



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RED HOOK INITIATIVE JOB DESCRIPTION

To apply for this position or make a nomination, please visit [Koya Leadership Partners](#).

About Red Hook Initiative

Red Hook Initiative (RHI) is a community-based nonprofit working to improve the lives of the residents of Red Hook, Brooklyn. RHI believes that social change to overcome systemic inequities begins with empowered youth, and that change in communities should come from within. In partnership with community adults, RHI nurtures young people in Red Hook to be inspired, resilient, and healthy, and to envision themselves as co-creators of their lives, community, and society.

Youth development, community building, and community hiring are at the core of the approach to strengthening Red Hook's future. RHI's model gives young people and residents the tools, resources, and opportunities they need to interrupt the systems and barriers that perpetuate historic inequities for the community. Residents lead the way toward a more equitable, hopeful future.

RHI confronts generations of institutional racism and inequity, serving Brooklyn's largest public housing community with a model that prioritizes youth and residents needs first. Over their 18-year history, RHI's model and dedicated team have been nationally recognized for their innovative, place-based approach to social change.



RHI's programs include:

Youth Development: RHI engages over 450 adolescents each year, from middle school through young adulthood, endeavoring to interrupt cycles of injustice and to build hope.

Building Community: Works with Red Hook youth and adults to organize, exercise leadership to drive positive change for the community, and increase social cohesion to build a more resilient neighborhood.

Investing in Residents: RHI hires locally and invests in residents who will improve their lives and the community in which they live. More than \$1.5M was earned in the last year by people from Red Hook.

Red Hook Farms: A youth-centered urban agriculture and food justice program operating one of Brooklyn's original and largest farms. Red Hook Farms cultivates affordable, fresh produce and provides STEM and nutrition education, leadership development, and employment opportunities for local youth and residents.

For more information on Red Hook Initiative, please visit rhicenter.org.

The Opportunity

RHI seeks a dynamic, dedicated individual as its next Executive Director (ED). Reporting to the Board of Directors, the ED will be an experienced, visionary, and compassionate leader with the ability to advocate successfully and passionately on behalf of RHI and the Red Hook community in the public and private sectors. The ED will bring proven nonprofit management expertise and experience in community-based programs, youth development, advocacy/organizing, and/or other relevant disciplines. The ED must be a hands-on leader, strategic and analytic thinker, and problem solver who responds to challenges effectively with sound judgment, high integrity, and a sense of humor.

The ED must also demonstrate fundraising ability, a highly focused social justice lens, excellent communications and relationship-building skills, a deep belief in the power and potential of engaged communities, and the ability to provide a clear, inspirational vision for RHI's next chapter. Ideal candidates will bring some connection to or knowledge of Red Hook and/or similarly marginalized communities.

The ED will be responsible for the following:

- Providing hands-on leadership to a highly engaged, passionate, 50-person staff, with a focus on learning, coaching, and growing individual and team capacity,

while directly supervising four staff who lead development, finance, strategy, and programs

- Developing and implementing policies to ensure the successful recruitment and retention of staff with a wide range of experience and skills; encouraging a culture of transparency, diversity, and inclusiveness, with a focus on RHI's commitment to creating local opportunities by hiring from the community
- Maintaining a flexible and responsive management structure to foster thorough review and timely, collaborative decisions on programs and policies
- Overseeing financial management, including the development of RHI's annual budget; allocating resources for optimal effectiveness and efficiency; ensuring fulfillment of all contractual and regulatory obligations
- Providing strong partnership, collaboration, and leadership to the Board, ensuring open lines of communication, high levels of engagement, and the advancement of RHI's mission
- In partnership with the Board, staff, and community members, establishing a clear vision for RHI's next chapter as well as a road map for this strategic vision
- In consultation with the Board, developing and administering prudent, effective strategies for continuous quality improvement, risk management, internal evaluation, and compliance across all aspects of RHI's operations, including programs, finances, HR, facilities, and technology
- Working in close partnership with the Director of Development and the Board to design and implement fundraising and communications strategies that increase RHI's visibility and funding
- Serving as an external spokesperson for RHI, ensuring that the organization is well represented and has a strong voice as needed, including knowing when another community or staff member may be the most effective spokesperson
- Developing and maintaining strong relationships with key figures in the NYC governmental, nonprofit, and philanthropic sectors
- Effectively advocating for RHI's mission and programs as well as the broader Red Hook community

Candidate Profile

Strong candidates will be seasoned, collaborative, and communicative leaders who understand how to move a diverse range of stakeholders forward through clear communication, inspiration, and motivation. Successful candidates will bring previous leadership in the nonprofit arena, exceptional organizational and people management skills, demonstrated passion for RHI's mission, and a commitment to place-based work.

Desired skills and experiences include the following:

- Deep knowledge of Red Hook or similar communities, including the history, policies, and systems that have established and maintained deep racial and other inequities; a desire to partner with community members to build an engaged, empowered community that is working to create positive change

- Previous experience leading a complex, multi-faceted organization or initiative is desired, including an understanding of nonprofit finance and of all relevant public and private funding streams
- Excellent leadership and management skills, including the ability to manage a diverse, engaged staff and Board
- A strong orientation toward coaching and learning, a desire to help team members grow personally and professionally
- Deep social justice values and competencies, including a belief in community-driven change, equity, and inclusion; fluency with related concepts like racial equity, redlining, and systemic discrimination; and the ability to raise, lead, and facilitate complex conversations about historic inequities
- Dynamic and effective interpersonal and communications skills; outstanding ability to develop rapport and build collaborative relationships with staff, stakeholders, and funders
- Experience fundraising and growing revenue with private sector donors, including individuals, foundations, and corporations; experience negotiating and managing government contracts
- Exceptional project management skills; the ability to drive simultaneous, complex stakeholder projects to measurable success
- An entrepreneurial approach to growth and impact, including a demonstrated ability to forge dynamic partnerships and coalitions
- Passion for developing the skills and leadership of young people and engaging with youth in an authentic, empowering way

In addition, strong candidates will offer the following personal qualities and characteristics:

- The ability to provide long-term, inspirational vision while simultaneously creating pragmatic solutions to day-to-day problems
- Comfort navigating complex issues and making difficult decisions, often in high-pressure situations
- Deep passion for RHI's mission and values; commitment to building and maintaining a workplace that reflects the population served by the organization, as demonstrated through RHI's commitment to hiring from the community
- Ability to maintain calm and steadiness during times of crisis or complication
- An understanding of how trauma impacts traditionally marginalized individuals and communities and how this influences the design and delivery of programs serving them
- Resilience, flexibility, and a sense of humor

Compensation

The annual salary for this role will start at \$165,000, commensurate with qualifications and experience. Red Hook Initiative also offers a comprehensive benefits package.

Contact

Koya Leadership Partners, the executive search firm that specializes in mission-driven search, has been exclusively retained for this engagement. Molly Brennan and Meghan Franklin are leading this search. To make recommendations or to express your interest in this role, please [visit this link here](#) or email mbrennan@koyapartners.com. All nominations, inquiries, and discussions will be considered strictly confidential.

Red Hook Initiative is an equal opportunity employer and strongly encourages applications from people of color, persons with disabilities, women, LGBTQ+, and other underrepresented applicants.

About Koya Leadership Partners

Koya Leadership Partners, a member of the Diversified Search Group, is a leading executive search and strategic advising firm dedicated to connecting exceptionally talented people with mission-driven clients. Our founding philosophy—The Right Person in the Right Place Can Change the World—guides our work as we partner with nonprofits & NGOs, institutions of higher education, responsible businesses, and social enterprises in local communities and around the world.

For more information about Koya Leadership Partners, visit www.koyapartners.com.