Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy

PROTECTING LAND AND WATER FOR PEOPLE, FOR WILDLIFE, FOREVER.

Philanthropy Specialist

About Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy (NCLC)

Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy is a nonprofit, regional conservation organization working with the communities of Litchfield and northern Fairfield Counties to safeguard natural and working lands, public recreation areas, and drinking water resources forever. Founded in 1965, NCLC is the largest land trust in Connecticut, protecting over 14,400 acres (and growing) of vast, interconnected natural areas. NCLC's conserved lands include 31 public hiking preserves, 56 working farms, 60 miles of rivers and streams, and over 3,000 acres of habitat for rare and endangered species.

NCLC is committed to connecting people to the land through public access, stewardship, and educational programming for all ages. In addition to advancing its own ambitious land protection program, NCLC serves as a conservation partner and service provider, supporting local land trusts and regional partners through funding, technical assistance, shared staffing, and transaction support. To strengthen long-term conservation capacity in the region, NCLC has strategically expanded through mergers with Brookfield Open Space Legacy (2019), Naromi Land Trust (2020), and Candlewood Valley Regional Land Trust (2025).

NCLC is a nationally accredited land trust, first accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission in 2015 and re-accredited in 2020. The organization has been recognized for excellence in land conservation with Connecticut's highest land trust award from the Connecticut Land Conservation Council, an EPA Environmental Merit Award, and a Working Lands Alliance Pathfinder Award for leadership in farmland preservation and public education.

Position Description

The Philanthropy Specialist is a key member of NCLC's Development Team, providing the operational, research, and analytical support that strengthens donor relationships and advances both annual fundraising and fundraising campaigns. Reporting to and working closely with the Director of Philanthropy, the Specialist maintains reliable donor information, helps translate data into opportunities for increased giving, and supports thoughtful donor engagement. The Specialist also collaborates with the Executive Director, colleagues, campaign consultants, Board officers and members, the Campaign Cabinet, and select donors.

Duties and Responsibilities

Gift Processing and Donor Acknowledgment

- Enter gifts, pledges, and related information into NCLC's constituent relationship management system (CRM) accurately and promptly. Gift processing includes cash gifts, stock transfers, DAF grants, IRA distributions, and campaign pledges with payment schedules, and others.
- Ensure gift records and acknowledgments meet IRS requirements and Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices.
- Prepare and track timely, personalized gift acknowledgments and other donor correspondence.
- Reconcile gift records monthly with the Finance Team and resolve discrepancies.
- Maintain accurate records of gift designations, recognition preferences, and other details needed for donor stewardship and reporting.

CRM Management, Reporting, and Analysis

- In collaboration with the Development Team, maintain accurate constituent records, including contact information, relationships, interests, giving history, and communication preferences.
- Conduct routine data reviews and audits; identify and correct duplicate, incomplete, or inconsistent records.
- Suggest improvements to Development systems, processes, and data practices.
- Build and maintain reports and dashboards that track fundraising progress, donor retention, giving patterns, appeal results, and engagement.
- Analyze donor data to identify trends and opportunities to encourage supporters to move to their next giving level. Recommend donor segments and follow-up priorities to the Director of Philanthropy.
- Prepare clear reports and summaries for staff, leadership, and the Board of Directors as requested.

Prospect Research and Comprehensive Capital Campaign Support

- Create and update prospect research profiles for NCLC's comprehensive campaign.
- Research prospective donors' philanthropic interests, giving history, connections to NCLC, and indicators of giving capacity using appropriate research sources.
- Summarize findings in clear, useful profiles that support cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship planning.
- Work with the Director of Philanthropy to identify and prioritize campaign prospects; track campaign pledges, payment schedules, and progress toward goals; maintain the prospect pipeline and record cultivation activity.

- Maintain prospect research, relationship information, and campaign activities in the CRM.
- Prepare prospect lists and materials for campaign planning and donor meetings.

Major Donor Events and Engagement

- Assist with major donor and prospect event logistics, including invitations, registrations, guest lists, materials, supplies, check-in, and follow-up.
- Coordinate practical details with staff, hosts, vendors, and volunteers.
- Record attendance, donor interactions, and relevant feedback in the CRM after events.
- Identify potential new supporters among event guests, program participants, volunteers, preserve visitors, and landowners, and recommend outreach to the Director of Philanthropy.
- Support new donor acquisition efforts, including list development, targeted mailings, and digital outreach.
- Help coordinate a welcome experience for new donors and members.

Mailings and Administrative Support

- Assist with development mailings by proofreading mailing lists and supporting mail assembly and delivery.
- Maintain development calendars and supplies, file meeting materials on the server, and keep Development records and folders organized and up to date.
- Provide scheduling, meeting preparation, and general administrative support to the Development Team and Executive Director.
- Assist with other Development projects as assigned.

General Organizational Sustainability

- Handle donor information with care and maintain confidentiality.
- Work with colleagues, members, donors, and community partners to build a welcoming and respected community institution.
- Maintain familiarity with NCLC's mission, strategic priorities, and policies as they relate to the position.
- Participate in staff meetings, professional development, and organizational activities.
- Travel locally and work occasional evening or weekend hours as needed.

Reports to

Director of Philanthropy

Salary and Benefits

NCLC is a collaborative and supportive work environment that encourages and inspires professional growth. NCLC offers a competitive salary and comprehensive benefits package. The annual salary range for this position is $55-75,000 depending on experience. NCLC offers full-time employees paid vacation, holidays, personal, and sick leave. NCLC pays 95% of health, life, vision, and dental insurance for full-time employees and contributes to a retirement plan.

NCLC is an affirmative action-equal opportunity employer. This is a full-time, exempt position located in Kent, CT.

Qualifications

- Strong attention to detail and commitment to data accuracy
- Two to three years of experience in fundraising, development operations, or a related role working with donor or constituent data
- Experience with fundraising database management, including gift entry, record maintenance, and report building (knowledge of Bloomerang CRM a plus)
- Proficiency with Microsoft Excel and Office and the ability to analyze data and present findings clearly
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to prepare donor correspondence and clear summaries for staff, leadership, and the Board
- Familiarity with prospect research methods and sources, or demonstrated aptitude to learn them
- Outstanding organizational abilities and the ability to manage multiple deadlines and projects
- Strong sense of discretion, ethics, integrity, and ability to maintain confidentiality of donor and prospect information
- Proven ability to collaborate with colleagues and engage effectively with donors, landowners, volunteers, and vendors, adapting communication styles to different audiences
- Experience supporting a capital or comprehensive campaign a plus
- Experience with event logistics a plus
- Previous experience with environmental or land trust organizations a plus
- Ability to work in a fast-paced environment with ease and humor
- Ability to travel locally and work some non-standard hours, including evenings and weekends