

## Executive Director – Mather Homestead Foundation

**Position Description:** The Mather Homestead Foundation seeks an Executive Director with a passion for history and education and relevant professional experience to lead the next chapter of our growth as a premier museum and education center of national significance.

**Location:** Darien, Connecticut



## History and Governance of the Mather Homestead Foundation

### History:

The Mather Homestead was built in 1778 by Deacon Joseph Mather during the Revolutionary War and has been meticulously preserved for over two centuries. The property, originally a 100-acre family farm, served as a safe house and was raided by Tories in 1781. The Homestead is renowned for its architectural significance and its association with Stephen Tyng Mather, the first Director of the National Park Service and a pivotal figure in American conservation. After passing through seven generations of the Mather family, the property was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1964 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1966. In 2017, the Mather-McPherson family donated the historic home and property to the newly established Mather Homestead Foundation, ensuring its preservation and operation as a museum and educational center for the public. Eight years after its founding, the Mather Homestead Foundation is a well-loved and young organization with a strong foundation for future growth.

## **Governance:**

The Mather Homestead Foundation is a nonprofit organization overseen by a volunteer Board of Directors. The Board is responsible for the strategic direction, fiduciary oversight, and governance of the Foundation. Board members serve without compensation and include a Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, and multiple directors who chair and serve on various committees. The Executive Director reports directly to the Board and is responsible for day-to-day operations, staff supervision, and the execution of the Foundation's mission and strategic goals. The Foundation is supported by a small staff and numerous volunteers and relies on contributions, grants, and fundraising events to sustain its programming and preservation initiatives.

## **Mission of the Mather Homestead Foundation**

The Mather Homestead Foundation is dedicated to the preservation of the Mather Homestead, established in 1778 and home to seven generations of Mather descendants, as a treasured place for historical education and enjoyment. The Foundation raises awareness of the Homestead's unique history, dating back to the Revolutionary War, and Stephen Tyng Mather's legacy as an important conservationist and founder of the National Park Service.

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## **Position Overview**

The Executive Director (ED) is the chief executive of the Mather Homestead Foundation, responsible for advancing its mission through dynamic leadership, strategic vision, and operational excellence. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the ED oversees all aspects of the Foundation's operations, including fundraising, programming, collections stewardship, community engagement, and staff management. The ED will build upon a strong organizational foundation and further position the Mather Homestead as a premier historic and educational resource of national significance.

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## **Key Responsibilities**

### **Leadership & Strategic Planning**

- Collaborate with the Board to develop, execute, and evaluate strategic initiatives aligned with the Foundation's mission and vision.
- Foster a collaborative, inclusive, and mission-driven organizational culture.

### **Operations & Staff Management**

- Supervise and coordinate small staff and dozens of volunteers to ensure effective day-to-day operations and exceptional visitor experiences.
- Oversee facilities management, preservation projects, and compliance with relevant policies and regulations.
- Serve as the primary liaison to the Board of Directors, providing regular updates and strategic recommendations.

#### **Development & Fundraising**

- Together with the Development Committee, lead all fundraising activities, including donor cultivation, grant writing, stewardship, and execution of development-oriented events.
- Oversee the planning and delivery of core fundraising and community events, such as historical lectures, the Garden Tea, The Fall Harvest Festival, and others.
- Manage donor recognition and partnership initiatives.

#### **Program & Event Management**

- Develop, coordinate, and execute a robust calendar of educational and public programs for all ages, including house tours, lectures, reenactments, and children's programming.
- Expand outreach to schools, community groups, and partner organizations to increase engagement and impact.
- Work with educators and historians to develop programs that connect the Homestead's story to broader themes in American history and conservation.

#### **Collections & Preservation**

- Oversee the stewardship, preservation, and interpretation of the historic house, property, and collections, ensuring best practices in collections care and exhibit curation.
- Implement recommendations from recent assessments to enhance collection accessibility and preservation.

#### **Communications & Community Engagement**

- Serve as the public face of the Foundation, representing the organization to donors, partners, media, and the broader community.
- Manage communications, including newsletters, social media, and public relations to grow the Foundation's audience and impact.
- Build and sustain relationships with local, regional, and national partners.

#### **Financial Management**

- Develop and manage the annual budget in collaboration with the Board Treasurer.
  - Ensure responsible financial stewardship, reporting, and compliance with all regulatory requirements.
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## Qualifications

- Passion for history and education.
- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree in management, museum studies, history, education, or related field preferred.
- Proven success in nonprofit leadership, preferably in a museum, historic site, or educational organization.
- Demonstrated experience in fundraising, donor relations, and grant writing.
- Strong executive functioning, organizational, and communication skills.
- Experience with collections management and exhibit curation.
- Strategic thinker with entrepreneurial drive and self-motivation.
- Ability to work collaboratively with staff, volunteers, Board, and diverse stakeholders.
- Proficiency with digital communication platforms and social media.

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## Desired Personal Traits

- Entrepreneurial and self-motivated
- Strong people skills and ability to inspire others
- Collaborative and team-oriented
- Enthusiastic, creative, and adaptable
- Commitment to the mission and values of the Mather Homestead Foundation

## Compensation

- \$70,000- \$80,000 annual salary depending on experience
- Flexible hours, some nights and weekends

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### To Apply:

Please submit a cover letter and resume to the Mather Homestead Foundation Board of Directors at [matherapplications@gmail.com](mailto:matherapplications@gmail.com) by Wednesday, July 16, 2025. Please direct any inquiries to the same email address.

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*The Mather Homestead Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and encourages candidates of all backgrounds to apply.*