

Executive Director

Words Without Borders

Remote/New York Tri-State Area

Salary: \$120,000

BACKGROUND

The Organization

Words Without Borders (wordswithoutborders.org) is the premier destination for a global literary conversation. Founded in 2003, our mission is to cultivate global awareness by expanding access to international writing and creating a bridge between readers, writers, and translators.

Our award-winning digital magazine offers unparalleled access to the world's literary voices. These include writers like Olga Tokarczuk, Abdulrazak Gurnah, and Han Kang, all published on WWB before they became international sensations, as well as hundreds of new and rising talents. We are committed to centering writers in indigenous, endangered, and other world languages that are too often marginalized.

Our education program, WWB Campus (wwb-campus.org), brings global literature into hundreds of classrooms, offering free access to stories from around the world, multimedia curricular resources that bring literature to life, and professional support for educators.

WWB organizes free virtual and in-person events with international authors, translators, and critics, providing a space for readers to engage directly with the perspectives we publish. Our fellowship and grants programs provide opportunities for emerging professionals in the field of literary translation.

The Position

Words Without Borders seeks an internationally connected, strategic, and visionary leader to shepherd the organization into its next phase of growth and impact. Building on two decades of steady progress, the Executive Director will report to WWB's board of directors and will help WWB meet its strategic goals while sustainably growing its financial resources.

Now in its third decade, WWB is well positioned to grow internationally in the coming years. One of the first tasks for the Executive Director will be to collaborate with board and staff to create the organization's next strategic plan, capitalizing on opportunities to expand its international readership and its education program, and communicating this vision to its diverse stakeholders.

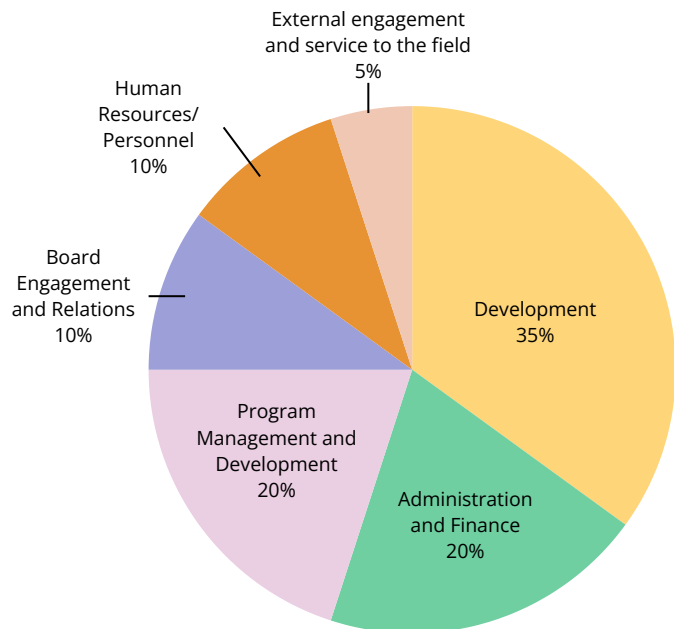
The Executive Director will oversee WWB's day-to-day operations, including all fundraising activity, financial management and planning, and program oversight. They will lead the three-person development team, playing an active role in expanding WWB's institutional support and cultivating individual donors. The Executive Director will also work with board and staff to plan and execute the organization's annual Gala, which will take place on October 30th, 2024. Launching a capital campaign to create WWB's first strategic reserve fund will be a key goal within the Executive Director's first two years.

Internally, the Executive Director will facilitate a culture of learning, innovation, collaboration, and excellence among the nine-member staff, freelance editors, and twenty-member board of directors, building a strong sense of community and shared purpose. They will strive to foster work-life balance and expand WWB's equitable HR practices, while providing opportunities for mentorship and professional development to staff members. As WWB's remote team expands outside the US, establishing practices that help optimize collaboration across a decentralized workplace will be key.

ROLE OVERVIEW

Development (35%)

- Strategize and expand upon WWB's fundraising pipeline, both by stewarding existing funding opportunities and identifying new ones (including individuals, foundations, and corporate).
- Plan and execute annual Gala and smaller cultivation events.
- Oversee two annual fundraising appeals.
- Engage board of directors in fundraising activities.
- Support development staff.



Administration and Finance (20%)

- Manage WWB's budget and finances, including approving payments to vendors.
- Oversee work of freelance bookkeeper in the preparation of quarterly financial reports.
- Interface with third-party financial and office tools including QuickBooks, Bill, PayPal, Stripe, Dropbox.
- Oversee annual report and quarterly impact updates.
- Work with independent auditor in the preparation of annual statements and 990.
- Provide guidance and mentorship to staff members, fostering their professional growth and development.
- Ensure that staff members feel valued, supported, and empowered to contribute their best to the organization.
- Establish clear performance expectations and goals for staff members, providing regular feedback and coaching to support their growth and development.

Program Management and Development (20%)

- Work with program staff to set annual and longer-term strategies for WWB's digital magazine, education program, events, communications, and fellowships.
- Oversee and evaluate all programs to ensure alignment with organizational impact goals.
- Seek out opportunities to expand impact through new program partnerships and initiatives.

Board Engagement and Relations (10%)

- Oversee the coordination of full-board and committee meetings and ensure that members are provided with regular financial and programmatic updates.
- Schedule and attend quarterly meetings of all board committees.
- Develop and implement organizational strategies in collaboration with the board and staff.
- Partner with the board to identify, cultivate, recruit, and retain board members who are highly engaged and willing to leverage their personal and professional networks and resources.

ROLE OVERVIEW (cont.)

Human Resources/Personnel (10%)

- Work with third-party payroll provider to onboard and pay employees, secure employee benefits.
- Oversee hiring, including implementation and development of equitable hiring and compensation practices.
- Provide opportunities for mentorship and professional development to staff members.
- Foster inclusive, supportive, and collaborative workplace culture, where staff members feel valued, supported, and empowered to contribute their best to the organization.
- Provide guidance and mentorship to staff members, fostering their professional growth and development.
- Establish clear performance expectations and goals for staff members, providing regular feedback and coaching to support their growth and development.

External engagement and service to the field (5%)

- Present WWB at festivals and literary events.
- Attend convenings and periodic educational trainings or webinars.
- Engage in peer learning, mentorship, and networking with other literary organizations.
- Author op-eds, contribute to relevant articles that advocate for literary translation.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate for the Executive Director position possesses the following competencies:

Communicates Effectively Developing and delivering multi-mode communications that convey a clear understanding of the unique needs of different audiences.	Drives Results Consistently achieving results, even under tough circumstances.	Resourcefulness Securing and deploying resources effectively and efficiently.
Strategic Mindset Seeing ahead to future possibilities and translating them into breakthrough strategies.	Financial Acumen Interpreting and applying understanding of key financial indicators to make better decisions.	Builds Effective Team Building teams with a strong identity that apply their diverse skills and perspectives to achieve common goals.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE (cont.)

Additional Qualifications

Mission Alignment

- Deep passion for and commitment to the mission of Words Without Borders. This could include experience in international cultural organizations, education, and/or publishing.
- Knowledge of at least one language beyond English strongly encouraged.

Proven Operational Abilities & Financial Acumen

- Strong understanding of nonprofit financial management within a growing organization, including budgeting and fiscal oversight to ensure long-term financial sustainability.
- Strong organizational skills and judgment; ability to prioritize work, manage time and multiple priorities, and meet deadlines.
- Outstanding written and verbal communication skills, including grant-writing experience, and engaging presentation skills. Comfortable with public speaking, articulating the mission of WWB, and being the face of an organization.
- Strong attention to detail.
- Proficiency with Google suite; experience with online bookkeeping and payment programs desired.

Excellent Relationship-Building Skills & Demonstrated Success as Fundraiser

- Experience in fundraising, major gifts, and donor stewardship.
- Excellent people management skills that encourage creativity, collaboration, and growth with a range of work styles.
- Track record of building relationships with board members or donors.

A Visionary with a Strategic Mindset

- Ability to envision future growth, leverage opportunities, and translate vision into strategy.
- Past participation in creating or implementing a strategic plan.

WHO WE ARE

Work Environment

WWB offers a remote work environment with a semi-flexible work schedule. The Executive Director should be able to travel easily to New York City for board meetings and events approximately six times per year. WWB's downtown Brooklyn office and meeting space is available to the ED as needed.

Our Commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

WWB is an equal opportunity employer. We strive to build a staff that reflects the diversity of the global communities we serve and uplifts marginalized and historically resilient communities while fostering an inclusive workplace culture. WWB welcomes and encourages applicants who bring a broad view of the world.

Our Commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (cont.)

WWB provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local laws.

This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Salary

\$120,000

- Health insurance including vision and dental
- Employer-sponsored health flexible spending account
- Twelve days' vacation time in Year 1 (increases over time) plus sick and personal PTO
- Generous annual holiday schedule, with 13 paid holidays annually
- Life & long-term disability
- Flexible work schedule with 32-hour weekly minimum

TIMELINE AND NEXT STEPS

If you are interested in this position, please [click here](#). All applicants will receive an email confirming receipt of their application.

We encourage candidates of all backgrounds to apply even if you do not meet all the qualifications outlined above. If you are selected to move forward for an initial screening call, we expect to be in touch by the end of May.

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[Submit an application HERE.](#)