



**OUTWARD BOUND**  
CALIFORNIA

Search Conducted By



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Outward Bound California seeks a leader with uncommon vision and compassion to ensure the continued impact of this remarkable organization in its core mission of changing lives through challenge and discovery.



# ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

Outward Bound California (OBCA) is a nonprofit educational organization with a core mission of changing lives through challenge and discovery. Its programs develop character, build leadership skills, and support self-discovery in remote wilderness settings and urban green spaces.

OBCA, based in San Francisco, brings the life-changing experiences of the Outward Bound educational model to participants from California, across the United States, and beyond. OBCA strives to provide equitable and inclusive programming and is continuously working to design culturally relevant and responsive experiences for all participants. As a nonprofit organization committed to expanding access to its programming, OBCA provides scholarships to over half of the students who attend its courses and partners with more than 60 community groups and schools.

OBCA is part of a network of 10 Outward Bound schools in the United States and is one of 45 Outward Bound schools worldwide. Building on 35 years of Outward Bound history in California, OBCA

currently serves over 3,400 people annually from program locations in the High Sierra, Bay Area, and the Joshua Tree National Park area. A talented staff of 25 and up to 50 seasonal employees lead these challenging outdoor courses that result in transformational learning and growth experiences for participants. OBCA offers a wide range of programs, from one-day experiences on their San Francisco Challenge Ropes Course to multi-day rock climbing and backpacking courses for ages 12 and up, including adults, veterans, LGBTQ+ participants, schools, professional groups, and aspiring outdoor educators.

With an annual revenue of \$4.5M, OBCA's financial model balances fundraised and earned revenue. OBCA finished 2023 in a solid financial position and exceeded its annual development goal, which has increased by \$1M since 2018. Additionally, OBCA is actively investing in its basecamp facilities, including identifying significant funds to support its new Joshua Tree basecamp.



## Position Overview and Responsibilities

The Executive Director (ED) provides visionary leadership and is the public heart, face, and voice of the organization. The ED strives every day to live, share, and sustain OBCA's values and to create a positive, engaging place to work and learn.

The ED is responsible for delivering on OBCA's mission, program, safety, financial, and strategic goals in a fiscally, ethically, and legally sound manner. Partnering closely with the Board and senior staff, the ED develops and articulates OBCA's strategic direction and implements the resulting strategies and initiatives utilizing sound business skills and judgment. The ED is the chief steward of the Outward Bound educational model for the benefit of all and oversees the continued sustainability of this dynamic organization as it executes its strategic plan and vision for impact.

As part of the larger Outward Bound USA network, the ED serves as an Outward Bound Services Group board member, and as a member of the Outward Bound USA Executive Directors' team and National Safety Committee. Through these leadership positions, the ED works to influence and expand the Outward Bound brand and benefits from the knowledge and experience shared among peer EDs.

The ideal candidate is an inspirational leader and strong communicator with emotional intelligence, high levels of business and fundraising acumen, and a collaborative, decisive approach. The ED must understand the challenges facing OBCA's student population and the nuances, opportunities, and challenges of operating in today's experiential outdoor education field. A clear, strong alignment with OBCA's mission and values is essential, as are effective staff leadership, board engagement, and partnership development skills.

This combination of professional and personal leadership qualities will help the ED serve OBCA's organizational and student community with expertise, flexibility, and above all, compassion.



## Leadership and Strategy

- ✦ Provide inspirational vision, direction, and structure to further OBCA's mission, brand reach, and growth.
- ✦ Lead with an approach that aligns with the Outward Bound core values of excellence, integrity, inclusion, and compassion.
- ✦ Lead, inspire, and motivate staff and enthusiastically nurture a culture that encourages teamwork, inclusion, innovation, data-based decision making, accountability, and impact.
- ✦ Coordinate organizational strategy to ensure a sustainable competitive advantage and leverage trends and innovations in outdoor leadership and character development.
- ✦ Work with board and senior staff to implement and adapt OBCA's existing strategic plan to current business, program, and environmental realities.
- ✦ Support and continue to evolve OBCA's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts across the organization.
- ✦ Maintain effective working partnerships and a collaborative approach with OBSG, OBUSA, and other OBUSA Chartered Schools.
- ✦ Work with OBCA's Student Services Team and OBSG to effectively market programs and services in accordance with OBCA and Outward Bound USA standards and enrollment goals.



## Finance and Human Resources

- ✦ Ensure prudent management of organizational financial resources and operations.
- ✦ Develop and manage the annual budget and execute a collaborative budgeting process in coordination with senior staff and board members.
- ✦ Ensure compliance with all laws, regulations, and reporting requirements from local, state, and federal government, land agencies, OBUSA, or private entities to safeguard OBCA's assets and access.
- ✦ Oversee HR policies, procedures, and practices to ensure staff have the support they need to accomplish their goals.
- ✦ Ensure effective management processes, IT systems, and communication channels to support program delivery and operational excellence.



## Fundraising

- ★ Serve as OBCA's primary spokesperson, including effective communication of OBCA's mission, values, and services in fundraising situations.
- ★ Lead annual fundraising efforts in coordination with advancement staff.
- ★ Work closely with the Board on comprehensive campaigns, leveraging their personal networks for cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship.



## Operations, Safety, and Program Development

- ★ Provide accountability for safety at OBCA as required of a chartered entity within the Outward Bound USA system.
- ★ Ensure program management and operations conform to Outward Bound Safety Policy and Standards, and OBCA local standards.
- ★ Ensure continuous safety program improvement, including annual objectives, and clearly define structures and procedures.
- ★ Oversee and expand OBCA facilities and infrastructure in accordance with applicable standards, resources, and programming needs.
- ★ Oversee the Director of Programs and Safety and support the continued development of OBCA's program excellence, risk management, and innovation.



## Governance

- ★ Collaborate with Board Co-Chairs and Governance Committee to ensure effective board management, meetings, materials, and preparation.
- ★ Assist the Board in recruiting new members.
- ★ Participate on board committees as requested by the Board.



# DESIRED EXPERIENCE AND COMPETENCIES

OBCA seeks an ED with extensive leadership experience in youth development, outdoor experiential education, and nonprofit organizations or other business requiring executive skills and effective leadership, including in a managerial position with P&L responsibility.

It is essential that the ED demonstrate a passion for OBCA's mission and the ability to communicate a strong belief and understanding of the impact of OBCA programs. Experience holding significant organizational responsibilities with a track record as a responsible, ethical, and effective leader is key. Executive leadership experience with an outdoor experiential education organization is highly desirable. Prior experience with Outward Bound, such as taking a course or working within the Outward Bound network, is a positive.

A demonstrated track record of success and aptitude for fundraising from individuals and institutional funders is required. The ED must be able to work effectively in complex, multi-stakeholder situations and demonstrate the ability to develop and maintain networks of partners, constituents, and funders for the benefit of an organization or program.

Experience leading an organization with increasingly complex operations while maintaining program quality and safety is essential. This includes holding accountability for physical risk management and safety for an organization or significant program similar to OBCA's scale and program operations.

The ED must be able to build, lead, develop, and retain a diverse staff team and maintain a focus on organizational culture and camaraderie. The ED must also demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as a personal core value and bring lived experience and a track record of creating positive organizational change in this area.



## Leadership and Vision

- ✦ Passionate about OBCA's mission and vision and able to communicate both aspects with clarity and authenticity
- ✦ Respectful of OBCA's history and fundamentals that contribute to successful programs while providing the vision and innovation needed for the future
- ✦ Knowledge and creativity to identify new opportunities to expand or improve OBCA's services and funding in all program areas
- ✦ Experience as an effective fundraiser and the ability to manage a strong fundraising team and board fundraising activities
- ✦ Demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as a value, programming cornerstone, and organizational priority
- ✦ Demonstrated track record of inspiring, mentoring, developing, and retaining talented, high-quality staff



## Management Competencies

- ✦ A decisive leader able to listen, ask questions, and make clear decisions, often with limited or imperfect information
- ✦ Energetic and resourceful with an entrepreneurial approach and innate curiosity
- ✦ Demonstrated strong leadership, people management, and motivational ability
- ✦ Ability to collaborate and develop consensus among multiple stakeholders, including staff, board, funders, volunteers, partners, and government agencies
- ✦ Comfortable and effective working in a group environment requiring team building, flexible multi-tasking, and careful time and expense management
- ✦ An aptitude for or experience in an organization or business that includes elements of high physical risk management and safety considerations
- ✦ Excellent oral and written communication skills as well as a passionate and persuasive storytelling capability



## Interpersonal Skills

- ✦ Empathetic, diplomatic, and inclusive of various perspectives; able to resolve conflicts and find common ground
- ✦ Culturally competent, with an appreciation of and high comfort level working with a wide array of individuals and communities
- ✦ Confident presence and comfort with being the face of the organization at a range of positive, pivotal, and challenging times
- ✦ Able to deeply listen to and acknowledge various viewpoints and support their engagement, while also maintaining a strong sense of vision and strategic direction
- ✦ High ethics, integrity, and connection to OBCA's values and their personal values
- ✦ Adaptable and flexible in the face of changing conditions; tolerance for adversity and uncertainty





## Compensation

Competitive compensation and a comprehensive benefits package will be provided commensurate with experience. The expected salary range for this position is \$185,000—\$225,000.

## Location

The Executive Director will work remotely from the greater San Francisco Bay Area. Regular travel to OBCA basecamps, program sites, and administrative meetings will be required, especially during program seasons. Due to the nature of OBCA programming, occasional night and weekend work may be required.

## To Apply

Interested candidates should apply by June 12, 2024, for priority consideration. Visit: <https://potrerogroup.com/OBCA>. Applications must include a resume and completion of all OBCA application questions via the application page.

## Start Date

Late Summer / Early Fall 2024



## Additional Information

More information on OBCA can be found at:

<https://outwardboundcalifornia.org/>

**For additional information regarding this opportunity, please contact:**

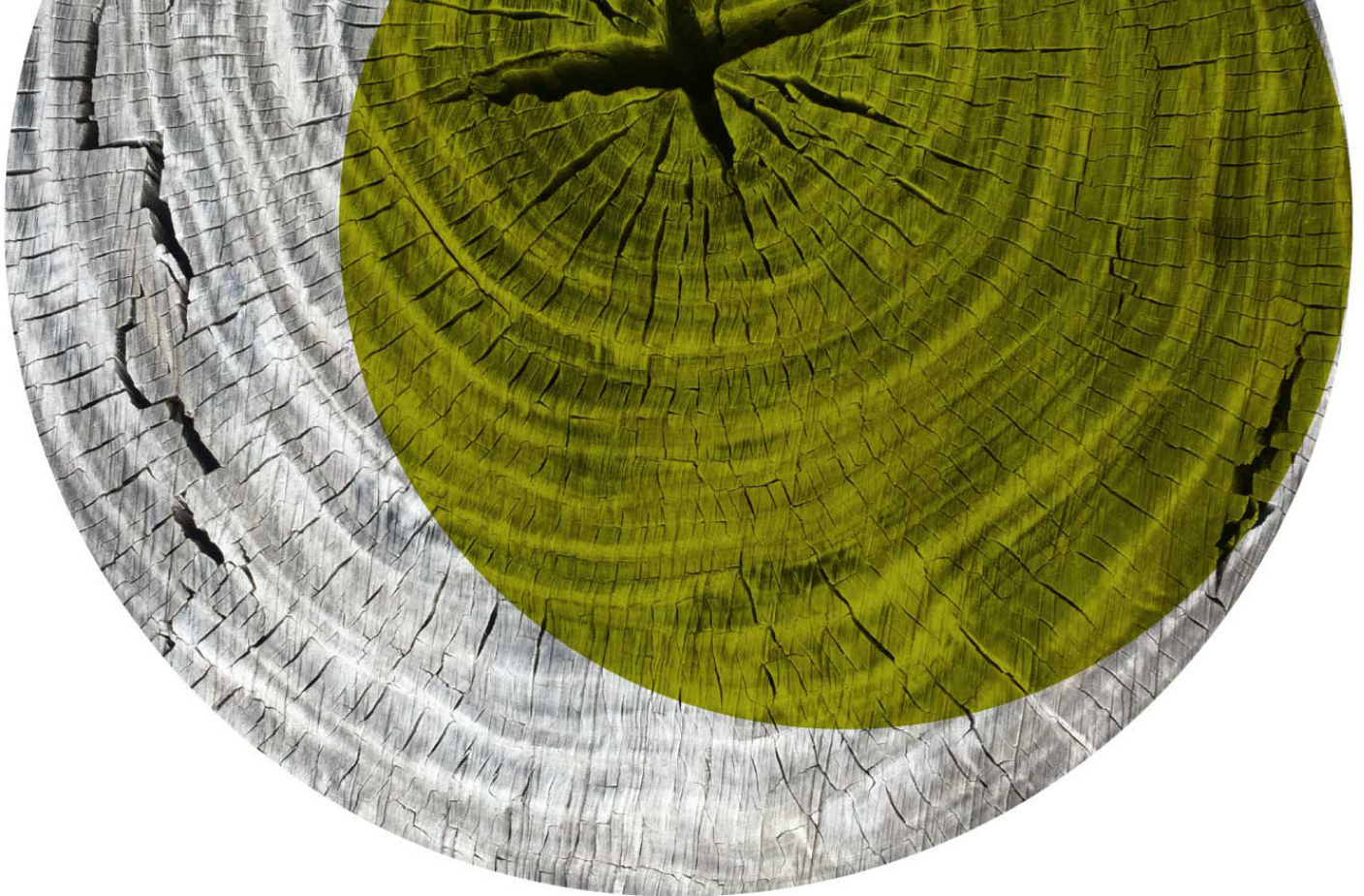
**Andrew Leider**

Managing Director, Operations and  
OBCA Search Lead, Potrero Group  
aleider@potrergroup.com



### Equity and Inclusion Statement

We believe that all people should have safe access to the outdoors and culturally relevant and responsive educational programming. OBCA is also striving to create an equitable and inclusive internal culture where all staff members feel represented and honored for their identities and lived experiences. We examine how power, bias, race, and other aspects of identity impact our organization. We work to build a culture where we are always learning and improving toward a vision for equity and belonging for all staff. We are looking for team members who can actively join us in this process. We are also committed to reflecting the diverse communities with whom we work and strongly encourage people of color, those identifying as LGBTQ+, and women to apply.



Potrero Group is honored to coordinate this search on behalf of Outward Bound California. Supporting a world-class education organization is in perfect alignment with Potrero Group’s commitment to providing rigorous strategy and business planning, organizational effectiveness, and nuanced search services to “mission-driven organizations.

Potrero Group supports innovative leaders and organizations making a difference in the world. We are committed to equitable and inclusive practices in all of our work.

To join our mailing list and be notified of future opportunities, please visit

**[PotreroGroup.com](http://PotreroGroup.com)**