



**THE 360 GROUP**  
— EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED —

# California Academy of Sciences

## Managing Director and Chief of Strategic Partnerships

### Position Description & Candidate Profile

# Managing Director and Chief of Strategic Partnerships

## Location

San Francisco (hybrid of in-office and remote work), with 3 days per week on-site

## Reports to

Executive Director

## Our Client

Founded in 1853, the California Academy of Sciences is a leading science institute dedicated to regenerating the natural world through science, learning, and collaboration. Within a generation, the Academy seeks to foster a natural world that grows healthier, more resilient, and wilder each year. From the 1.4 million visitors who walk through its doors each year to the 46 million scientific specimens in its collection, the Academy's impact starts at its museum in San Francisco, California and reaches far across the globe through scientific research, public engagement and environmental literacy programs, digital media, and sustainability education. The Academy is the Bay Area leader in STEM experiences for K-12 students and teachers, and an innovative pioneer in efforts to increase scientific and environmental literacy in classrooms worldwide.

As a beloved institution that has stood for nearly 170 years and seen countless social and environmental challenges in its history, the California Academy of Sciences is entering a bold and exciting new phase—one that will help to meet the world's most pressing challenges head on. The Academy is transforming into a purpose-based organization that will focus beyond repairing and sustaining our ecosystems and climate. Instead, the Academy's mission will center around regeneration, which includes:

- Reversing biodiversity and habitat loss to fight climate change
- Restoring critical ecosystems—and our place within them
- Reshaping environmentalism to welcome diverse voices
- Remembering that we are part of, not apart from, the natural world

The Academy has launched three major initiatives under its Regeneration mission, each of which aims to protect and regenerate some of Earth's most important and critically endangered ecosystems:

- Thriving California will harness scientific data and mobilize diverse communities to fight climate change, stop biodiversity loss, and advocate for nature in the Golden State. The initiative received \$2.1 million in state budget funds to support its Environmental Learning Plan to close the science learning gap. The funding will benefit families, communities, and K-12 students and teachers across the state.
- Hope for Reefs, Phase II aims to reverse the rapid decline of Earth’s reefs in this generation. Coral reefs support 25 percent of all marine life—and the livelihoods of half a billion humans. Phase I was focused on understanding, protecting and restoring global reefs. Phase II will take this work to scale and create pathways to see reefs on a trajectory of resilience and regeneration.
- Islands 2030 seeks to halt biodiversity loss and habitat degradation on five key tropical island archipelagos by 2030 while empowering and benefiting local communities. Islands 2030 will focus on five diverse tropical archipelagos—the Galápagos, Lesser Antilles, Madagascar, Philippines, and the Gulf of Guinea islands. Through three critical pathways—biodiversity science, environmental learning, and collaborative engagement—the Academy will equip island communities with the tools, data, and resources needed to build green economies and boost biodiversity and ultimately create a blueprint for regenerating vital, vulnerable ecosystems.

Culturally, the Academy is deepening its commitment to equity and inclusion in every aspect of the work it does, from its leadership structure to the partners and voices that influence and elevate its research and educational efforts.

Learn more about the California Academy of Sciences at <https://www.calacademy.org!>

## **Position Responsibilities**

The Managing Director and Chief of Strategic Partnerships (MDCOSP) will report to the Executive Director and serve as an integral member of the Academy’s Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The MDCOSP will provide visionary leadership, galvanize staff, and distribute resources to execute a partnerships strategy that advances the Academy’s mission. The MDCOSP will be responsible for maintaining and nurturing strategically important relationships and partnerships, supporting innovation and new initiatives, and positioning the Academy to enjoy ongoing programmatic success and financial sustainability.

The MDCOSP will identify, evaluate and initiate new partnerships for the Academy that will create new connections and fresh insights in order to expand the Academy's impact, scale, and bandwidth. These national and international partnerships could include museums such as the Smithsonian or the American Natural History Museum; nonprofits such as The Nature Conservancy or Sierra Club; government entities such as the State of California or large foundations. The goal of these critical partnerships is to serve all parties well.

This role will catalyze and deepen the Academy's position as a thought leader and actor in regenerating the natural world through science, learning and collaboration. The MDCOSP will also oversee the Academy's efforts to bring together diverse voices, experts, and advocates for critical dialogue, helping to establish a safe place for the kind of bold ideas needed to advance innovation and action toward a healthy, thriving future.

Overseeing the Chief of Science and Chief of Education and a staff of 170 full time and part time employees, this role will shape and guide the institution's newly defined partnership and community engagement work and strategic initiatives efforts. The MDCOSP will create and lead a team of talented staff in each area to achieve ambitious goals and serve as a connector of resources and opportunities.

More specifically, the Managing Director and Chief of Strategic Partnerships will be responsible for:

#### *Leadership*

- Leading the Academy to fulfill the institution's five-year strategic plan; stewarding existing successful programs and initiating new projects
- Advising the Executive Director and serving as a strategic thought partner
- Mentoring and developing the management capabilities of the Chief of Education and the Chief of Science
- Working collaboratively with the Executive Director and other SLT members to grow awareness of its brand, reputation and capabilities as a leading science institute and key partner in regenerating the natural world
- Acting as an external ambassador representing the Academy at strategically important meetings and events; serving in place of the Executive Director as necessary at key events, meetings, presentations, etc. including with the public, elected officials, community leaders, donors, and other partner agencies and entities
- Establishing strong working relationships with colleagues; strengthening a culture of trust, accountability, transparency, collaboration, communication, teamwork and integrity

### *Partnership and Collaborative Engagement*

#### Community Engagement:

- Fostering authentic, multi-directional relationships through a community-first approach that uses deep listening and responsiveness to center the voices and needs of community members
- Leading the division to advise Academy teams working on community engagement projects and supporting those teams with training on best practices for equitable and justice-oriented collaborations

#### Convening:

- Leading the Academy to fulfill the institution's goal of becoming a convener that brings together people and communities to regenerate the natural world
- Developing a business model and creating a team to manage and execute convenings, in collaboration with other Academy departments
- Strategic Partnerships:
  - Partnering with the Executive Director, Chief of Science, Chief of Philanthropy, and others to guide and complete the development of the Academy's strategic partnership vision and business case
  - Working collaboratively with the Executive Director to identify, recruit and maintain high-level strategic partnerships among non-profit, corporate, foundation, state, federal, K-12 and higher education organizations
  - Seeking out strategic opportunities and helping to accelerate decision-making by convening the right internal and external experts; developing a framework for selecting partners and evaluating partnerships

### *Strategic Oversight*

- Guiding the implementation of the three strategic initiatives: *Hope for Reefs*, *Thriving California*, and *Islands 2030*
- Providing leadership and mentorship for strategic initiative leads and core teams
- Mitigating obstacles, making connections, and helping to access resources to implement projects
- Collaborating with the philanthropy and government affairs teams to raise funding for the Academy's programs, including community engagement programs and strategic initiatives
- Cultivating relationships with state and national government agencies to enhance the fundraising capacity of the Academy. This may include the

California Department of Education, state senators, congressional representatives, federal agencies, etc.

## **Profile of the Successful Candidate**

The Academy seeks an exceptional leader with a demonstrated track record of building and executing successful partnerships that move the mission of an organization forward through innovative thinking and strong relationship skills.

More specifically, the Academy seeks a professional who has:

- At least 15 or more years of professional experience in managing staff, teams, budgets, timelines and partnership efforts to effectively accomplish strategic goals, annual goals, and specific projects, programs, and work plans
- Successfully created, developed, and led a rich array of partnerships in cultural institutions, public agencies, corporations or other organizations
- Finely honed collaborative skills to deliver extraordinary program outcomes through a range of important and often complex partnerships, navigating those relationships with grace, patience and diplomacy
- Ability to work in a consensus-driven environment, managing in a facilitative manner while being a receptive listener; well-honed ability to bring together different perspectives to chart a path forward
- Passion for the mission of the Academy, with proven skill at speaking with passion and eloquence about the impact of an organization and its programs
- Exceptional communication skills, with the ability to communicate vision and goals in an effective, engaging, humble, culturally respectful and persuasive manner; experience in working with a range of audiences, including staff, board members, community partners, corporations, academic institutions, civic leaders and donors
- Experience in developing business plans, securing funding and allocating resources
- A personal and professional style that maintains good will, collegiality, and trust with all partners, staff, and key stakeholders
- A background in science or science education is desired but not required

## **Start Timeframe**

We seek to have someone in place by Summer 2023.

## **Compensation**

This position offers a competitive salary range of \$380,000 to \$420,000 and includes a comprehensive benefits package. We actively welcome all candidates

from a wide range of backgrounds who have the skills to fulfill this role – regardless of compensation history.

### **To Apply**

All applications are held in strict confidence. Please submit your credentials and a letter of interest through our private applicant portal to The 360 Group at:

<https://the360group.us/portal/>

Applications should be directed to the attention of Maureen Capitolo, Principal or Vincent Robinson, Managing Partner. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Earlier applicants may receive priority consideration. To be considered, The 360 Group encourages all interested candidates to submit their applications promptly, via the confidential applicant portal linked above.

*At The 360 Group, we know that a richly diverse mix of professionals makes organizations more effective. Using that principle as our “North Star,” we make diversity a hallmark of our firm, and all of our search engagements.*

**Learn more about The 360 Group at [the360group.us](https://the360group.us).**