Position Summary
The Executive Director is responsible for maintaining the organization’s vision, mission, and core values, as well as directing the organization’s resources to achieve its strategic and operating goals. The position is accountable for the performance of all organizational functions, including relationships with the governmental Northwest Avalanche Center, funding cooperators, donors, and sponsors. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors.

Essential Functions
A primary function of the Executive Director is shaping and executing strategies necessary to improve weather and avalanche forecasts, expand avalanche awareness and education, provide end-user forecast tools, collaborate with key partners, and conduct critical research to advance the mission and/or that of the governmental Northwest Avalanche Center.

To accomplish this primary function, a critical activity of the position is fundraising. The Executive Director must develop fundraising strategies necessary to support a growing organization with increased technical demands.

The Executive Director must also successfully lead day-to-day managerial duties. The position is responsible for directing all organizational activities to achieve its mission and strategic plan goals. Within this pursuit, the Executive Director must manage the organization’s employees, ensuring they are sufficiently supported and resourced to succeed in their roles.

Primary Job Responsibilities
- Develops organizational strategy, in concert with the Board
- Develops and executes against annual work plan and budget
- Leads organizational fundraising
- Leads events
- Develops strategic partnerships and alliances
- Maintains relations with diverse stakeholders
- Oversees technology offerings, in partnership with governmental NWAC
- Communicates vision, mission and organizational strategy to personnel
- Oversees day-to-day operations, including budget management, staff management, and administration (payroll, insurance, etc)
- Maintains office and technology supporting the organization
- Maintains an environment of service excellence and continuous improvement

Minimum Qualifications
- Bachelor’s degree or greater
- At least 10 years of work experience
- Experience designing, implementing and directing multiple programs and ensuring program accountability
- Experience developing proposals and other written communications
- Experience negotiating with agencies, companies, private parties or related entities
- Demonstrated ability to fundraise, including through solicitations, grants, and events
- Absolute integrity
Preferred Qualifications

- Big-picture thinker who can craft a vision and inspire others toward achieving it
- Demonstrated experience developing and successfully implementing complex projects in an unstructured environment
- Experience in nonprofit management
- Proven ability to build strong relationships with partners, donors, volunteers, and staff
- Outstanding written and oral communication, including negotiation
- Working knowledge of current trends in avalanche awareness, avalanche education, avalanche forecast distribution, and other relevant disciplines
- Demonstrated experience with snow-travel manufacturers and related industries
- Supervisory experience, including ability to set objectives and manage performance
- Entrepreneurial
- Understands the vision and has a passion for the future success of NWAC
Northwest Avalanche Center Non-Profit

Executive Director

Recruitment Profile
The Pacific Northwest has a vibrant winter snow culture based on deep snow packs across the coastal ranges of the Olympics and Cascades. These snowfalls feed glaciers and provide the opportunity for skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling throughout much of the year. The Pacific Northwest celebrates this by enjoying endless terrain, numerous ski areas and has become the home of several outdoor goods manufacturing and retail companies. Avalanche safety is an increasingly important issue and opportunity for the community. Seattle is one of the fastest growing cities in the United States – with many moving to enjoy the outdoors.

**NWAC, The Northwest Avalanche Center Non-profit**

The Northwest Avalanche Center (NWAC) is a collaborative effort between the U.S. Forest Service Northwest Avalanche Center forecasters and the non-profit Northwest Avalanche Center. The mission of NWAC is to save lives and reduce the impacts of avalanches on recreation, industry and transportation in the Cascade and Olympic Mountains of Washington and northern Oregon through mountain weather and avalanche forecasting, data collection and education.

The non-profit NWAC is an independent 501(c)3 corporation similar to other groups in Colorado (Friends of the Colorado Avalanche Center) and Utah (Friends of the Utah Avalanche Center) which support their local avalanche center.

The non-profit NWAC was founded in 1999, then known as the Friends of the Northwest Avalanche Center and operated on an all-volunteer basis. The Forecasting center and the Non-Profit arm rebranded together to be known as NWAC in 2013 to show collaboration and cooperation and help clarify our shared mission with the public. Today the non-profit NWAC has grown to a paid staff including the Executive Director, an office space, a volunteer network with a strong financial base and sees growing opportunities in the Pacific Northwest.

**Programs and Activities of the non-profit NWAC (referred to as NWAC below)**

NWAC’s current activities include:

Support for the forecasting operation at the U.S. Forest Service, in partnership with a number of other organizations such as U.S. Forest Service, Washington State Department of Transportation, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission (including Snowmobile and Snowpark Programs), National Park Service, Pacific Northwest Ski Areas Association, and the NW Winter Sports Foundation.

Support for the development and operation of the NWAC website, providing the public with a timely, user-friendly interface to understand and utilize the USFS forecast for decision-making in recreational winter and snow activities. NWAC also supplements the forecasting with a professional observer program that uses videos via twitter and facebook feeds to share current conditions in the field.

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1 The NWAC forecasters are employed by the U.S. Forest Service and are not part of the non-profit NWAC.
Avalanche awareness and education for recreationalists through sharing information, annual events, educational programs and professional workshops such as “Going Deep” and Northwest Snow and Avalanche Workshop (NSAW). These services help adults and youth learn about, practice and discuss avalanche techniques, strengthening the avalanche safety community in the Pacific Northwest.

Key to this is NWACs fundraising which occurs through a variety of events, individual donations, memberships, grants and corporate sponsorships. There are approximately 15 events a year including Snowbash, Snowball, and Vertfest. There are over 1,000 donating members.

The annual revenues for NWAC last year reached over $400,000 with positive growth in both revenues and net assets over the prior five years (except for the really bad snow season of 2014 – 2015 when the regional snowpack was 30% of normal). Last year approximately 18% of NWACs funding was from individual support, 49% from events and 18% from corporate support – the reminder a mix of other sources.

The original Executive Director was brought onboard in 2008 and the position now directs a staff that includes a Program Director and a Program Coordinator. During the same time the dozen-member NWAC board has moved from a working board to a strategic board, providing more strategic direction but valuable volunteer hands-on support for the major events and some staff functions such as accounting.

**Future Challenges and Organizational Growth for NWAC**

The numbers of backcountry travelers are increasing with more backcountry skiers, snowboarders, snowshoers, and snowmobilers participating each year. NWAC perceives a number of growing opportunities to help the backcountry community remain safe by having timely access to critical key avalanche information and supporting a growing community which practices safe backcountry avalanche skills through awareness and education.

A key strategy for NWAC in the coming years includes growing to serve this increasing user base. Expanding ways to improve avalanche safety includes expanding events and workshops serving the community, continued support of increasing demands on the forecasters and the equipment infrastructure, upgrading and improving the NWAC website and mobile app, and expanding the professional observer programs as well as developing and implementing new approaches to serve the community through social media.

NWAC seems to have a strong brand within the growing skiing and snowboarding community, however there appears to be opportunities to grow NWAC’s connection and relevancy in the snowshoeing and snowmobiling communities and youth.

Supporting this work will require a broad development focus and strategy, increasing membership donations, personal fundraising, corporate sponsorships and other means of raised revenues. This will be guided by a new strategic planning effort in 2016 – 2017 that the new Executive Director would help lead. Through this effort there is a chance to examine the variety, number and mix of fundraising strategies and events.

Currently the staff works a 9-month year, however this new position is envisioned as being year round with a particularly high tempo during the avalanche season (September to April).
New Executive Director Opportunity

NWAC, the non-profit is seeking a new Executive Director (ED) who is a dynamic leader with experience in fundraising and executive management, visioning, strategy and leadership. The ED will have the opportunity to help build the future vision with the NWAC’s board through strategic planning and then implement that vision by leading a small, skilled staff. The Executive Director will be working from a strong programmatic and financial base and be located in Seattle.

The ideal candidate would have significant experience in executive management, fundraising with a knowledge of avalanche education and training along with a mission-based focus. They would have an ability to connect with the outdoor community and be able to successfully interact with leaders in government, the non-profit outdoor community as well as the outdoor retail and manufacturing industries on both a personal basis and through public relations strategies.

Key Elements of the Executive Director Role

The Executive Director reports to the Board through the President of the Board. The Executive Director will ensure that the strategic planning of the organization is undertaken, and will be responsible for the effective execution of the strategic plan including fundraising, support of NWACs educational work, NWAC forecasting, avalanche awareness, web site enhancements and other operational aspects of NWAC.

General Responsibilities:

- Work with the Board, staff, forecasters and volunteers of NWAC to carry out the mission and programs;
- Lead the next phase of the strategic planning effort through 2016 and 2017 and make future adjustments as needed;
- Manage staff and ensure all functions of the organization are carried out effectively;
- Manage budgeting and finances to meet financial goals;
- Represent NWAC to members, donors and the general public;
- Actively manage attend, and engage attendees at multiple NWAC events – usually nights and weekends;

Preferred Qualifications

- Three years of experience in organizational leadership and management;
- Three years of experience fundraising at a level that will help NWAC grow ($100,000+ a year);
- Experience with a non-profit as staff, member or volunteer;
- Knowledge of the avalanche safety world, training or education;
- Experience managing a $500,000+ budget

Core Competencies

- Can build a vision, develop and lead others in achieving the vision;
- Has strong oral and written communications skills;
- Demonstrates a good understanding of, and ability to use computers and internet technologies for operations, marketing and information including Excel and Word;
- Can build collaborative and cooperative efforts among and between board, staff, volunteers and members;
- Budgeting and financial management
- Takes the initiative to successfully develop and implement new services;

Salary
Based on experience. NWAC offers benefits.

To Apply
Please submit a resume and letter of interest by April 29, 2016 to NWACED2016@gmail.com.