

## Executive Director

Position Profile

Location: Columbus, Ohio

### Introduction to Local Matters

Local Matters partners with individuals, organizations, and neighborhoods in Central Ohio to create healthier communities and amplify and celebrate the joy and connections that food fosters. For 16 years, the organization has worked with hundreds of area schools, hospitals, nonprofit organizations, community groups, and individuals to deliver comprehensive food education and increase access to healthy food in neighborhoods across Central Ohio. Local Matters' committed team of staff and Board members believes that good food is a fundamental human right and envisions a world free of food-related chronic disease.

Local Matters' mission to create healthy communities is rooted in access, equity, and collaborative leadership. The accessibility of nutritious food is among the most significant social determinants of health, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Local Matters partners with communities to transform our food systems from the ground up, reducing barriers to food access and education and advocating for food justice for Central Ohioans of all ages and economic statuses.

Local Matters' signature programs have impacted over 150,000 community members in 15 years, and include Food Matters, a 24-week comprehensive food education curriculum; Veggie Van, a mobile food access program administering multiple incentive programs; pay-as-you-can community-wide cooking classes; and the Community Advocates Group, a mobilized group of residents working to solve neighborhood-wide food access issues. Notable partners include Nationwide Children's Hospital, Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Whitehall City Schools, Linden Early Childhood Education Center, St. Vincent Family Center, and many other organizations in and around Central Ohio.

Local Matters also offers capacity building support to local food-focused projects in alignment with our mission. In January 2024, Local Matters brought the Columbus chapter of Food Rescue US into the organization as a new program called Columbus Food Rescue (CFR). CFR's work minimizing food waste and increasing access to perishable foods adds a new dimension to the organization's mission of ensuring that food is available and accessible for all. Together, Local Matters and the CFR team then launched Ro's Kitchen in May, adding capacity for rescued food to be transformed into prepared meals for those without ready access to kitchen equipment or ingredients.



Each year, Local Matters' staff and partners support more than 10,000 community members—from preschool to high school students and from parents to seniors. With an operating budget of \$1.5 million, Local Matters is a leader in the movement toward community-driven, equitable approaches to food education and access.

## The Opportunity

Local Matters seeks a thoughtful, experienced, collaborative, community-oriented executive to drive the organization's continued impact. The incoming Executive Director will partner with the Board and committed staff to shape the vision and strategy to guide the organization into its next era.

As the leader of staff with deep expertise in and commitment to food education, access, and advocacy, the new Executive Director will build on proven processes to drive innovation and increase organizational impact. They will work collaboratively with the staff and Board to develop a strategy to expand Local Matters' reach and will effectively engage key partners and community leaders for intentional and long-term sustainable growth. This leader will bring deep management experience and a commitment to working thoughtfully and collaboratively with staff to build operational capacity and strong working relationships.



The director will combine their commitment to Local Matters' mission with their understanding of nonprofit operations, policy and advocacy, finance, strategic planning, fundraising, and management to lead the organization into its next era. They will balance emotional intelligence with operational savvy, partnering with the Board and staff to engage expertly with partners, advocates, and funders to generate support for the organization. They will maintain existing relationships with individual and institutional donors, civic leaders, program partners, and community members, and they will establish and cultivate relationships with new supporters with the capacity to drive the

organization's continued growth.

The ideal candidate will thrive in collaborative and visionary roles and bring the expertise to create the operational infrastructure and community support to achieve ambitious goals. Building on the organization's signature programs, and in collaboration with Local Matters' exceptional Board and staff, the new Executive Director will chart the course to expand the organization's impact, creating healthier communities through food education, access, and advocacy.

## Key Position Functions

The Executive Director of Local Matters provides strategic leadership and day-to-day management of the organization, working in partnership with the Board of Directors, staff, and community members. The Executive Director will:

- Evaluate, build on, and refine existing assets and strategies to further strengthen the organization's leadership position in the nonprofit community.
- Ensure operations, including program delivery and fundraising, align with the organization's mission and strategic purpose.
- Provide strong leadership to staff; understand and implement best practices of nonprofit board governance.

# Local Matters

- Cultivate and steward relationships with current and potential organizational supporters and partners, including individual donors, corporate sponsors, foundations, civic and government leaders, and school representatives.
- Elevate the organization's visibility in the region and educate the community about Local Matters' mission and impact.
- Continually evaluate the intersectionality of our work and other issues affecting the daily lives of our community.

**Vision and Strategy:** In partnership with the Board of Directors and staff, evaluate, refine, articulate, and amplify a vision and strategy for Local Matters' future and impact. Seek and understand the input and objectives of the community, Board, staff, and other key stakeholders. Anticipate and explore emerging directions for the organization as part of, and in advance of, strategic planning processes. Ensure plans and activities align with the overall strategy and use a lens that prioritizes diversity, equity, inclusion, and access.

**Leadership and Management:** The collaborative and visionary Executive Director leads with a shared leadership approach, empowering staff across departments to contribute strategically to the organization's goals, fostering a culture of collective decision-making and accountability while maintaining clear overall direction. Ensure a strong culture of accountability, transparency, and communication. Ensure metrics for effective team performance align with the organization's strategic priorities. Inspire fellowship among staff and support the ongoing development of leaders within the team. Support employees by creating and maintaining a positive, learning, and development-focused culture, building on the established social ecology.

**Governance:** Report to the Chair of the Board of Directors with responsibility to the full Board of Directors. Develop, maintain, and nurture a high-performing Board of Directors through strong governance standards and practices. In partnership with the Governance Committee, ensure Board members reflect the diversity of the community at large and, more specifically, the communities with which Local Matters works. Ensure all Board members are engaged in the substantive work of Local Matters.

**Policy and Advocacy:** Provide leadership to food-related bodies at the local and state level, which currently include the Ohio Food Policy Network, Ohio Nutrition Incentive Network, and Columbus-Franklin County Food Board. In partnership with the Community Advocates Group and Co-Founder, define and represent Local Matters' policy and advocacy priorities.

**Resource Development:** Participate in fundraising planning and implementation, including identifying resource requirements, identifying revenue prospects, and establishing strategies to approach funders. In partnership with the Director of Development, oversee the creation and implementation of a data-driven fundraising plan to increase philanthropic investment in the mission. Serve as a principal fundraiser and foster strong engagement with fundraising goals among staff and volunteers.

**Program Development and Leadership:** Collaborate with staff and Board leadership to develop, scale, and implement programs that support the organization's mission and strategic goals. Assess partnership opportunities and cultivate and steward existing partnerships. Work closely with the Director of Programs, Columbus Food Rescue Directors, and Director of Operations on programming and associated budget issues. Develop plans and proposals and share them with the Board.

**Community Relations:** Continue to build and nurture effective relationships and partnerships with existing and prospective stakeholders. Ensure Local Matters' ongoing impact and sustained growth through relationships with program partners, community members, funders, and other key stakeholders.

**Financial Management:** Oversee the creation of the annual budget, ensuring that budget expectations are met or appropriately adjusted and communicated. Prudently manage the organization's resources within those budget guidelines according to current laws and regulations.

## Qualifications

### Competencies and Attributes for Success in the Position:

- Communicates effectively
- Fosters culture of collective staff decision-making and accountability
- Informs vision and purpose
- Builds networks
- Collaborates
- Builds effective teams
- Develops talent
- Ensures accountability
- Instills trust
- Interpersonal savvy
- Political acumen
- Strategic mindset
- Values and respects differences
- Balances stakeholders
- Learning/growth mindset

### Required Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in a relevant field or equivalent experience
- Proven professional experience leading cross-functional teams
- Exemplary verbal and written communication skills
- Proven fundraising experience with another organization
- Proven understanding of nonprofit governance and management
- Previous fiscal management accountability
- Proven ability to review and understand financial reports

### Desired Qualifications:

- Ability to lead a small, highly collaborative team
- Understanding of food systems or other basic community needs
- Experience building multi-sector, institutional partnerships
- Experience identifying anti-racist trainings and workshops
- Comfort engaging in conversations around the intersections of power, privilege, and identity
- Previous experience leading advocacy efforts or engaging in public policy initiatives
- Leadership experience in a human-services organization
- Comfort and familiarity with principles of community-centric fundraising
- Leadership experience in a fast-moving nonprofit organization



## Compensation

Local Matters is pleased to offer a competitive compensation and benefits package for this position. Target salary is \$95,000-\$115,000, commensurate with experience.

## Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

Local Matters provides equal employment opportunities to all applicants and employees without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, height, weight, national origin, disability condition, marital status, status as a disabled or Vietnam-era veteran, or any other protected characteristic as established by law. In addition, Local Matters affirmatively seeks to advance the principles of equal employment opportunity as it applies to all policies and procedures relating to recruitment and hiring, compensation, benefits, termination, and all other terms and conditions of employment.

Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions of this position.

## Application Process

Benefactor Group is pleased to be assisting Local Matters 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 cover letter in pdf format to:

**Benefactor Group Recruitment Team**

[HR@benefactorgroup.com](mailto:HR@benefactorgroup.com)

<http://www.benefactorgroup.com>

To learn more about Local Matters, please visit <https://www.local-matters.org/>

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