



Job Title: Vice President, Destination Development & Community Engagement
Reports to: President & CEO
Department: Community Engagement
FLSA Status: Exempt

Position Summary:

This is a newly created role for Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau (Explore Asheville). The Vice President, Destination Development & Community Engagement is accountable and responsible for the strategic planning, direction, design, and implementation of all areas of the department including destination development and grant programs, community engagement, and partnership development. This position will leverage resources, community outreach and relationship-building to develop, manage and contribute to projects and experiences that align with or expand the destination and help enhance its distinct sense of place. Additionally, this role will focus on the quality of experience for visitors and quality of life for residents, contributing to the growth of a sustainable tourism economy. The VP of Destination Development & Community Engagement will serve as a member of the Executive Leadership Team, providing support to the CEO by assisting in strategic planning and administration of organization policy, implementing the organization’s vision, mission, strategic imperatives, and key objectives.

Essential Duties & Responsibilities:

Destination Development & Grant Programs Leadership

- Accountable and responsible for designing, implementing, and evaluating tourism development strategic plans and programs that enhance Asheville and Buncombe County both short-term and long-term.
- Provide consistent leadership to maximize potential for increased visitor spending through supporting compelling, sustainable visitor projects and experiences throughout the destination.
- Oversee and ensure the success of robust, timely, transparent grant programs and relevant committees. Ensure compliance with current state legislation and program guidelines.
- With input from CEO & BCTDA, responsible for facilitating nominating process for grant committee members as well as determining when grant cycles will occur.
- Collaborate with municipal partners, departments of transportation, local stakeholders, members of the travel/hospitality industry, neighborhoods, cultural districts, non-profit and community partners in developing tourism enhancements.
- Oversee the management, maintenance, and expansion of a community-wide wayfinding signage program to influence dispersal throughout the destination.
- Foster vertical multi-sectoral meetings and strategic planning sessions to enhance collaboration and alignment.
- Collaborate with Marketing and Business Development Departments to integrate new products into promotional and sales efforts.

- Oversee the development and implementation of industry-wide training and education efforts, creating targeted training sessions to increase destination knowledge, presenting a positive image for the destination and greater destination awareness.

Community Engagement Leadership

- Actively engage with community partners, building capacity, increasing connectivity and knowledge of community leaders throughout Buncombe County. Raise awareness and appreciation for the tourism sector and recommend approaches to increase the positive impacts of tourism on economic development.
- Represent Explore Asheville in community discussions and focus groups that relate to destination development, infrastructure, and quality of life. This includes municipal partners, departments of transportation, local stakeholders, members of the travel/hospitality industry, neighborhoods, cultural districts, non-profit and community partners.
- Collaborate with community organizations, local businesses, and environmentally focused partners to support the sustainability and growth of the outdoor economy.
- Support product development, place making and community connections, enabling new experiences and business opportunities throughout the community.
- Collaborate with the President & CEO and the Marketing Department in the creation of activities, projects and campaigns focusing on destination development and insight and local engagement.
- Maintain active membership in appropriate industry and community organizations.

Partnership Development

- Develop goals and establish targets for partner recruitment and retention.
- Foster relationships with partners to understand their challenges and anticipate their needs.
- Oversee and design processes and programs that ensure partners understand Explore Asheville's mission and stay engaged with the organization's efforts.
- Provide guidance and direction to ensure that partners understand and take advantage of partner benefits.
- Oversee administration and policies of partner customer relationship management (CRM) system.
- Oversee the development of partner collateral materials and partner communications, in collaboration with the Marketing Department.

People Leadership

- Effectively lead and inspire a team of five direct reports: Director of Grants, Destination Development Manager, Events & Engagement Manager, Public Information Manager, and Community Engagement Assistant.
- Build a cohesive, effective, and accountable department. Promote an inclusive work environment by valuing employee differences and contributions, providing opportunities for employees to be heard, and ensuring decisions that affect the team are transparent and equitable.
- Set and communicate department priorities in alignment with other departments. Provide daily work direction, performance management, onboarding and training, oversight/approval of absences and overtime, and recommendations related to employment decisions in support of organizational priorities. Oversee the team's involvement with industry and consumer communication efforts.

- Ensure accountability with empathy. Provide coaching, mentoring, and feedback to employees in support of improved performance, growth, and employee engagement.
- Delegate to, involve, and communicate transparently with employees to foster a connected, collaborative organization.
- Position, develop, and involve employees to best promote collaboration, application of their knowledge, skills, and abilities, and individual/team development.

Executive Leadership

- Develop and maintain local and industry partnerships in support of Explore Asheville's strategic imperatives and priorities.
- Create, manage, and monitor annual budgets. Enhance these budgets via collaborative projects that leverage available internal and external resources and create industry alignment. Community engagement annual budget: \$300,000. Festivals & cultural events annual budget: \$225,000. TPDF annual budget: \$10-13 million.
- Work with Executive Leadership Team leaders ensuring agency-wide collaboration and integration.
- Ensure proper financial and human resources to deliver on the business plan. Oversee contract development, vendor selection and work conducted by contractors as appropriate to deliver the best outcomes Explore Asheville, BCTDA and the community.
- Represent the organization, as necessary, at industry and community meetings and functions and to professional organizations. Provide strategic counsel, support, and assistance to internal and external stakeholders to elevate the development efforts across the destination.
- Model leadership aligned with organizational values for all employees.
- Make decisions that serve in the best interest of the organization's purpose and develop systems and processes that enable interdepartmental and cross-departmental collaboration.
- Collaborate with the Executive Leadership Team in the production of the annual business plan and reports.

Other Responsibilities:

This job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee for this job. Duties, responsibilities, and activities may change at any time with or without notice. There may be times where this position is asked to help other team members with their work, completing tasks outside of this description.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree with a minimum of 10 years of progressively more responsible destination development and community engagement experience. Preferred degree in Public Administration, Business Administration, Planning, Economic Development, Hospitality, or other related field -OR- any combination of education, coursework, and/or technical training necessary to meet position requirements.
- Minimum of 5 years of people management experience, including team management and supervision.
- Commitment to delivering measurable results and achieving established goals.
- Demonstrate ability to manage multiple priorities.
- Appreciation for Buncombe County's tourism community.
- Must be able to use sound judgment and discretion.
- Well-organized, self-motivated, and comfortable in a fast-paced environment.

- Advanced proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite.
- High attention to detail.

Physical Environment & Working Conditions:

The work environment and physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- Work involves working alone on the computer, collaborating as part of a team, or working closely with others by computer or over the phone.
- Most work tasks are performed indoors.
- Must be able to sit or stand at a desk for up to 7.5 hours per day.
- Requires grasping, writing, being mobile, repetitive motions, listening and hearing ability and visual acuity.
- Attendance of outside work functions after hours are required.
- Position is expected to spend time in the community on a regular basis.

Travel:

Some local travel, generally within Buncombe County, is required, but not extensive. Must have a valid driver's license, current automobile insurance and own or have access to an automobile when needed.

EEO Statement:

Explore Asheville provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state, or local laws.

This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.

Explore Asheville strives to be an inclusive and equitable organization. We are actively seeking a diverse pool of candidates from a variety of abilities, backgrounds, and cultures.

About Explore Asheville:

The Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA) oversees the work of the Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau, which develops and carries out advertising, marketing, public relations, and group sales plans to inspire leisure and business travelers to visit Asheville and Buncombe County. In 2021, the BCTDA adopted strategic imperatives that are informing and guiding the direction of Explore Asheville's program of work and community investments going forward. These strategic imperatives include:

- Deliver balanced recovery and sustainable growth
- Encourage safe and responsible travel
- Engage and invite more diverse audiences
- Promote and support Asheville's creative Spirit

In addition, the Explore Asheville staff has adopted and embraced the following core values:

- Innovate & Evolve – We seek out new ideas and are open to change.
- Leadership & Collaboration – We focus on the truly important priorities to make the most positive impact.
- Equity & Empathy – We respect and embrace differences recognizing real progress requires inclusion.

What we offer:

Explore Asheville offers a competitive benefits package that includes a Paid Time Off program with 18 days to start, 11 annual paid office holidays, employer-subsidized medical insurance, employer-provided dental, life, STD and LTD insurance, plus 401k with a company match, and employee wellness benefits.