

Job Opening  
Executive Director  
Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life  
New York, NY  
First posted: April 29, 2008

Background

In 1992, a group of distinguished Jewish luminaries, including lay leaders, religious scholars, and members of the clergy, joined together to create the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL), an organization that brought a Jewish voice to the environmental debate, and has worked to engage and mobilize the Jewish community to embrace practices and promote policies that will assure a sustainable future.

Since its inception, COEJL has embarked on a range of successful environmental programs and initiatives, including: several national issue campaigns designed to promote awareness and engagement; the launch of a website with relevant content and links; a Greening Synagogues program to promote best practices relative to congregational operations and management; the establishment of a Washington, DC office to advocate on Capital Hill on behalf of the Jewish community's environmental interests; the publication of environmental study guides and curricula for distribution to Jewish schools and congregations; and an annual Environmental Leadership Institute featuring speakers such as Vice President Al Gore and Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt.

COEJL was at the beginning of what has become a groundswell of Jewish environmental activism, with more than half a dozen Jewish national organizations springing up in the last few years. In light of such changing external as well as internal dynamics, COEJL temporarily reduced its staffing and program activity while it pursued a strategic planning process to articulate its role and mission going forward. COEJL is now looking for a visionary Executive Director to lead this organization in this new era.

Fiscally sponsored by the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA), COEJL has been governed by its own independent advisory board. Current staffing consists of two full-time employees who, during this period of transition, report to a contact at the JCPA. The position of Executive Director for COEJL has been intentionally left vacant until the strategic planning process neared completion.

The strategic plan recommends that: COEJL seek and attain independent 501(c)(3) status; make changes/additions to its current board as it moves into a traditional fiduciary role; and increase the size of the staff in light of reinvigorated programming activity and accompanying fundraising needs. The strategic plan calls for COEJL to be served by a professional team of five, led by an Executive Director, with annual operating budgets in the \$500K to \$600K range.

Responsibilities

As COEJL's chief professional officer, the Executive is expected to provide leadership in identifying and carrying out programmatic, policy, and advocacy initiatives that advance its mission, and is responsible for overall organizational management. The COEJL Executive will report to the JCPA executive director until the planned transition to 501(c)(3) status is complete.

Following the transition, he or she will officially be named Executive Director and will report to COEJL's newly-formed board of directors. The Executive Director will:

- implement the specifics of the strategic plan, including overseeing the process to secure 501(c)(3) status, recruiting additional staff, and strengthening the composition of the board of directors;
- foster and lead a collaborative working relationship with the board, staff, and stakeholders relative to program development, mission, and vision;
- identify new programming opportunities that advance COEJL's mission, and develop plans for funding and implementation;
- conduct regular reviews of existing programs to make certain objectives are being met, to determine if the program is to be continued, and, if it is to be continued, what changes might be warranted to improve its execution;
- maintain and expand COEJL's productive relationships with appropriate professional partners such as the Jewish Council for Public Affairs and the National Religious Partnership for the Environment;
- serve as the primary spokesperson for COEJL, increasing the visibility of its program and policy agenda, and representing the organization at Jewish communal and environmental organization gatherings;
- oversee all financial functions of the organization in the interest of maintaining and enhancing COEJL's long-term fiscal viability;
- supervise and actively participate in all fundraising activities, involving both funding organizations and individual donors, to further expand COEJL's funding base;
- monitor the effectiveness of COEJL's organizational structure, implementing changes as necessary; and
- supervise the staff, conducting regular reviews of job performance.

The Executive Director is expected to be far more than COEJL's chief administrative officer. The position requires the talents and abilities of an individual who can guide and shape a Jewish environmental agenda in the interest of affecting policy, belief, and behavior.

#### Qualifications/Job Requirements

The ideal candidate will possess the traits common to effective nonprofit managers, including strong skills in the areas of:

- leadership;
- financial oversight;

- board engagement;
- team building;
- problem solving;
- organization; and
- communication.

Qualified candidates should also have:

- leadership experience with a national, nonprofit organization of similar size and scope;
- experience in and knowledge of the environmental community as well as the organized Jewish communal world;
- knowledge and understanding of public policy, policy creation and development, advocacy, and lobbying;
- experience in grassroots community organizing, public education, and coalition building;
- fundraising experience, especially in the cultivation and solicitation of foundations and individual donors;
- an ability to interpret and articulate how Jewish law, practice, and values inform and impact relationships with the environment; and
- an undergraduate degree, with a masters degree in a relevant field preferred.

This position will most likely to be based in New York, but an alternate arrangement may be possible. It requires national travel.

#### Compensation

A benefits package and salary commensurate with qualifications and experience will be provided.

#### To Apply

Qualified candidates should send a letter of interest and resume via email as Microsoft Word or PDF attachments to [Liore@coejl.org](mailto:Liore@coejl.org) with “Executive Search” in the subject line.