



Adirondack North Country Association
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Adirondack North Country Association

Executive Director: Job Description

The Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) seeks a visionary Executive Director to lead our rural economic development organization as we build shared prosperity across 14 counties located within and around New York's Adirondack Park. ANCA's work focuses on creating and sustaining local wealth and improving quality of life through its core program areas — Climate and Energy, Local Food Systems, Small Businesses, Welcoming and Belonging, and Organizational Excellence, as articulated in the 2026–2028 strategic plan, Building Shared Prosperity.

About the Position:

ANCA's Executive Director leads a staff of nearly 20 in implementing the 2026–2028 strategic plan with ambitious, measurable goals across the organization. This position carries responsibility in three key areas: leadership and management; fundraising and communications; and strategy and planning. The Executive Director is a passionate advocate for North Country communities and economies with regional, state and federal bodies as well as member stakeholders. ANCA is, fundamentally, a service organization that works in close partnership with other nonprofits; the Executive Director must see ANCA in that collaborative, hub-building role as it serves a large and dispersed region across northern New York.

Fundraising and external relationship-building are among the most urgent priorities for the incoming ED. ANCA currently operates without a dedicated development staff position, which means the ED must arrive with the credibility, relationships, and strategic instincts to build upon a sustainable funding base — and the organizational vision to keep growing the development capacity the organization needs. The ED must be able to lead fundraising across individual major donors, foundations, and government sources, with the ability to engage and expand all three.

ANCA has a high-functioning, close-knit staff driven by our mission and values. We seek a leader who combines visionary strategic thinking with genuine respect for staff expertise and autonomy. The next ED will be a listener before they are a director — someone who earns trust by understanding the work deeply before reshaping it. This position reports to ANCA's Board of Directors and is based in ANCA's main office in Saranac Lake, NY.

Ideal Candidate:

The ideal candidate brings a compelling external voice to the organization — a communicator and storyteller who can translate ANCA's multi-pillar work into a coherent regional narrative that earns trust from donors, elected officials, partners, and the press. They approach the ED role as a unifier and motivator, someone who gives voice to the work of the staff rather than directing it from above.

Critically, this candidate understands that ANCA's five program pillars each exist with real operational autonomy and are led by subject-matter experts on staff. Deep technical expertise in any single pillar is not a requirement at the ED level; what matters is the discipline to listen closely to staff, diagnose what each program area needs, and strategically represent those needs credibly and compellingly to funders and partners.

Strong candidates have proven experience managing multi-program nonprofit organizations, ideally with budgets of \$1M or more, and a track record of engaging donors, foundations, and government agencies in funding program activities. Familiarity with the Adirondack and North Country region is essential, both for the ED's credibility with regional partners and for their ability to genuinely understand the communities ANCA serves.

This person must be a persuasive and passionate communicator and a good listener with excellent interpersonal and multidisciplinary project skills. They are passionate about creating an economy that works for everyone — not just the few — and have substantive experience addressing the economic challenges facing minoritized and underserved populations.

About ANCA:

Founded in 1955, ANCA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation with a transformational approach to building prosperity across northern New York. With community-informed, boots-on-the-ground strategies, we seek to create and sustain wealth and value in local communities.

Our work is distinguished by its results-driven focus, creating an inflow of resources, high-impact ideas, investments in infrastructure and greater economic diversity. We measure results and adapt as we scale up programs. We find and leverage the resources to implement broad system changes that will result in long-term impact. We explore, build, learn, adapt and expand our proven programming throughout the region.

Advocating for our region is central to the success of our work. Over the past five years, ANCA has been able to secure and leverage over \$65M in financial resources for local businesses and communities, creating over 150 jobs, supporting 3,400 jobs, impacting 195 communities and engaging 25 school districts. Our programs have influenced New York State's clean energy and farm to school policies.

As ANCA has expanded its staff and impact over the past decade, we have developed an organizational culture that has proved successful in helping attract and retain high-performing staff. Our culture places a high value on collaboration and a range of viewpoints, accommodation of remote work and flexible schedules, and continuous assessment of how ANCA impacts both regional visitors and community residents alike. This culture — including the workplace flexibility that allows ANCA to employ and retain exceptional people who might not thrive under more rigid arrangements — is a core organizational asset. The next Executive Director must understand, respect, and actively protect it, while promoting accountability and productivity within that framework.

Intentional Action & Leadership:

In a resolution adopted in 2020, ANCA's Board of Directors holds the organization accountable for building a community of staff, board members, advisors, donors, interns, volunteers and partners that demonstrates a strong commitment to "A North Country for All."

We define human diversity as differences in race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical and/or mental capabilities, and religious beliefs. We define equity as providing fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement for all people, eliminating barriers that have prevented the full participation of all groups. We define inclusion as creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued to participate fully.

See www.adirondack.org for more information.

About the North Country:

The Adirondack North Country is one of New York's most rural and dramatically beautiful places. This region is native land to three of the five original nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy — the Mohawk, Oneida and Onondaga Nations. The 14 counties served by ANCA encompass 38 percent of New York's geography, home to 1.26 million people living in 255 small towns, 14 small cities and rural hamlets and three sovereign nations.

The North Country benefits the whole northeast as a renewable energy exporter, as a major food producer, and for its long-term success in sustaining wild places and rural quality of life. ANCA has positioned itself at the forefront of ensuring that BIPOC New Yorkers have equal access to and the support needed to capitalize on emerging economies across the region.

Duties & Responsibilities:

ANCA's Executive Director drives scale and innovation in the practice of just economic development across the 14-county North Country Region. The heads of each of ANCA's program areas report to the Executive Director, as do the Deputy Director, Communications Director and the Director of Finance and Operations.

Leadership & Management:

- Earn trust with staff through active listening and a diagnostic approach in the first year — understanding the history and culture behind each program before directing changes to it
- Ensure ongoing local programmatic excellence, rigorous program evaluation and consistent quality of finance and administration, fundraising, communications and systems; recommend timelines and resources needed to achieve the strategic goals
- Actively engage and energize ANCA's board members, partnering organizations, supporters, local, state and federal agencies and other stakeholders

- Maintain, enhance and support a strong Board of Directors; serve as ex-officio for Executive & Personnel and Compliance Committees, and as an ex-officio member of the Finance Committee
- Protect and sustain ANCA's flexible, trust-based organizational culture, which is recognized by staff as essential to the organization's ability to attract and retain high-performing people
- Ensure effective systems to track progress and regularly evaluate program metrics to quantify successes and challenges for dissemination to the board, funders and other constituents

Fundraising & Communications:

- Serve as ANCA's primary external voice — a compelling communicator and regional storyteller who can translate the work of five distinct program pillars into a unified organizational narrative
- Lead development strategy across individual major donors, foundations, institutional philanthropy, and government grants and contracts
- Work toward establishing a dedicated development staff position, recognizing this as a critical organizational capacity gap that limits growth and currently pulls program staff away from their primary work
- Work closely with development team staff, including the Deputy Director, Communications Director and Director of Finance and Operations, as well as the Board of Directors Fund Development Committee, to expand revenue generating and fundraising activities to support existing program operations and regional expansion
- Deepen and refine all aspects of communications — from web presence to external relations — with the goal of strengthening constituent engagement and philanthropic support
- Build and sustain relationships with philanthropic and major donor networks, regional community and municipal partners, state and federal government officials, and peer nonprofit organizations

Strategy & Planning:

- Lead implementation of the 2026–2028 strategic plan, Building Shared Prosperity, across all five program pillars: Climate and Energy, Local Food Systems, Small Businesses, Welcoming and Belonging, and Organizational Excellence
- Develop effective strategies to support each program area in achieving its goals, in partnership with program staff who are the subject-matter experts in each pillar
- Work closely with program leadership to develop, articulate, and execute the organization's strategic vision for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging
- Build partnerships in new markets, establishing relationships with relevant funders and political and community leaders
- Be an external local, regional and national presence that communicates program results and serves as a model for equitable rural economic development

Preferred Qualifications

The Executive Director will be thoroughly committed to ANCA's mission. All candidates should have proven leadership, management, mentoring and collaborative relationship-building experience, as well as:

- Visionary and strategic thinking combined with the judgment to listen and diagnose before acting — the ability to hold both a compelling long-term vision and genuine humility in a new organizational context
- Demonstrated fundraising success across multiple channels, including individual major donors, foundations, and government sources; experience building or growing a development function is a strong asset
- Proven experience managing a multi-program nonprofit organization, ideally with staff of 15 or more and budgets of \$1M or more
- Familiarity with the Adirondack and North Country region — its communities, partners, geography, and economic realities — is highly valued and considered near-essential by ANCA's staff
- An action-oriented, entrepreneurial, adaptable and innovative approach to strategy and planning
- An ability to work effectively with multiracial, multiethnic and low-to-moderate income stakeholders
- Demonstrated commitment to DEIB, including evidence of self-directed learning and practical application in an organizational setting
- Excellence in organizational management with the ability to coach staff, respect their autonomy, and build the kind of trust that allows people to surface real challenges early rather than managing around leadership
- Past success working with a Board of Directors with the ability to cultivate existing board member relationships
- Strong written and verbal communication skills; a persuasive and passionate communicator and storyteller with excellent interpersonal and multidisciplinary project skills
- A kind, thoughtful and respectful leader who leads by asking what they can do to help staff do their jobs better

Benefits & Salary:

Salary commensurate with experience within an estimated range of \$100k to \$125k.

ANCA offers eligible employees a generous benefits package that includes health insurance; options for dental and vision insurance; paid vacation; paid sick leave; ample paid holidays; and an employer retirement contribution.

EOE & Diversity:

ANCA is an Equal Opportunity Employer, and we do not discriminate against candidates and employees because of their disability, sex, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, veteran status, or any other protected status under the law. We welcome and encourage applicants of all backgrounds and experiences and strive to create a working environment that supports all, including the provision of reasonable accommodations.

How to Apply:

Interested candidates are invited to submit a cover letter and resume to hr@adirondack.org by July 20, 2026, for first consideration. Applications will continue to be accepted until the position is filled.

References will be requested from candidates who advance to the interview stage. Questions regarding the position may also be directed to hr@adirondack.org, and appropriate follow-up will be provided throughout the search process. To ensure a fair, consistent, and well-coordinated search process, we ask that all inquiries be submitted by email rather than phone calls to the office.