Perception Institute

Executive Director

Position Description & Candidate Profile
Executive Director

Location
Flexible, with a preference for candidates living in or willing to relocate to New York City

Reports to
Board of Directors

Our Client
Perception Institute (“the Institute”) works towards a world in which people feel a sense of belonging, respect, and dignity. Through a consortium of researchers, advocates, and strategists who translate cutting-edge mind science research on race, gender, ethnic, and other identities into solutions that reduce bias and discrimination, the organization seeks to address systemic inequities by understanding how individual, interpersonal, and institutional dynamics undermine equity and fairness. The Institute works in sectors where bias has the most profound impact: education, healthcare, financial services, technology, media, law enforcement, and civil justice, as some examples. Perception Institute turns research into remedies; its work centers on designing studies, evaluations, interventions, and communications strategies. Through the design of research, workshops, interventions, and services, the organization is dedicated to crafting real-world solutions for everyday relationships, to help everyone navigate human differences and mitigate discriminatory effects.

The Institute works with institutional stakeholders who bring a strong commitment to change, value innovation, and can help test solutions and bring them to scale. In working on sensitive issues associated with discriminatory or disparate impact, the Institute’s goal is conversation, not confrontation. The organization uses its research to make communication among its partners more effective, helping them to tell stories that are maximally inclusive and extend bridges to potential allies. Through these steps, Perception Institute works toward a world that is free from discrimination and other harms linked to cultural and social identity differences and seeks to address systemic inequities by understanding how individual, interpersonal, and institutional dynamics undermine equity and fairness.

We invite you to learn more about the Perception Institute at https://perception.org!

Position Responsibilities
Perception Institute Executive Director Position Description

Perception Institute seeks a grounded, versatile, and dynamic Executive Director who possesses a deep level of emotional intelligence to lead an organization that exists in service of promoting belonging, equity, and dignity. The successful Executive Director will take the Institute’s impact to exciting new heights by calling on a background of leadership and management experience, well-honed fundraising and partnership development skills, success in communicating with varied audiences, experience with and knowledge of scaling organizations, and experience with culture growth and change. Above all, the new Executive Director will demonstrate a deep commitment to driving sustainable strategies, internally and externally, that embrace principles of belonging, equity, and inclusion. Most importantly, this role requires a leader who is personally grounded and able to link the strengths of ideas, individuals, community, government, and more.

The Executive Director will lead the Institute’s strategy development through identifying growth opportunities and expanding partnerships and other resources to capitalize on them. The Executive Director will also lead the evolution of existing internal systems, including operations, fundraising, and a mission-aligned workplace culture. The Executive Director has overall strategic accountability and operational oversight for the Institute’s staff, programs, growth, and the successful execution of its mission.

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the new Executive Director will collaborate with the board, staff, and additional stakeholders to strengthen the organization’s brand as the premier thought leader in driving innovative equity solutions by utilizing science, data, and research to understand and transform large societal systems. Serving as the Institute’s primary spokesperson and ambassador, along with collaborating with and uplifting the team, the Executive Director will inspire confidence with both external and internal audiences while demonstrating leadership, self-management, courage, and communication skills. The Executive Director will supervise a passionate and skilled team of community-focused equity leaders whose work spans the globe.

More specifically, the Executive Director will be responsible for:

**Leadership and Management**

- Leading, coaching, learning from, and retaining a high-performing senior management team; empowering, energizing, and supporting the development of overall staff capacity
• Working with staff to build a rigorous and nurturing workplace culture that makes explicit workplace norms and expectations, while including processes that acknowledge the emotional labor of the organizational work
• Ensuring programmatic excellence and evaluation as well as consistent quality of finance and administration, fundraising, and communications; effectively communicating outcomes to the board, funders, and stakeholders
• Developing, maintaining, and supporting an active, engaged, strategic board of directors
• Managing staff, advisors, partners, clients, and influencers with versatility, empathy, and insight

Strategy and Planning

• Strategically aligning the Institute's collective vision and related programming to that which will contribute to the development of the mind sciences, strategies around navigating identity differences, and institutional and systemic change
• Supporting the construction of the relationship between mind science researchers and applied practitioners
• Collaborating hand-in-hand with Perception Strategies, the Institute's sister organization, and its founders
• Leading and overseeing ongoing strategic and budget planning, with an eye toward employing organizational resources towards collaborative, research-based efforts that have the greatest social impact and collective efficacy
• Expanding networks of senior-level contacts across philanthropic and institutional supporters

Fundraising and Communications

• Identifying additional revenue streams to enhance strategic flexibility, while extending the Institute’s footprint, consistent with its mission
• Leveraging the Institute’s institutional knowledge in bias, belonging, and mind sciences to lead and participate in innovative coalitions to develop and support greater impact
• Building the Institute’s funder network and brand equity by articulating the Institute’s impact to broad target audiences on social media, at events, and at public speaking engagements
• Leading the reimagining of Perception's primary public-facing web and social media presence
Profile of the Successful Candidate
Perception Institute’s next Executive Director will be a strong, empathetic leader who is passionate about eliminating systemic bias through empiricism and research based in the mind sciences, with a real capacity to drive internal and external cultural change. The Institute will welcome an informed and dynamic leader who has deep emotional intelligence, the ability to communicate complex ideas simply, and a commitment to the power of the mind sciences in the work of social justice through an intersectional lens. The new Executive Director will also be able to appreciate how innovative collaboration within industries can amplify impact and accelerate change. The successful candidate will possess proven leadership, relationship management, equity acumen, and staff development experience. To be sure, the successful candidate will have strong values alignment with the Institute, and unimpeachable personal and professional integrity.

More specifically, the Institute seeks a professional who embodies the following:

- A well-developed sense of self, with the personal grounding to work within layers of differing cultures and politics, as well as the sensitivity and ability to work cross-culturally and bring people together to achieve greater impact
- Demonstrated skill in talking with a variety of audiences within institutions, levels of management, and functional areas of expertise
- Ability to develop and implement strategies that enable an organization to reach the next stage of growth, recognizing the need to course-correct as necessary
- Strong writing and composition skills
- Ability and commitment to elevating the importance of mind sciences in making systems more just
- Strong ambassadorial skills to raise the visibility of the Institute
- Well-developed sense of self-management in order to amplify the strengths and talents of the Institute’s staff and broader community
- A strong track record in building sustainable organizations, including the ability to develop and cement fundraising and other revenue relationships
- Ability to energize staff and marshal internal resources to capitalize on opportunities that emerge from relationship and partnership development
- Ability to act as a bridge between the mind science research community, systemic change, and mainstream discourse
- Sophisticated understanding of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging issues, and experience helping organizations make internal cultural shifts
- Commitment to providing quality programmatic offerings, ensuring ongoing improvement of those programs
• Excellence in inclusive organizational management, including the ability to coach and manage individuals, develop high-performance teams, and unify a geographically dispersed staff
• Demonstrated success developing and working with a board of directors, including recruiting new board members
• Strong marketing and public relations experience, with the ability to listen well and engage a wide range of stakeholders and cultures
• Exceptional written and verbal communication skills
• Action-oriented, entrepreneurial, adaptable, and innovative approach to strategic planning

Additionally, the successful candidate will likely have:

• At least 10 years of senior management experience in either the nonprofit or private sector
• Intense curiosity about people, mind science research, and institutional change

**Start Timeframe**
We seek to have someone in place by Winter 2021.

**Compensation**
This position offers a competitive salary 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/](https://the360group.us/portal/)

Applications should be directed to the attention of 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.