



**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
**Words Alive**

*Location: San Diego, California*

*Compensation: \$90,000—\$100,000*

*Organization Annual Budget: Approximately \$750,000*

**WHO WE ARE**

Founded in 1999, Words Alive is a nonprofit organization based in San Diego, California, whose mission is to open opportunities for life success by inspiring a commitment to reading. We believe that reading is a bedrock of personal and community development, and that when everyone reads, whole communities thrive!

We are a leading literacy expert in San Diego County, with recent expansion to Orange County, delivering programs that focus on empowering children, teens, and families to change the stories of their lives through a commitment to reading.

We get the work done in collaboration with a highly engaged board, eight talented staff members, 350+ active volunteers, 800+ donors and 30+ partner organizations, including the United Way, Qualcomm, and the San Diego County Office of Education. Equity, diversity and data-driven impact are central to our mission and approach to serving the community.

Words Alive has a variety of streams of revenue to support our programs. We work closely with individual, family, and corporate foundations, and maintain a large portfolio of grants.

Our annual Author's Luncheon fundraiser attracts hundreds of the most dynamic philanthropic partners in the San Diego community and has featured such internationally renowned authors as Salman Rushdie, Jodi Picoult, and Isabelle Allende. This year's guest at our September 10<sup>th</sup> luncheon will be Emma Donoghue, author of the national best-seller (and Academy Award-winning film) *Room*.

Please visit [www.wordsalive.org](http://www.wordsalive.org) to learn more about our organization.

## **THE OPPORTUNITY**

The Executive Director position at Words Alive is a tremendous opportunity for an individual who is looking to change the story of the lives of children, teens, and their families by fostering a love of reading. You will be leading a dynamic team of staff and volunteers who are deeply committed to our mission of opening up opportunities for life success by inspiring a commitment to reading.

As Executive Director, your duties will include:

- Mission & Vision – Overall strategic and operational responsibility for executing the Words Alive mission through business plan development, partnership building, programmatic excellence, and systems for tracking progress.
- Fundraising & Donor Relations – Interfacing and engaging with diverse donor groups. Implementation of a wide variety of creative fundraising strategies.
- Fiscal Integrity & Viability – Overall cultivation and management of sufficient and varied resources to ensure the financial health of—and new opportunities for—our organization.
- Program & Business Development – Creation of new programs and streams of revenue as well as ongoing analysis of current programs and income sources.
- Governance & Leadership – Strategic development and retention of strong board of directors, staff, and key stakeholders.
- Community & Government Relations – Establish and maintain relationships with partners in the community and local government.
- Communications – Strategic development of public relations and brand recognition.

## **WHO YOU ARE**

- You are a positive, progressive person of high integrity who is passionate about the power of reading to improve lives.
- You are energized by, understand, and have experience taking programs to scale.
- You are entrepreneurial and have a proven track record creating innovative revenue-generating programs and/or social enterprise.
- You are an exceptional fundraiser with proven financial acumen.
- You have command of fundraising strategies and donor relations unique to the non-profit sector. You have experience analyzing, adapting, and explaining an organizational budget.

- You work best in transparent, collaborative environments. You are a good listener and do not shy away from tough conversations. You can build relationships and consensus, motivate others, and develop high-performance teams.
- You are a communicator of the finest caliber—a strong writer and natural public speaker who can inspire, empower, and motivate both internal and external stakeholders to drive impact.
- You can move comfortably between stakeholder audiences such as students, volunteers, donors, and community leaders.
- You have the ability to convey a vision of Word Alive's strategic future to staff, board members, volunteers, and donors.
- You are self-directed and pay attention to the details. You adhere to deadlines, delegate effectively, and have experience driving large, simultaneous projects through to final execution.
- You have had previous success working with a board of directors.
- You hold a bachelor's degree and have 5+ years of senior nonprofit management experience.

#### **WE HIGHLY PREFER THAT YOU HAVE**

- Connections to the San Diego philanthropic community.
- A background working with, or lived experience of, underserved communities.
- An advanced degree in Education or Literacy with an understanding of current pedagogical approaches to 21<sup>st</sup> century learning.
- Prior experience working with high-level community partners such as school districts, libraries, and out-of-school providers.

#### **TO APPLY**

Email your resume, cover letter, and three professional references to [WordsAliveJobs@gmail.com](mailto:WordsAliveJobs@gmail.com)