

Candlelight Ranch
Executive Director
Full-Time • Hybrid (Remote + Onsite at Lake Travis)

Candlelight Ranch is seeking an inspiring and strategic Executive Director to lead our next chapter of growth and impact. This is a unique opportunity to guide a mission centered organization that provides educational nature-based experiences for children, youth, and families to learn, explore, and heal across Central Texas.

As the chief executive leader, the Executive Director strengthens community visibility, cultivates donors and partners, and ensures exceptional program delivery across our 40-acre ranch on the north shores of Lake Travis. This role is ideal for a seasoned nonprofit leader who thrives at the intersection of strategy, fundraising, operations, and community engagement.

About Candlelight Ranch

Candlelight Ranch provides hands-on outdoor experiences for children, youth, families, and partner organizations. Through adventure, learning, and connection with nature, we serve children with disabilities, youth in foster care, military families, and others who benefit from supportive, experiential programming. Our work is rooted in compassion, inclusion, and the belief that time in nature can transform lives.

About the Role

The Executive Director leads Candlelight Ranch in partnership with the Board of Directors, providing vision, operational oversight, and external leadership. This position oversees fundraising, community relations, financial management, programs, HR, and ranch stewardship. The Executive Director supervises the Deputy Director, Development Director, and Ranch Manager and serves as the primary liaison among staff, the Board, and the broader community.

Key Leadership Responsibilities

Community Relations & External Engagement

- Serve as the public face of Candlelight Ranch.
- Lead communication strategies across media, PR, social platforms, and the annual report.
- Strengthen community partnerships and elevate visibility.
- Share program impact with dignity and authenticity.

Fundraising & Development

- Drive annual and long-term fundraising strategies.
- Cultivate donors, foundations, and corporate partners.
- Lead major gifts, grants, planned giving, and special events.
- Ensure donor recognition and accurate gift management.

Board Partnership & Governance

- Maintain strong communication with the Board.
- Support Board recruitment, training, and committee engagement.
- Prepare materials and strategic updates for Board meetings.

Impact, Planning & Evaluation

- Lead annual planning and organizational evaluation.
- Advance Vision 2030 by aligning programs and staffing.
- Build partner relationships and lead the annual Impact Report.

Finance, Operations & HR

- Provide strategic financial leadership and budget oversight.

- Oversee audits, IRS Form 990, and financial reporting.
- Ensure operational excellence, risk management, and compliance.
- Partner with the Deputy Director to support HR and organizational culture.

Ranch Stewardship

- Ensure safety and sustainability of ranch property.
- Collaborate on capital improvements and long-term goals.
- Maintain compliance with conservation and wildlife requirements.

Key Attributes

The ideal candidate is mission-centered, emotionally intelligent, and grounded in values aligned leadership. They communicate with authenticity, build strong relationships, and navigate complexity with steadiness and optimism. They bring strategic insight, operational discipline, and a commitment to staff wellbeing and organizational excellence.

Mission & Community

- Deep commitment to improving the lives of children and families through nature-based programming.
- Ability to cultivate meaningful relationships across staff, Board, donors, partners, and the community.

Communication & Presence

- Exceptional communication skills, including public speaking and storytelling.
- Ability to articulate decisions with clarity and transparency.
- High emotional intelligence and the ability to foster trust.

Leadership & Management

- Strategic thinker aligned with Vision 2030.
- Proven fundraising and donor engagement experience.
- Broad operational expertise across governance, programs, communications, finance, HR, and facilities.
- Skilled people manager who leads with compassion and accountability.
- Strong financial acumen and comfort with budgets and compliance.

Relational Attributes

- Adaptability, resilience, and integrity.
- People-centered leadership that prioritizes team cohesion and psychological safety.
- Warm decisiveness and the ability to set boundaries.

What You Bring

Training & Experience

- Master's degree preferred.
- 7+ years of nonprofit experience.
- 3+ years of leadership experience.
- Success in fundraising, planning, operations, and governance.

Knowledge & Skills

- Proven fundraising and donor cultivation skills.
- Strong understanding of nonprofit operations.
- Excellent communication and relationship-building abilities.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office, CRM systems, GSuite, and basic accounting.
- Appreciation for the Texas Hill Country.

Compensation & Benefits

- Salary: \$90,000–\$95,000, commensurate with experience
- Health stipend
- Cell phone stipend
- Mileage reimbursement
- Simple IRA with employer match
- Flexible schedule
- Ample paid time off

Working Conditions

This hybrid role blends remote work, community engagement, and onsite leadership at the Ranch. Candidates must be comfortable working outdoors and navigating a 40-acre property. Regular travel across Central Texas is required.

- Hybrid role with remote, community, and onsite work
- Must be comfortable driving throughout Central Texas for meetings, events, and partner engagement
- Flexible schedule with some evenings and weekends
- Ability to obtain Level 1 high ropes certification
- Ability to lift 50 pounds and navigate ranch terrain

To Apply

Please send a one-page cover letter and resume to jobs@candlelightranch.org by **February 13, 2026**.