partisanship by emphasizing these qualities in all aspects of the ACLU-MI's work.

Fund Development

- Lead the staff and the Board in furthering a robust fundraising program that ensures the financial viability of the ACLU-MI, building and leveraging past successes that will continue important relationships.
- Play an active role in recruiting and maintaining diversified donors to include foundations, individuals, and other giving entities.
- Initiate funding opportunities with individual donors and foundations that ensure a constant new stream of financial support that builds long-term stability.
- Anticipate funding needs and engage program staff as needed to ensure that staff have the resources, they need to be successful and to maintain continuity of important initiatives.
- Inspire, cultivate, steward and solicit a dedicated group of major donors to the organization.

Public Representation

- Represent the priorities of the ACLU-MI as the lead official representative of the organization to the press and public, articulating the organization's positions and communicating its mission to increase the organization's visibility and public's understanding of the work.
- Formulate and articulate to the membership, Board, staff and the media a clear and accessible understanding of the ACLU-MI's strategies, goals and positions on issues.
- Maintain and encourage relationships with legal and social science scholars, educators, activists, civil liberties/civil rights and social change advocates so that the Board and staff have the expertise and knowledge they need to confront a wide range of policies and challenges.
- Maintain and encourage relationships with members of the press and the social media community.
- Lead a communications strategy that values a diverse set of voices to represent the organization's positions on its work.

Board Partnership and Communication

- Partner with the Chair of the Board to plan for Board meetings and updates, providing ongoing reporting on overall organizational performance and initiatives.
- Collaborate with key Board committees on a range of strategic initiatives, including identifying and orienting new Board members, fundraising and supporting governance activities.
- Inform staff of Board policies and decisions and ensure that they are implemented in a timely and consistent manner.

Qualifications:

- Commitment to the mission and principles of the ACLU, including characteristics described in the Candidate Profile.
- Ten years of professional experience required with prior nonprofit experience preferred. Proven managerial, problem-solving, strategic thinking, leadership development and human resource experience in the private, not-for-profit, and/or public sectors.
- Proven fundraising and financial management experience with a solid track record of success.

- Credibility and experience to connect the ACLU to resources and opportunities outside the organization.
- Proven and successful track record in creating and implementing programs; experience creating partnerships and collaborations.
- A history of communicating effectively in writing and verbally, including excellent public speaking skills for both formal and extemporaneous presentations; ability to represent the ACLU to a broad public.
- A record of success working in partnership with a Board and staff of diverse personalities and talents.
- Strong work ethic and the ability to interact effectively with volunteers from divergent geographical and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Ability to work both independently and as a member of a team, and to have excellent problem solving and decision-making skills.
- Ability to work in a high-pressure environment and to multi-task.
- Creative, result-oriented, self-starting, willing to learn and able to manage an aggressive schedule, working beyond 9am-5pm as needed.

Personal Characteristics

- Personally committed to advancing the ACLU's values, mission, goals and programs, with an understanding of the range of civil liberties issues and their implications.
- A dedicated leader and representative who can translate vision into action; someone who is passionate about networking and representing the organization to critical constituencies including ACLU members, the public, government and the media.
- A candidate who is inspiring, able to conceptualize and express ideas, anticipate and act on events which may create opportunities for the ACLU.
- A strategic, resourceful, and politically astute individual; someone who understands the value of creating partnerships with other organizations as a way of accomplishing the ACLU's goals.
- A candidate who can prioritize multiple activities and responsibilities, a self-starter and finisher.
- A team player who inspires collaboration and functions decisively; flexible and well organized.
- One who shares information easily, listens as well as gives advice and respects and enhances the abilities of others.

Contact

To express your interest in this role, please submit a compelling cover letter and resume to EDSearch@aclumich.org. All inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential. The ACLU of Michigan is an equal opportunity employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. The ACLU encourages applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, disability, veteran status and record of arrest or conviction.

The ACLU of Michigan is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to individuals with disabilities. If you are a qualified individual with a disability and need assistance applying online, please e-mail EDSearch@aclumich.org and include "Accommodation" in the subject line. If you are selected for an interview, you will receive additional information regarding how to request an accommodation for the interview process.