



Higher Ground Job Description

Position Title	Chief Development Officer
FLSA Status	Exempt
Reports To	Chief Executive Officer
Compensation	Depends on Experience
Current as of	March 2026

Higher Ground USA, Inc. (HG) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to enhancing quality of life through therapeutic recreation and education for individuals with disabilities including veterans and first responders.

The Opportunity

- The Chief Development Officer (CDO) will build on a successful foundation to lead the next chapter of Higher Ground's fundraising. Their goal will be to drive several million dollars of annual revenue growth over the coming years to scale Higher Ground's impact and reach.
- Reporting to the CEO, the CDO will oversee a comprehensive philanthropy portfolio, including major gifts, grassroots donors, corporate partnerships, foundation grants, and events. They will manage a strong and growing Development team, guiding their work on renewals, prospecting, and relationship management, and working with them to develop innovative strategies to grow revenue in each stream.
- The CDO will work closely with the CEO, Board of Directors, and staff to align fundraising efforts with Higher Ground's strategic and financial priorities. Strong candidates will bring extensive nonprofit fundraising experience, including a proven track record of securing six- and seven- figure gifts and managing giving across Higher Ground's portfolio. They will have a proven ability to build and lead high-performing teams, as well as drive revenue growth. The ideal candidate will have experience in, or a desire to learn about the adaptive, veteran, and first responder communities.

Core Responsibilities/Duties:

Strategic leadership and execution

- Develop and implement a strategic philanthropy plan to meet annual and long-term revenue goals for Higher Ground.
- Develop a sustainable and diverse revenue portfolio that aligns with our efforts to grow.
- Set fundraising strategy to grow revenue in alignment with Higher Ground's strategies, while recognizing the importance of pacing and team health.
- Build and strengthen relationships with current and prospective high-net-worth donors and prospects, ensuring meaningful engagement and solicitation.

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- Personally manage a portfolio of high-net-worth key donors and prospects, ensuring meaningful engagement and solicitation.
- Enable senior leadership to “plug and play” in donor engagement by providing structured briefing materials, scheduling key pitch opportunities, and leading donor training.
- Train the team in effective donor communication, ensuring clarity, energy, and decisiveness in conversations.
- Oversee the creation of compelling proposals, case statements, messaging, and other fundraising materials on Higher Ground’s impact.
- Plan and execute donor recognition programs and events to deepen relationships and demonstrate impact.
- Represent Higher Ground at meetings, events, and conferences. Serve as a spokesperson for Higher Ground when necessary

Team management and collaboration

- Lead, mentor, and grow a high-performing Development team, building on a culture of collaboration, innovation, and accountability.
- Drive cross-departmental collaboration, particularly with the Veteran and Adaptive program teams, to integrate fundraising into Higher Ground’s broader work.
- Collaborate cross-departmentally to articulate a clear and compelling case for support across multiple mediums, including website, pitch decks, and other written collaterals.
- Set and maintain clear revenue goals and tactics for each revenue stream, with a focus on consistent year-over-year growth; establish and improve systems for tracking the effectiveness of tactics.
- Lead Development team meetings and revenue pacing meetings with the CEO and CFO to review pipeline health, goal progress, and strategy refinements.
- Manage the CEO, BOD, and other key leaders' briefings and communication with key donors.

Development operations and systems

- Ensure accurate donor data management and reporting within Salesforce.
- Identify areas to improve donation processing for gifts arriving via check, bank transfer, Classy, etc.
- Forecast annual revenue generation leveraging Salesforce analytics and market insights.
- Implement a systematic approach to tracking fundraising tactics — meetings, proposals, events, and touchpoints — and evaluating their effectiveness.

Financial reporting

- Develop and manage the department’s budget, ensuring efficient resource allocation.
- Work closely with the finance team to track revenue projections and fundraising performance.
- Partner with the CEO, CFO, Board of Directors, and Finance Committee to provide regular updates on fundraising results, challenges, and opportunities.

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Required Qualifications

- 10+ years of progressive experience in philanthropy, fundraising, or development, with at least 2 years in a senior leadership role.
- Strong financial acumen and experience with budgeting and financial forecasting.
- Demonstrated success in managing an annual fund and campaign appeals, as well as securing six- and seven-figure gifts.
- Strong leadership skills with the ability to inspire and manage a high-performing team with various backgrounds, abilities, and personalities.
- Demonstrated ability to manage a remote and onsite team of 4+ direct reports, fostering a culture of accountability and collaboration.
- Excellent communication, relationship-building, and strategic planning skills.
- Deep understanding of fundraising best practices, donor motivations, and the philanthropic landscape.
- Strong user of Salesforce, including donor data management, pipeline tracking, and revenue forecasting.
- Strategic thinker with the ability to develop innovative fundraising solutions.
- Deep knowledge and understanding of fundraising trends and best practices.
- Passion for outdoor recreation with an enthusiasm for engaging donors through skiing, boarding, hiking, or other activities.
- Willingness to travel to meet donors nationally.

Preferred Qualifications

- The ideal candidate will have experience at double-digit million-dollar revenue organizations.
- Comfort working with adaptive and veteran/first responder communities.
- Credentialed as a Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE) or equivalent professional certification.
- Experience designing and optimizing membership programs to drive engagement, retention, and revenue growth.

Compensation

- Salary commensurate with experience. Higher Ground offers a generous benefits package including healthcare benefits as well as a retirement match. Additionally, Higher Ground offers a self-managed paid time off policy, sick and holiday time, and a family-friendly, flexible work environment.

Physical Requirements:

- Geographic Information: This position is based in Ketchum, Idaho. Remote work will not be considered.
- Occasional travel and weekend work required
- Occasional attendance at evening and overnight program events

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- Ability to lift up to 30 pounds of equipment and gear

Equal Opportunity Employment – Higher Ground Inc. is an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to maintaining the hiring practices and work environment free from discrimination based on race, color, religious creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, genetic information, veteran/military status, marital status or other status protected by federal or state law, with regard to any term or condition of employment.

To apply please send your resume and cover letter to:

Cara Barrett
(Interim CEO)
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