



Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind

Executive Director

Posted On: September 30, 2026

Closing On: October 30, 2026

Location: Manotick, ON

Employment Type: fulltime

Level: management

Salary Range: \$130,000 - \$150,000

Website: <https://kciphilanthropy.com/kci-talent/>

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Executive Director

THE OPPORTUNITY

Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind (CGDB) is seeking a purpose and relationship driven Executive Director to build on the organization's strong operational foundation and lead its next chapter of growth and impact.

Reporting to the Board of Directors and supported by a talented and capable team with deep expertise in programs and operations, CGDB is well positioned for a leader who will leverage the strengths of the staff while bringing strategic leadership, external perspective and a strong focus on expanding CGDB's profile, influence and reach. A background in guide dogs is not required; rather, the successful candidate will bring curiosity, a collaborative approach, and leadership to draw on the expertise of others while advancing the organization's mission and future direction.

The Executive Director will lead the development and implementation of a diversified revenue strategy, identifying new opportunities for philanthropy and strategic partnerships, while raising awareness of the vital role guide dogs play in enhancing independence and quality of life for people who are blind or visually impaired, and supporting children and

families living with autism. Working closely with the staff and Board, the ED will translate this strategy into a clear, measurable plan and build the relationships, infrastructure and organizational capacity required to deliver on it.

As a visible ambassador for CGDB, the Executive Director will be a compelling storyteller and relationship builder, connecting the organization's mission and impact with donors, partners, volunteers and the broader community. They will combine strategic vision and entrepreneurial thinking with the collaborative leadership style that engages and empowers others.

Building on decades of groundbreaking work and the legacy of its founder, CGDB is well positioned for an exciting new phase of growth. With a strong foundation and an established reputation, the organization is ready for a strategic, forward-thinking Executive Director to advance its success, increase and diversify revenue, and expand its programs, reach and impact.

Note: Dog training or handling experience is not required. CGDB employs a dedicated training team and operations staff for animal care.

ABOUT CANADIAN GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND

Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind (CGDB) is a national, charitable organization founded in 1984 with a mandate to provide Canadians with greater mobility and independence through the use of professionally trained guide dogs (nationally) and autism service dogs (Ottawa area).

CGDB provides professionally trained guide dogs that help Canadians who are blind or visually impaired navigate the world with greater mobility, confidence, and independence. The organization carefully selects dogs with the temperament and aptitude required for guide work—most commonly Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers, and Labrador-Golden crosses. After being raised and socialized by volunteer puppy walkers, the dogs begin formal training between 14 and 20 months of age. This specialized training, which typically lasts five to eight months, prepares each dog to safely guide its future handler by avoiding obstacles, maintaining focus, and responding calmly in a variety of environments.

Once matched, clients participate in an intensive residential training program at CGDB's National Training Centre to build a strong partnership with their guide dog and learn how to work together as a team. Guide dogs are more than highly skilled companions—they provide freedom, confidence, and increased independence to the people they serve. Made possible entirely through donations and fundraising, the program provides guide dogs to

clients at virtually no cost, ensuring that financial barriers do not prevent Canadians from accessing this life-changing support.

Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind does not receive any ongoing government funding and relies on the generosity of donors and funders to support its programs and services. Sources of funding includes individual and corporate donors, service clubs, foundations and grants, bequests and legacy gifts, as well as in-house and third-party fundraising events.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind website](#)

[About CGDB](#)

[2025 Financial Statements](#)

[Newsletter – Fall/Winter 2026](#)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Edward Mann, Chair
- Mary Jane Binks, Vice Chair
- Robert Meredith, Treasurer
- Brian Scott, Secretary
- Shane Bennett
- Donna Tessier
- Jane E. Thornton, Co-Founder

KEY AREAS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Leadership & Governance

- Partner with the Board of Directors on governance, strategy and organizational priorities, bringing professional leadership and expertise to the organization's activities.

- Attend Board meetings, providing required reports, updates and materials, and ensuring timely follow-up on decisions, communications, and action items.
- Identify, assess, and inform the Board of Directors of issues that affect the organization.
- Collaborate with senior leadership and other staff to develop, implement and monitor annual and multi-year business plans and budgets, aligned with CGDB's mission and strategic objectives.
- Model a commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility, ensuring the workplace reflects a commitment to these values with the staff team, volunteers, clients, donors and the community.
- Conduct official correspondence on behalf of the Board and jointly with the Board as appropriate.
- Work with staff to achieve and maintain the organization's accreditations (International Guide Dog Federation and Assistance Dogs International) and ensure compliance with all CRA and other regulatory requirements.
- Identify and evaluate organizational risk and implement measures to control and mitigate, in partnership with the Director of Canine Affairs.

Staff Leadership

- Provide leadership to the management team; fostering a culture of collaboration and accountability.
- Establish a positive, healthy, and safe work environment in accordance with all appropriate legislation and regulations.
- Foster a culture of respect, inclusion, collaboration, teamwork and accountability.
- Collaborate with the Director of Canine Affairs, Controller and other program leads to identify staff requirements for operations management and program delivery.
- Build performance management processes to ensure effective staff assessment and individual and team performance
- Oversee the implementation of human resources policies, procedures and practices including hiring, orientation, training, evaluations and/or performance reviews, discipline, and manage job descriptions for all staff and volunteers.

Fundraising, Communications, Community & Volunteer Engagement

- Strengthen the organization's fundraising capacity, building the systems, relationships and practices needed to strengthen CGDB's sustainability, reducing reliance on bequests.
- Monitor revenue performance and emerging opportunities, adapting strategies and investments as needed to achieve sustainable growth.
- Lead all aspects of fundraising including major gifts, annual giving, corporate partnerships, foundation support, and grants.
- Identify and cultivate relationships with individual donors, sponsors, foundations, sector peers and community partners.
- Plan and execute successful fundraising campaigns, events, and donor engagement strategies.
- Represent CGDB as a credible, passionate spokesperson with media, partners, government, and the public. Promote awareness of CGDB's mission, services, and impact nationally and locally.
- Provide strategic leadership to strengthen volunteer engagement, adapting to the global decline in volunteerism and ensuring volunteers remain meaningfully connected, supported, and engaged in the organization.

Program and Facilities Management

- Provide leadership and oversight to ensure services and programs are safe, effective, high quality and compliant with applicable legislation and standards, working closely with the leadership team.
- Oversee the effective management, maintenance and long-term planning of the organization's facilities, ensuring they are safe, accessible, and well-maintained.
- Ensure that the operation of the organization meets the expectations of its clients, Board and funders.

Financial and Operational Planning and Management

- Accountable for the overall leadership for organizational operations, including annual budgeting, financial stewardship, and operational efficiency.

- Ensure that the organization complies with all regulatory bodies related to animal welfare, privacy, accessibility, charity governance, including the standards set by Assistance Dogs International and the International Guide Dog Federation.
- Ensure effective procurement; facilities management; digital infrastructure and governance; information security.

QUALIFICATIONS AND KEY COMPETENCIES

- Senior leadership experience in a not-for-profit, charitable or mission-driven organization.
- Knowledge and/or experience working in the disability, accessibility, or human services sector is an asset.
- Proven success leading diverse fundraising programs, including annual giving, major gifts, corporate partnerships, foundations, grants and events, with a focus on sustainable revenue growth.
- Experience working effectively with Boards of Directors and/or senior volunteer leadership, providing strategic advice, managing risk and ensuring strong governance and regulatory compliance.
- Demonstrated ability to develop and implement strategic and annual plans and successfully drive and manage programs and teams aligned with organizational plans.
- Excellent people management skills with a track record of building, leading and developing high-performing teams and fostering healthy, inclusive and accountable workplace cultures.
- Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills, with the credibility to engage donors, volunteers, clients, community partners, government and the broader public.
- Strong financial and operational acumen, including experience with budgeting, financial stewardship, resource allocation and organizational planning.
- Experience leading within a regulated, service-oriented or complex operational environment, with an appreciation for quality, safety, compliance and risk.
- Experience overseeing facilities, technology, information management and other organizational infrastructure, directly or through external partners.

- Experience working within a national organization, with an understanding of the opportunities and complexities of operating across regions and communities is an asset.
- Work full-time onsite from the Manotick office, while maintaining an active, visible presence in the community. Be accessible and responsive to significant or urgent matters as required.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

KCI Search + Talent has been retained to conduct this search on behalf of Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind (CGDB). For more information about this opportunity, please contact Ellie Rusonik, Senior Vice President/Practice Lead, KCI Search + Talent by email at: CGDB@kcitalent.com.

Interested candidates should send their resume and letter of interest to the email address listed above by **October 30, 2026**. All inquiries and applications will be held in strict confidence.

To view full Executive Brief, please visit www.kcitalent.com

The salary range for this role is \$130,000 – \$150,000 plus a comprehensive benefits package including RRSP match.

At Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind, we are dedicated to fostering a workplace that values diversity, promotes equity, and embraces inclusion. We believe that a diverse and inclusive environment is essential for innovation, collaboration, and overall success. We are committed to treating all individuals with respect and dignity, ensuring equal opportunities for growth and advancement. By actively promoting diversity in all its forms, we strive to create a workplace culture where everyone feels valued and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives. Our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is integral to our mission, and we continuously strive to cultivate an environment that reflects these principles.

This posting is for an existing vacancy. The successful candidate will succeed the current Executive Director. Artificial intelligence will not be used to screen resumes nor assess candidates in this search.