

POSITION PROFILE



Director of Development

Praestolari

Remote



About Praestolari

Praestolari, formerly known as Prison Contemplative Fellowship, is a growing national nonprofit dedicated to accompanying people affected by incarceration on a journey of healing, transformation, and belonging. The organization was founded in 2014 by Ray Leonardini as Prison Contemplative Fellowship and expanded in 2024 through a partnership that led in 2026 to the renaming and reimagining as Praestolari – a Latin word meaning “to wait” or “to stand ready.” For more information about the organization’s history, please visit Praestolari’s [website](#).

The organization exists to build contemplative community that transcends walls, with a focus on sharing the method of Centering Prayer. Praestolari works every day toward a world where individuals are not defined by their past or their circumstances, and are given access to space and resources to support their healing, reconnect with their authentic selves, and thrive in community.

At the heart of Praestolari’s work is a simple but profound belief: every person possesses inherent worth and dignity, as well as the capacity for transformation. The organization walks alongside individuals during and after incarceration, creating spaces where they are seen, supported, and encouraged to grow. Through contemplative practice and meaningful relationships, Praestolari brings a trauma-informed approach to helping participants cultivate resilience and build lives rooted in hope, compassion, and purpose.

Praestolari’s impact extends both inside and outside prison walls through [five interconnected areas of work](#): supporting residents who seek to explore the practice, both directly and through independent volunteers who facilitate Centering Prayer groups; fostering community for individuals returning from incarceration through its Outside the Walls network; providing contemplative retreats that deepen healing and connection; facilitating correspondence that combats isolation and nurtures spiritual growth; and developing the innovative Prison Outreach Networking Database (POND), a first-of-its-kind technology platform designed to make it easier to communicate and maintain relationships with people who are currently experiencing or have previously experienced incarceration.

Praestolari is distinguished by its commitment to accompaniment. Staff, volunteers, board members, and participants—including many with lived experience of incarceration—share a belief that lasting change happens through authentic relationships, compassionate presence, and sustained support. Participants consistently describe Praestolari as a community that refuses to let people be forgotten, providing encouragement during incarceration and continuing to walk alongside them as they navigate the challenges of reentry. This philosophy of accompaniment shapes every aspect of the organization’s culture and work and will be crucial to the success of its fundraising efforts.

As Praestolari enters its next chapter, it is building the organizational infrastructure needed to expand its reach, deepen partnerships, and ensure long-term sustainability. Benefitting from a broad and diverse community of committed volunteers, practitioners, and partners, the organization is poised to expand and strengthen its community of supporters who want to invest in this vision and approach.



The Opportunity

Praestolari seeks a mission-driven Director of Development to build and lead the organization's first strategic fundraising program. This is an exceptional opportunity for a discerning, relationship-focused fundraiser who is energized by creating something from the ground up while helping advance an innovative organization that serves people affected by incarceration through contemplative practice, community, and transformative support.

Reporting to Executive Director Chandra Hanson, the Director of Development will partner closely with organizational leadership to establish the vision, strategy, systems, and infrastructure necessary to establish and sustain philanthropy at Praestolari. As the organization's first dedicated fundraising professional, this leader will have the rare opportunity to inform every aspect of the development function—from creating a compelling case for support and identifying prospective donors to building stewardship practices, fundraising communications, and long-term development strategies. Doing so successfully will require a collaborative, relationship-oriented fundraiser who, in keeping with the practice of Centering Prayer, is capable of discerning when to take action and when to humbly embrace a moment or situation.

Praestolari has built a passionate community of volunteers, developed innovative technology to strengthen connections, and created programming that supports healing and transformation both inside and outside prison walls. The next stage of the organization's growth requires philanthropic investment, and the Director of Development will play a critical role in helping translate the organization's compelling mission into meaningful, mutually beneficial opportunities for donor engagement and support.

The successful candidate will be equally comfortable thinking strategically and performing tactically, with an approach firmly rooted in relationships and philanthropic partnership. They will bring a deep sense of discernment and a proven ability to advise individual and institutional donors to make gifts that advance their personal philanthropic goals and the organization's mission and values. Most importantly, they will possess a genuine desire to learn about the transformative potential of Praestolari's work, exceptional listening skills, and the ability to authentically communicate a nuanced, trauma-informed, mission-centered story that inspires others to invest in lasting change.

This is a fully remote position with occasional travel for donor meetings and other events as needed.

Key Position Functions

Fundraising Strategy and Program Development: Develop and implement Praestolari's first comprehensive fundraising strategy, establishing goals, priorities, systems, and metrics that support sustainable philanthropic growth. Build the foundational infrastructure necessary for a successful development program while balancing immediate fundraising needs with long-term organizational capacity.

Major Gifts and Individual Giving: Identify, cultivate, engage, and steward individual donors and prospective supporters. Build meaningful relationships with new and existing donors through thoughtful engagement strategies that invite long-term philanthropic investment. Develop personalized engagement and stewardship plans for current and potential individual donors.



Foundation Funding: Research, identify, and pursue funding opportunities from foundations whose priorities align with Praestolari's mission. Partner with organizational leadership to develop compelling proposals and reports while maintaining strong funder relationships.

Development Communications and Case for Support: Partner with the Executive Director and communications staff to develop a compelling case for support that clearly articulates Praestolari's mission, impact, and vision. Create donor-facing communications, fundraising materials, appeals, and stewardship content that inspire philanthropic investment through authentic storytelling.

Development Operations: Establish and manage fundraising systems, policies, and processes, including creation of a donor database, gift tracking, donor acknowledgment, stewardship practices, fundraising reporting, and performance metrics. Ensure data integrity and create systems that support long-term organizational growth.

Board and Executive Partnership: Serve as a trusted strategic partner to the Executive Director in advancing philanthropic priorities while helping build confidence and comfort around fundraising activities. Support and engage board members in fundraising efforts by identifying meaningful opportunities for relationship-building, cultivation, and stewardship.

Organizational Leadership and Collaboration: Serve as a collaborative member of the leadership team, partnering across the organization to identify funding opportunities, elevate organizational visibility, and strengthen a culture that embraces philanthropy as an essential component of advancing Praestolari's mission.

Qualifications

Competencies and Attributes for Success in the Position:

- Fundraising Acumen
- Storytelling
- Initiative
- Project Management
- Donor Stewardship
- Communication
- Resilience
- Cultural Competence
- Relationship Building
- Strategic Thinking
- Discernment
- Collaboration
- Emotional Intelligence
- Humility
- Adaptability
- Trust Building
- Mission Alignment
- Organizational Skills

Required Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent relevant experience.
- Five or more years of nonprofit fundraising experience.
- Demonstrated success cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding gifts from individual donors.
- Experience developing and implementing successful fundraising strategies.
- Experience building and managing relationships with diverse stakeholders, including donors, volunteers, board members, and organizational leaders.
- Experience using donor databases, CRM systems, and prospect research tools.
- Excellent written, verbal, and presentation communication skills.
- Ability to work independently while collaborating effectively across a remote organization.
- Personal values that align with Praestolari's values and approach.



Desired Qualifications:

- Experience serving as the sole development professional within a growing nonprofit organization.
- Experience securing foundation and corporate grants.
- Experience working with individuals affected by incarceration.
- An active personal Centering Prayer practice or openness to the development of a personal contemplative prayer practice.
- Experience engaging and supporting boards in fundraising activities.
- Experience helping organizations build fundraising infrastructure, systems, and donor stewardship programs from the ground up.
- CFRE credential or other relevant fundraising certification.

Compensation

Praestolari is pleased to offer a competitive base salary of \$85,000-\$100,000 for this role, commensurate with experience, and a stipend to offset a portion of health insurance premiums.

Application Process

Benefactor Group is pleased to be assisting Praestolari 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 submit an application at this link: <https://bit.ly/PraestolariDODapp>.

To learn more about Praestolari, please visit: <https://praestolari.org>.

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

Benefactor Group Recruitment Team

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