



National Park Foundation  
Chief Program Officer

The National Park Foundation seeks to recruit a Chief Program Officer.

**Mission and Background**

The National Park Foundation (NPF), the official charitable partner of the National Park Service, enriches America's national parks and programs through the support of private citizens, park lovers, stewards of nature, history enthusiasts, and wilderness adventurers. Chartered by Congress in 1967, the NPF grew out of a legacy of park protection that began over a century ago, when citizens acted to establish and protect our national parks.

The National Park System, managed by the National Park Service (NPS), was established for the benefit and enjoyment of all Americans. More than a century later, it secures our inheritance, and requires our constant and committed effort to protect and steward. The more than 400 park units comprising the National Park System belong to all of us. We are partners in their protection. National parks need us now more than ever to ensure that in the next century these American treasures are supported, protected, enjoyed, and appreciated by all. National parks have long relied on a combination of federal appropriations and private philanthropy to keep them beautiful, vital, and accessible. Throughout its history, the National Park Foundation (NPF) has played a leadership role, raising \$1 billion in priority projects and programs. This model of public-private partnership underscores NPF's belief that we all share in the responsibility to protect our parks as a living inheritance for future generations.

In 2016, NPS celebrated its milestone Centennial anniversary. NPF's involvement in the Centennial planning and celebration demonstrated the value of strategic alignment and collaboration with agency partners to identify funding priorities required to direct private philanthropy in a larger, transformational way. *Find Your Park*, the centerpiece marketing campaign of the Centennial, invited all Americans to experience the natural and cultural treasures preserved in our national parks. The combination of strategic focus and increased public awareness positioned NPF to dramatically expand its fundraising efforts and to more aggressively target new donor communities and channels. NPF's unique relationship with NPS, as its congressionally chartered national philanthropic partner, provides the opportunity to jointly leverage strategic planning and funding for emerging areas of innovation. This relationship enables them to pilot and scale best practices within the park service; and to advance complex, high impact, high priority projects that the service wouldn't otherwise be able to accomplish.

NPF is poised to advance the bold and important vision for the National Park System. With the completion of a strategic refresh in 2018, NPF's strategic realignment is to amplify the impact of NPS' highest priority initiatives where philanthropic investment can both accelerate impact, and leverage NPF's core competencies. The first pillar of the strategic framework, **Protect**, centers on investments to protect, preserve and restore the natural, cultural, and historic resources stewarded by NPS. The second pillar, **Connect & Engage**, focuses on building greater public awareness of national parks, communicating the relevancy of parks, and inspiring deeper public engagement with them.

National parks do more than preserve our nation's natural and cultural heritage; they enrich lives, enhance learning, and provide inspiration. Many Americans have not experienced these special places, do not feel a strong connection to them or cannot physically access them. NPF's challenge is to connect them to our national parks not only to experience the intrinsic value of their pristine, natural beauty, but because parks connect us to one another. As the stories of lesser known parks are amplified and shared, our parks become places of awe, joy and wonder, telling a more an inclusive story of our heritage and our history, its glory, and its imperfections. Bringing people to parks was a vital facet of the first century of NPS. In the next century of park stewardship, NPF will also invest in bringing parks to people. We will share stories of the parks that reflect a diversity of American experience, leveraging the power of media and technology to inspire all people to visit, care for, and invest in these treasures for the benefit of future generations.

For more information on the full range of programs and projects supported by the National Park Foundation please review their website at [www.nationalparks.org](http://www.nationalparks.org).

### **Chief Program Officer**

The Chief Program Officer (CPO) will have overall strategic and operational responsibility for strategic programs and partnership initiatives of the NPF. This position serves in an important role integrating the grants and partnership work of NPF and fostering close strategic relationships with key national and regional partners. Internally, the CPO will act as a critical facilitator, reaching across the organization to foster a positive, collegial working environment. The position will serve as key member of the senior management team. The CPO oversees a FY17 program budget of \$65 million and a professional senior team of four Vice Presidents and one Senior Vice President for Community Partnerships. The CPO will focus on the following three areas: program leadership and management, external relationships, and knowledge management.

The new CPO will be challenged to meet the following broad goals and responsibilities:

- Build and sustain a trusted and collaborative relationship with the National Park Service and key partners.
- Establish and sustain relationships with other leaders in the fields of conservation, park management, outdoor recreation and stewardship.
- Design and implement programs and initiatives that build out the organizational vision as established in NPF's Strategic Plan.

- Manage a Board committee, ensuring committee members are regularly engaged in the development and implementation of strategic initiatives.
- Attract, develop, coach, and retain high-performance team members, empowering them to elevate their level of responsibility, span of control, and performance.
- Provide leadership in development of inter-team communication and cohesiveness, sustaining culture and supporting staff during organizational growth.
- Convene partners to share best practices and ideas for enhancing support for the national parks.
- Develop the necessary systems, processes, and tools to better support the facilitation, collection, and sharing of knowledge that is generated by the programs.

The CPO ideally should possess the following professional qualifications and personal attributes:

Professional Qualifications:

- A passionate commitment to our National Park System and NPF's mission and a demonstrated record of success building and leading programs which address public lands management and cultural and conservation stewardship.
- Unwavering commitment to quality programs and excellence in organizational and project management with the ability to achieve strategic objectives and manage a budget.
- Proven ability to engage a wide range of stakeholders including advisory groups, coalitions, forums, trade associations, foundations, corporate sponsors, and practitioner groups.
- Ability to work effectively in collaboration with diverse groups of people.
- A team player, who can interrelate and operate effectively with peers and other associates within a collegial, entrepreneurial work environment.
- Solid experience working with finance in managing budgets, planning for contingencies and identifying revenue streams.
- Management style that is goal oriented, but flexible and respects the capabilities and independence of volunteers and staff alike and provides them with a clear sense of direction.
- Possessing the highest level of personal and professional integrity, quality standards and a strong work ethic often requiring weekend and evening engagements.

Personal Attributes:

- Passionate commitment to the values and mission of the NPF and a demonstrated conservation ethic.
- Demonstrated leadership, coaching, and relationship management experience.
- Ability to inspire trust, lead and facilitate with strong interpersonal skills and move from ideas to action.
- A superb professional and personal presence with impeccable integrity and a strong work ethic.
- Positive outlook on life, mission-driven, and team motivated.
- Personal creativity and strategic vision, coupled with an ability to listen to others and learn from their best ideas.
- Ability to think strategically, tactically and creatively.

**Compensation**

Compensation for the Chief Program Officer includes a competitive base salary, and a package of health and employee benefits.

**How to apply**

Interested candidates should submit a resume and cover letter responding specifically to the experience and qualifications being sought to: Daniel Sherman, President, Explore Company at [resumes@explorecompany.com](mailto:resumes@explorecompany.com). Refer to NPF/CPO in the subject line. No phone inquiries please.

*The National Park Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and invites individuals who bring a diversity of culture, experience and ideas to apply.*

*All correspondence will remain confidential.*