

Nestled in the Taconic Mountains of Southwestern Vermont, Merck Forest & Farmland Center (MFFC) is more than just a picturesque destination -- it's a gateway to discovery, connection, and stewardship. With 3,500 acres of sustainably managed farm and forest, 35 miles of trails, and rustic backcountry cabins, our campus welcomes 20,000 annual visitors to explore, learn, and grow. For nearly 75 years, MFFC has cultivated a sense of curiosity, love, and responsibility for natural and working lands, creating multi-generational memories while welcoming new faces every day. This is an exciting moment for MFFC. Visitorship, engagement in programming, and participation in the annual fund have risen steeply in the past five years. While the organization is on a positive trajectory, there remains significant opportunity for continued growth. We're looking for a visionary Director of Development to lead our fundraising efforts, ensuring we continue inspiring and serving our community for decades to come.

### **Why Join Merck Forest & Farmland Center?**

At MFFC, we build barns with timber we've milled ourselves onsite. We lead hikes through breathtaking landscapes. We host signature events for hundreds of visitors multiple times a year. Our culture is hands-on, collaborative, and driven by our mission. We're a place where innovative ideas meet practical action, and where your work will foster deep connections between people and the land.

### **The Opportunity**

The Director of Development will take the helm of our fundraising efforts, stewarding relationships with individual donors, foundations, businesses, and government agencies. You'll play a key role in shaping our strategic direction, ensuring the financial health of the organization while fostering a culture of philanthropy across the organization. This effort should be accomplished in a diverse array of creative ways, including:

Designing and leading:

- Major donor cultivation efforts
- Cyclical capital & endowment/comprehensive campaigns
- Corporate engagement
- Planned giving

Providing strategic guidance and oversight for:

- All Annual Fund fundraising efforts

Serving as a key member of MFFC's leadership team by:

- Representing the donor perspective in all strategic conversations
- Collaborating with the Executive Director and Director of Program to secure foundation, state, and federal funds to support MFFC's work
- Serving as an ambassador for the organization and its work to internal and external stakeholders
- Fostering a growth-oriented culture of collaboration, mutual respect, and collegiality consistent with the organization's core values

## **The Director of Development will:**

- Work with the Executive Director to Develop a comprehensive fundraising plan aligned with the organization's strategic plan.
- Lead development staff, volunteers, and consultants in the successful implementation of the fundraising plan.
- Monitor and analyze fundraising data to ensure progress towards goals and to make adjustments as necessary.
- Ensure the proper use of, and maintain accurate and up-to-date records in, MFFC's donor database.
- Collaborate with the Communications Manager to ensure that all donor-centric communications (appeal letters, acknowledgement letters, campaign materials, etc.) are effective while aligning with organizational voice and brand standards.
- Work closely with the Board of Directors to ensure Trustees understand the fundraising plan, are kept informed of key metrics, and are empowered to support the organization's fundraising efforts.
- Represents the donor perspective as a member of MFFC's leadership team.
- Instill a culture of gratitude to ensure that all MFFC staff understand and appreciate the critical role that donors play in the organization.

## **Required Skills/Experience**

- A minimum of five years of successful nonprofit fundraising experience.
- Leadership and management with a track record of meeting ambitious goals.
- Excellent communication abilities, both written and verbal.
- A passion for the natural world, outdoor recreation, sustainable land management.
- Familiarity with donor databases (preferably Salesforce).

## **Preferred Skills/Experience**

- Foundation relations and grant writing expertise.
- Experience in event planning and execution.
- Knowledge of farming, forestry, conservation, place-based education, forest ecology and/or conservation.

## **Why You'll Thrive Here**

At MFFC, variety is abundant. Whether you're creating a new campaign, joining a trail crew to better understand our land or connecting with donors over shared interests, you'll be part of a team that values collaboration and creativity.

## **Position Details**

- Salary: \$80,000–\$100,000+, based on experience.
- Benefits: Healthcare, retirement, generous PTO, paid holidays, short- and long-term disability, and life insurance.
- Work Environment: Blend of office, outdoor, and regional travel, with occasional evening, overnight, and weekend events.

**Apply Today:** Send your resume, cover letter, and references to [work@merckforest.org](mailto:work@merckforest.org)