

## **West Center CEO Job Description**

### **West Business Development Center CEO**

**Location:** Mendocino County, CA

#### **POSITION SUMMARY**

West Business Development Center (West Center) is seeking a dynamic CEO to guide the organization into a new era of impactful leadership. This role offers a unique opportunity to champion rural economic development, foster investment in underserved areas, and drive small business growth through innovative technical assistance and collaborative relationships in rural Northern California. The CEO will be a highly visible leader and prominent advocate, building and nurturing partnerships across local, regional, state, and national levels to elevate the organization's profile and extend its influence in driving sustainable economic growth.

Reporting directly to the Board of Directors, the CEO will oversee the strategic and operational aspects of West Center, supervising direct reports and leading a dedicated team. The ideal candidate will embody West Center's core values of inclusiveness, optimism, respect, collaboration, and integrity. They will possess a collaborative and strategic mindset, guiding the organization with a balance of visionary leadership and hands-on operational management. This role requires a strong commitment to advancing economic equity, empowering diverse business communities, and positioning West Center as a leader in rural, climate-forward economic development.

#### **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### **Leadership and Strategic Vision**

- Provide innovative and inspired leadership reflective of West Center's mission, vision and core values.
- Implement the organization's recently developed strategic plan to achieve established goals and objectives.
- Recruit, support, and challenge a highly skilled team, delegating responsibilities appropriately; foster open communication; and promote a collaborative and transparent culture where staff are engaged, productive, and thriving.
- Collaborate closely with the board of directors to set strategic goals and ensure alignment with the organization's mission. Assist in the growth of the board to include regional and inclusive representation.

##### **Funding & Communications**

- Cultivate relationships with private foundations, corporate donors, individuals, and public grantors.
- Proactively seek opportunities to enhance the organization's financial position and diversify funding streams.
- Lead donor fundraising initiatives, including annual appeals, individual giving and major gifts.
- Partner in the research, identification and development of government, corporate and foundation grants.
- Enhance organization's visibility through effective communications and relationship-building.

##### **Community & Policy Engagement**

- Innovate and champion ways to support small business growth and economic development in the region.

- Represent the organization at local, regional, state and national levels.
- Build and maintain strategic public/private partnerships and alliances through diverse stakeholder engagement.
- Monitor legislation impacting California and the small business and economic development sectors.

### **Fiscal Oversight**

- Develop and manage the annual organizational budget.
- Ensure fiscal responsibility and that robust financial policies and guidelines are in place.
- Allocate resources effectively to meet both current and future needs and to achieve excellent, impactful organizational outcomes.
- Provide the board with regular updates on the financial status of the organization.

### **SKILLS & EXPERIENCE**

- Executive leadership experience, preferably in an economic development agency or nonprofit setting.
- Understanding of the changing dynamics of the business and economic development environments and opportunities in the region.
- Knowledge of, and experience working in, rural communities preferred.
- Proven success in driving organizational growth and implementing strategic, innovative, data-driven programs and initiatives.
- Strong decision-making, negotiating and problem-solving skills.
- Experience working with and reporting to a board at a strategic level.
- Proven ability to manage complexity within organizations and engage with diverse stakeholders.
- Demonstrated record of building and maintaining public/private partnerships.
- Strong computer skills to navigate a primarily virtual, cloud-based work environment.
- Demonstrated success in raising funds using diverse funding strategies.
- Strong experience with grant writing and management.
- Sound financial knowledge, including fund accounting.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Management expertise in building, leading, developing and coaching high performance staff.
- Valid driver's license and safe driving record.

### **POSITION REQUIREMENTS**

- **Travel:** Must be able to travel as necessary for the role. This will include local, regional, state and national travel as required.
- **Prolonged Computer Use:** The position involves sitting at a computer for extended periods of time to complete essential job functions.

### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMITMENT**

West Business Development Center is committed to creating a diverse environment and is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law. We adhere to the principles of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and California labor laws, striving to provide a fair and inclusive workplace.

## **ABOUT WEST CENTER**

West Center envisions a thriving, sustainable rural economy and a high quality of life for all residents. Our mission is to advance rural economic prosperity by partnering with entrepreneurs and communities to drive business success and growth.

For 36 years, West Center has delivered technical assistance to entrepreneurs throughout Northern California. Our mission is to advance rural economic prosperity by partnering with entrepreneurs and community organizations to drive rural business success and growth. We host both the Mendocino Women's Business Center (WBC) and Mendocino Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and are engaged in numerous regional activities and state and federal partnerships that promote economic innovation and development. Our demonstrated success is based on years of serving thousands of small businesses annually through a combination of no-cost professional counseling and training, underpinned by our mission to spur growth within the diverse industries of our region. Our expertise in facilitating business development across all stages – from startup to expansion and innovation – is unparalleled.

We are poised to make a significant impact on our region through the acceleration of blue economy and working lands enterprises. As a Sector Investment Coordinator for the California Jobs First Initiative, we recently developed a regional blue economy sector report which outlines economic strategies to bolster the economy through transformational projects and diverse funding strategies. By fostering essential public-private partnerships to emerging entrepreneurs and accelerating the expansion of existing businesses within the rural redwood region, we are outlining ways to create a fertile ground for business success, driving economic development and enhancing the quality of life in our rural region.