



The Land Trust
FOR SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Search Conducted By



Communications & Engagement Director

The Land Trust for Santa Barbara County seeks a Communications & Engagement Director to inspire and connect the public, partners, and stakeholders to discover and champion land conservation across one of California's most distinctive and diverse landscapes.



All images courtesy of Land Trust for Santa Barbara County

Organization Overview

Founded in 1985, the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County has spent four decades working alongside landowners, public agencies, and community partners to permanently protect the open spaces, productive agricultural lands, wildlife habitat, and watersheds that define this remarkable landscape. To date, the Land Trust has conserved more than 58,000 acres, including signature places like Arroyo Hondo Preserve, the Carpinteria Bluffs, and lands stretching across the Gaviota Coast. The organization is led by a committed 17-member board and a talented staff of 26, who manage an annual budget of approximately \$21M in fiscal year 2026–2027. The Land Trust is nationally accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, reflecting its long record of professional excellence and ethical practice.

The Land Trust's vision is a future where conserved lands throughout Santa Barbara County nourish human, plant, and animal life, where local food systems are valued, where wildlife thrives, and where trails and open spaces are genuinely accessible to everyone who calls this area home. The organization is actively evolving from its grassroots history into a more sophisticated organization working at scale, with growing ambitions for strategic marketing, communications, community engagement, partnership development, and long-term financial sustainability. The communities of Santa Barbara County, from the agricultural valleys of the north to the coastal cities of the south, are the Land Trust's constituency, and the organization is committed to reflecting and serving all of them.



Position Overview

The Land Trust for Santa Barbara County is entering an exciting new chapter. The organization has built a strong foundation and deep roots in the community, and is now ready to grow its visibility, broaden its base of supporters, and deepen its connection to communities across the county. The Communications & Engagement Director is a new senior leadership role created to bring strategic vision and creative energy to this moment in time. Its purpose is to compellingly tell the Land Trust's story, build authentic relationships countywide, and drive the kind of broad public engagement, understanding, and momentum that sustains a conservation organization for the long term.

Reporting to the Executive Director, this position oversees the communications, marketing, and community engagement team and is responsible for developing, overseeing, and implementing strategic messaging and brand engagement. The Director will be an important thought partner to the Executive Director, working on coordinating strategy and engagement. They will also be a close collaborator with the Director of Development, working to ensure that communications and marketing amplify and support the organization's fundraising work. This position is a member of the senior leadership team.

This is a role for someone who is equally comfortable shaping strategy and rolling up their sleeves to execute it. The Director is a creative implementor with high standards for design and storytelling, a genuine curiosity about the communities and landscapes of Santa Barbara County, and the drive to build something meaningful.

Responsibilities



Strategic Leadership

- Develop and implement annual marketing, strategic messaging, organizational brand engagement campaigns, and community engagement activities aligned with organizational mission and goals.
- Lead annual planning and execution of grassroots fundraising and awareness building campaigns, community events, and partnership initiatives with clear metrics and revenue targets.
- Monitor industry trends and best practices in conservation communications and community engagement, both analog and digital.
- Track performance metrics, analyze results, and adjust communications strategies based on data.
- Oversee the community engagement and program teams as well as manage all digital communications systems and channels.
- Foster a collaborative, inclusive team culture by mentoring and developing staff.
- Serve as the staff lead for a topically relevant board committee.



Marketing & Communications

- Own and grow the Land Trust's brand, narrative, and storytelling, ensuring consistent and engaging messaging across all print and digital channels, including website, social media, e-newsletters, brochures, and annual reports.
- Develop visually clever, smart, and sophisticated content across all channels, with a high bar for design quality.
- Oversee digital marketing strategy and execution, including website optimization, social media, email campaigns, digital advertising, and analytics.
- Lead public relations efforts, serving as the primary media liaison and overseeing media outreach across print, digital, and broadcast.
- Work with a branding consultant to further develop and refine organizational brand identity and integrate this across the communication framework.



Community Engagement & Outreach

- Oversee and refine an authentic, countywide community engagement strategy that activates and reflects the diverse communities of Santa Barbara County.
- Design and execute community events that attract new supporters and build on existing relationships, deepen connection and understanding of land and conservation, and help the organization grow its base of supporters.
- Develop and execute programs that build community and add value to the Land Trust's conservation and stewardship programs.



Revenue Generation & Partnerships

- Support revenue growth through integrated digital and analog campaigns, events, sponsorships, and partnership development.
- Identify, cultivate, and steward corporate and community sponsorships that help grow the Land Trust's donor base.
- Support building and maintaining strong relationships with county businesses, community organizations, civic leaders, agricultural constituents, and other nonprofits.
- Work collaboratively with the Executive Director and Director of Development to align partnerships and sponsorships with broader fundraising priorities.

A photograph of a herd of horses and a bull grazing on a grassy hillside. The horses are in various shades of brown, tan, and white. A bull with large horns is in the foreground. The background shows a clear blue sky and some trees on the hillside.

Desired Experience, Competencies, and Attributes

The Land Trust for Santa Barbara County seeks a creative, entrepreneurial leader who brings both vision and discipline to the work of modern messaging, marketing, and community engagement. The ideal candidate has a high bar for quality and a real appetite for building and owning a function that matters to the organization's future.

The Land Trust needs someone who can work fluidly between strategy and execution and who brings the cultural fluency and genuine curiosity needed to engage authentically across diverse communities. They understand the technical infrastructure necessary to run both digital and analog campaigns, and can create and manage workflows efficiently across systems. They are a skilled and supportive manager who brings out the best in the people they lead, a natural collaborator who earns trust across teams and with external partners, and a creative thinker who approaches problems with imagination, good humor, and systems thinking. Experience in conservation, land use, or the agricultural world is a plus, but what matters most is the ability to learn the language of this work quickly and use it to connect people to a mission worth caring about.

Experience

- Significant, progressive leadership experience in growth marketing, consumer communications, and community engagement, with experience in a management or leadership role, preferably within the nonprofit sector.
- Proven track record in building and scaling communications and marketing functions and systems, ideally from a grassroots or growing organization.
- Demonstrated success in building, leading, and mentoring teams.
- Proven ability to develop and execute integrated marketing and communications strategies across digital, social, email, print, and earned media channels.
- Experience managing organizational brand, website, social media, and email platforms with proficiency in digital marketing tools, analytics, and CRM systems.
- Experience with media relations and a track record of securing meaningful earned media coverage.
- Demonstrated experience designing and leading community engagement programs for diverse audiences, including agricultural communities, youth, and underserved populations.
- Track record of building authentic partnerships with community organizations, nonprofits, and businesses.
- Experience with community organizing or constituency building for public benefit purposes.

Competencies

- Strategic thinker with the ability to translate organizational vision into actionable, community-based strategies.
- Exceptional storytelling skills—written, verbal, and visual—with the ability to craft compelling narratives that inspire action among diverse audiences.
- Persuasive public speaker and natural collaborator who builds authentic relationships with diverse communities and partners.
- High visual standard and design sensibility, with an appreciation for clean, smart, polished content.
- Demonstrated experience with graphics and visual communication styles across various digital platforms like social, email and web.
- Understanding of and hands-on experience with CRM database, email marketing, and website and social media platforms is necessary.
- Cultural competency and a genuine commitment to working across difference.
- Familiarity with Santa Barbara County's communities, agricultural landscape, conservation context, and diverse neighborhoods and cultural landscape a plus.
- Able to manage multiple projects simultaneously and balance a varied and shifting workload.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office, Google Suite, Constant Contact, and social media platforms including Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn; familiarity with design tools such as Canva or Adobe Creative Suite a plus.

Attributes

- Passion for land conservation, open space, working lands, and connecting people to nature and place.
- Commitment to the Land Trust's mission of permanently protecting the lands and waters of Santa Barbara County.
- Deep commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and environmental justice.
- Adaptable and resilient in a dynamic, mission-driven environment.
- Self-motivated, proactive, entrepreneurial team member who takes ownership and accountability for their time, work, and collaboration.
- Willingness to work in both strategic and hands-on capacities as a member of a small team.



Compensation

This is a full-time, exempt, benefit-eligible position. The anticipated annual salary range for this position is \$145,000–\$180,000. The range provided is an estimate and will be evaluated on an individual basis, taking into consideration the candidate’s knowledge, skills, abilities, experience, and education.

Location

The Land Trust for Santa Barbara County is based in new offices in central Santa Barbara, CA. The Communications & Engagement Director must be based in Santa Barbara County, with regular travel throughout the county.

The position requires regular in-person presence for events and meetings with partners, donors, and community constituents throughout the region, including evening and weekend events and activities as needed.

Start Date

Fall 2026

To Apply

Please visit potrerogroup.com/santabarbara and select “Apply Here.” Applications should include a resume and a cover letter describing your qualifications that match the position criteria and what you will bring to the role. The position is open until filled.



Additional Information

More information on the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County can be found at sblandtrust.org

For additional information regarding this opportunity, please contact:

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Land Trust for Santa Barbara County is an Equal Opportunity Employer

The Land Trust for Santa Barbara County is an equal opportunity employer. Employment decisions are made without regard to race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, protected veteran status, or other characteristics protected by law.



Potrero Group is honored to coordinate this search on behalf of Land Trust for Santa Barbara County. We support innovative leaders and organizations making a difference in the world with strategic planning, facilitation, organizational development, and board and executive search services. We are committed to equitable and inclusive practices in all of our work.

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