



JOB DESCRIPTION

TITLE: Director, Development	JOB CODE: DDEV
REPORTS TO: Chief Executive Officer	DEPARTMENT: Development
REVISION DATE: May 2026	DIVISION: Executive Administration
SUPERVISES: Fundraising Operations position	

POSITION SUMMARY:

The Director, Development, will be the inaugural fundraising leader responsible for launching and growing the association's enterprise development function for research. This externally facing role will cultivate and grow the strategies and networks needed to secure philanthropic support for the organization's goal to fund neuroscience research, with an initial focus on research and public education.

The Director will serve as the organization's strategic senior fundraising ambassador, cultivating relationships with principal and major donors, foundations, and partners while laying out the groundwork for future team growth.

The Director will partner closely with internal resources to support the rapid growth of the new program.

ESSENTIAL ACCOUNTABILITIES:

Strategy & leadership

- Serve as the senior leader responsible for building and advancing the organization's fundraising brand, translating mission and scientific impact into a compelling, credible case for philanthropic investment across diverse audiences
- Act as a highly collaborative partner to executive leadership, board members, physicians, researchers, and program leaders, aligning fundraising priorities with organizational strategy and impact
- Serve as the organization's internal subject-matter expert on philanthropy and fundraising best practices, advising leadership on strategy, trends, and opportunities while fostering a culture of philanthropy
- Author and execute on a multiyear (3–5 year) fundraising roadmap, including campaigns designed for multiple revenue streams (major gifts, foundations, corporate philanthropy, annual giving)

Fundraising & donor engagement

- Cultivate, solicit, and steward high-value individual, foundation, and corporate partners, personally leading complex, high-opportunity donor relationships and strategic partnerships
- Lead all aspects of grant seeking: prospect research, proposal writing, budgets, reporting and compliance
- Build and manage a pipeline of major gift prospects, with emphasis on new relationships.
- Develop compelling presentations and impact reports to support donor engagement
- Launch, test and improve fundraising initiatives such as annual giving campaigns, donor appeals, and small, member-led events



- Partner closely with Communications to elevate storytelling and visibility, ensuring consistent, high-quality donor messaging that strengthens trust, credibility, and recognition of the organization's work

Collaboration & infrastructure

- Collaborate with internal research, public education, and programs leads and member-facing committees to align fundraising with mission and strategic plan priorities
- Work closely with Legal, Finance, and HR to ensure compliance, budget tracking, and resource allocation
- Partner with the Industry Relations team to clarify roles, minimize overlap, and maximize impact.
- Establish foundational policies, systems, and practices (gift acceptance, donor stewardship, CRM/database, reporting)
- Oversee a scalable development function, building and improving sound practices, systems, and partnerships
- Maintain development policies and accessibility standards in all operations
- Serve as staff lead and key partner to the Development Committee

Team leadership

- Provide leadership and mentorship to future fundraising staff as the team grows
- Develops strategy for the fundraising department in alignment with organizational strategy

This job description may not cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee for this job. Duties, activities, and responsibilities may change at any time with or without notice.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Bachelor's degree in business, communications/marketing, nonprofit/public administration, fundraising or philanthropic studies or related field
- Minimum 10 years of progressive senior-level experience, in fundraising, advancement, or philanthropy ideally within healthcare, academic medicine, research, association or mission-driven organizations
- Demonstrated ability to uphold the AAN's values
- Strong desire and proven ability to build and grow philanthropic relationships with major, principal and institutional donors
- Minimum of 5 years of supervisory experience
- Demonstrated success building or significantly expanding a fundraising program, including securing major gifts, foundation support, and strategic partnerships
- Proven ability to operate as a peer to executive leadership and board members, with strong judgment, credibility, and executive presence
- Exceptional relationship-builder and collaborator, with experience working across disciplines (e.g., clinicians, researchers, communications, finance, external partners)
- Ability to translate complex scientific, medical, or technical concepts into compelling donor-focused narratives (clinical or physician background welcomed but not required)



- Collaborative, entrepreneurial, and comfortable operating in an emerging function with limited initial resources

Relevant education and/or experience exceeding the required qualifications may be substituted on a year-for-year basis.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Advanced degree, clinical credentials, or relevant professional certification (e.g., CFRE) preferred
- Experience in inaugural or start-up fundraising functions

ADDITIONAL POSITION INFORMATION:

FLSA classification: Exempt

Travel requirements: Frequent travel required- up to 30%. Ability to legally travel outside of the United States is required.

Location: Minneapolis, MN and is identified as hybrid (required to work in the office with the ability to work remotely part of the week)

Schedule: Some evening and weekends required

AI utilization: At the AAN, the utilization of artificial intelligence (AI) is assumed and expected to be used in a responsible, ethical, and transparent manner. Human judgement, critical thinking, and creativity remain essential to AAN's operations and decision making.

Physical requirements: Standard office setting, with the ability to sit, stand, or utilize alternative seating arrangements for long periods of time as needed. Occasional use of stairs or accessibility devices. Regular use of computer and office equipment, with consideration for adaptive technologies as necessary. Lifting requirements of up to 10 lbs., with accommodation provided for individuals with varying physical capabilities. The physical demands outlined above are essential to the successful performance of this job, and reasonable accommodations will be made to enable all individuals, including those with disabilities, to fulfill these essential functions.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is a commitment of the AAN. The AAN is an equal opportunity employer, and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability status, sexual orientation, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law.

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