

Position Profile: Chief Development Officer

Epilepsy Foundation

Location: Remote

About the Epilepsy Foundation

The Epilepsy Foundation works to enhance quality of life for Americans living with epilepsy. Since 1968, the organization and its network of supporters have promoted awareness, advocated for laws, funded epilepsy research, and delivered personalized services to individuals and families. The staff and board of the Epilepsy Foundation are united in their shared vision of creating a “Seizure Safe Nation.”

The Epilepsy Foundation is one of the largest and longest-serving nonprofits working in this field. Despite the prevalence of this condition—10% of Americans will experience a seizure in their lifetimes, and 1-2% will develop epilepsy—stigmas, diminished opportunities in life, and limited research can make it challenging for those living with epilepsy and their loved ones. The Epilepsy Foundation’s work is more important than ever.

Today, signature programs include the SUDEP Institute, overnight camps for kids, the National Epilepsy Education and Awareness Collaborative, and individual and family services to help people with epilepsy overcome stigmas, enhance quality of life, and find moments of joy and connection. The Epilepsy Foundation’s staff of 80+ works with people living with and affected by epilepsy, partners, and researchers to deliver these programs and the standardized, personalized 1:1 services that people rely on—all at little to no cost to patients and their families.

About the Opportunity

The Epilepsy Foundation seeks an experienced, strategic development leader to oversee the organization’s continued fundraising growth and success. Overseeing a team of eleven fundraising professionals, the Chief Development Officer (CDO) will be a key member of the organization’s Core Team and a thought partner to a visionary CEO. Together with these partners, the incoming CDO will build and implement a strategy to raise \$21 million in FY2024 in support of Epilepsy Foundation’s critical mission, while carrying a personal portfolio with an expectation of \$3.5 million.

This position carries tremendous opportunity. The incoming CDO will assume leadership at a critical moment in the Epilepsy Foundation’s history. They will build on the momentum and strategic alignment resulting from a soon-to-be-adopted strategic plan and enter with a clear roadmap for success with the soon-to-be-approved development plan. They will partner with a well-respected Core Team and a board deeply committed to the organization’s mission.

These tremendous assets are accompanied by challenges, of which existing staff and board are aware and aligned in solving. Epilepsy Foundation is coming off an extended period of leadership transition. The incoming CDO will need to develop a strategy to rebuild and repair relationships with some donors who remain loyal to the organization but have been less engaged in recent years. A successful candidate will extend this focus on stewardship and relationship building to the internal team to establish and maintain a culture of trust and mutual accountability – both within and beyond the development department.

As with many national organizations that have grown, Epilepsy Foundation has been fluid and responsive in its management of the relationships with the organization's chapters and affiliates. The new strategic plan will provide additional structure, focus, and clarity to these relationships. In partnership with the CEO, the CDO will develop and implement a strategy for mutually beneficial philanthropic relationships between Epilepsy Foundation of America and its chapters and affiliates.

The CDO will be a strategic, dynamic fund-development leader with a deep understanding of fundraising principles, methods, and tactics at national organizations. They will be highly collaborative and a strong motivator who will promote a culture of philanthropy among the board, volunteers, and staff. In addition, they will bring a keen understanding of management, team dynamics, and accountability to lead a high-performing development staff to continued excellence.

Key Position Functions

The incoming Chief Development Officer (CDO) will lead the Epilepsy Foundation's efforts to engage stakeholders in raising the funding resources needed to support the organization's mission. The primary responsibility of the CDO is to execute a strong and multi-faceted development plan in partnership with an organization-wide strategic plan.

The CDO will lead a nationwide development team, in collaboration with Core Team and VP leadership, supporting and expanding development activities and impact across the Foundation's chapter and affiliate network.

Fundraising Strategy: Lead and implement a short- and long-term strategic development plan and the related tactical plans and activities to achieve the development and strategic goals of the organization. Strategies include opportunities to secure new and expanded funding ultimately leading to diversification of revenue streams.

Leadership and Management: Motivate and manage an eleven-person development team, directly supervising a vice president and senior director-level reports. Hire, train, retain, and develop a nationwide development team by providing adaptive coaching and support to empower staff to grow, learn, and develop as fundraisers and professionals; create intentional succession plans in pursuit to increase tenure of team members; build a strong team culture grounded in inclusivity and belonging as well as dedication to fueling the organization's mission; and ensure all team members have tools, resources, role clarity, and support to achieve ambitious portfolio goals.

Collaboration: Serve as a member of the Core Team which includes the Chief Advocacy and Government Relations Officer; Chief Technology Innovations Officer; Chief Health Informatics Officer; Chief Medical Officer; Chief Outcomes Officer; Chief Finance and Operating Officer; and Vice President Research. The CDO will participate in carrying out the new strategic plan and management activities. Establish and maintain strong relationships with Epilepsy Foundation team members and other stakeholders. Collaborate with other departments to ensure strong working relationships that foster a cohesive and creative work environment. Ensure conditions for a culture of philanthropy across the Foundation including the chapters and affiliates.

Donor Engagement and Stewardship: Cultivate, strengthen, and sustain strategic relationships with key donors, ensuring a high level of donor satisfaction and involvement. Oversee the creation and

implementation of donor development, solicitation, and stewardship plans. Guide strategy for the development of recognition activities for key stakeholder groups.

Portfolio Management: Directly manage a portfolio of top national donors, focusing on corporate partners, foundations, and individual donors with complex or overlapping connections to Epilepsy Foundation. Develop and execute individual strategies, in alignment with the development and strategic plans, to engage top donors nationwide including within chapters and affiliate networks.

Development Operations: Develop, implement, and monitor appropriate metrics for overall development and individual team performance to achieve strategic objectives. Ensure the development infrastructure provides an efficient and effective pathway for donor engagement; provide strategic direction to the team responsible for all donor data tracking and reporting, donor relations, gift acknowledgement and gratitude activities, donor solicitation tracking and portfolio management, and gift and fundraising policies and processes.

Board Relations: Guide and lead board members in identifying and cultivating donors. Develop and maintain positive relationships with the national board and provide tools to elevate the role of chapter and affiliate board members in supporting fundraising activities.

Qualifications

Competencies and Attributes for Success in the Position:

- Strategic Mindset
- Communicates Effectively
- Drives Vision and Purpose
- Builds Effective Teams
- Ensures Accountability
- Plans and Aligns
- Drives Engagement
- Builds Networks
- Manages Complexity
- Collaborates
- Interpersonal Savvy
- Drives Results
- Manages Ambiguity
- Instills Trust
- Action Oriented

Required Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in related field
- Ten or more years of experience in development with progressive roles
- Keen ability to implement and grow a national development program
- Knowledge of and experience with fundraising, affiliate models, and national organizations
- Ability to travel 30-40%

Desired Qualifications:

- Leadership experience in national health, healthcare, or human services organizations
- Understanding of, or desire to learn about, epilepsy and its impact on individuals and families

Compensation:

The expected salary range for this position is \$190,000 to \$210,000, commensurate with experience.



Application Process

Benefactor Group is pleased to be assisting the Epilepsy Foundation with this executive search. Applications will be reviewed as they are received. All applications are considered highly confidential. To be considered for this position, please send a resume and formal cover letter in pdf format to:

Benefactor Group Recruitment Team

HR@benefactorgroup.com

<http://www.benefactorgroup.com>

To learn more about the Epilepsy Foundation, please visit <https://www.epilepsy.com/>.

Please do not contact Epilepsy Foundation staff or board with questions or interest in the role. All inquiries about the position should be directed to Benefactor Group.