

**SUPERIOR HIKING TRAIL ASSOCIATION  
POSITION DESCRIPTION  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

The Executive Director is responsible for the planning, organizing, staffing, motivating, directing, and management of the Superior Hiking Trail Association (SHTA), a Minnesota nonprofit dedicated to constructing, maintaining, and promoting a world-class 310-mile natural surface trail paralleling Lake Superior from Wisconsin to Ontario. The 5,000 plus member organization has a small staff and an active volunteer group, including the SHTA Board of Directors. The Executive Director is hired by and reports to the organization's member-elected Board of Directors.

General responsibilities include leading the organization in maintaining and improving the trail as well as managing the organization's marketing communications, fundraising and financial management. Duties are carried out with the advice and direction of the board and its committees; and the support of staff, contractors, and volunteers. These responsibilities and duties are described more fully below.

***LEADERSHIP***

1. **Strategic and operational planning:** Provides strategic leadership and works with the Board to develop and translate a joint vision into achievable operating plans. Identifies and evaluates emerging issues and opportunities that might affect the trail and communicates these to the Board of Directors along with recommendations for ways to address them.
2. **Staff leadership:** Hires, develops, mentors and supervises employees and recommends organizational structure for better accomplishing the mission. Administers SHTA Personnel Policies.
3. **Support systems:** Leads and directs the organization in the adoption of new operating methods such as databases, communication tools, and training to improve organization efficiency and effectiveness.
4. **Board communications and support:** Manages logistics and provides information to the Board of Directors and its committees through bi-monthly board meetings and periodic planning sessions. Provides reports and communications at and between meetings to keep board members informed of events and to facilitate Board oversight and decision-making.

***THE TRAIL***

1. **Trail building, maintenance and improvement:** Plans, engages and directs the necessary resources for maintaining and improving the trail in compliance with SHTA Trail Policy. Features of the trail include tread way, bridges, trailheads, campsites and signage. Note: Current resources are two trail maintenance contractors; SHTA volunteer trail workers; volunteer trail section, trail head and campsite adopters; and one full time staff person whose responsibilities include volunteer and landowner outreach.
2. **Trail corridor management:** Initiates and maintains positive, productive relationships with the public entities and private individuals whose land is traversed by the trail, thereby preserving crossing rights. Negotiates easements or other appropriate

agreements, seeking professional assistance where necessary. Directs staff resources to address landowner concerns, keep landowners informed of trail issues, and recognize them publicly for their vital contribution.

3. **Special trail projects:** Identifies and leads special projects such as replacement of major bridges or the pursuit of opportunities for additional spurs, links and loops based on the main stem.
4. **External relations:** Initiates and maintains regular communications and strong working relationships with the organizations that are affected by the trail, including government agencies, counties, cities, businesses, and other nonprofits such as the North Country Trail Association.

### ***MARKETING/PUBLIC AFFAIRS***

1. **Promotes and creates awareness for SHTA mission and policies:** Educates the general public and trail users about the organization, its mission, sources of funding, and trail policies.
2. **Marketing communications:** With the Board's Public Affairs Committee, develops and executes a marketing communications plan regarding the trail and the organization that reaches trail users and the general public, employing both traditional media outlets and social media.
3. **Membership:** Directs staff in membership development and communications, including overseeing the annual membership meeting and member retention and recruitment efforts.
4. **Publications:** With the Board's Public Affairs Committee, produces membership newsletters, maps, brochures and trail guidebooks with the help of staff, volunteers and contractors.
5. **Retail sales:** Oversees the activities of office staff in their management of the retail store, which includes merchandising, inventory, sales, marketing, distribution and order fulfillment.

### ***FUNDRAISING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT***

1. **Grants:** Identifies possible grants, prepares grant proposals, and manages grant-funded activities to ensure that all grant conditions are satisfied.
2. **Donations and planned giving:** Develops and directs, with the assistance of the Board and staff, the planned giving program and other forms of donations such as one-time gifts and special fundraising appeals.
3. **Endowment:** With the Board's Finance Committee, reviews and makes annual elections with respect to the SHTA Endowment which resides with Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation.
4. **Budget and financial reporting:** Prepares, with the Board Treasurer, the annual budget for approval by the Board of Directors. Monitors conformance to budget and recommends budget amendments as necessary. With the assistance of the bookkeeper, prepares monthly financial reports for the Board.

5. **Cash and investments:** Monitors cash balances and assets, making recommendations to the Board for approval for reallocations as appropriate.
6. **Internal controls:** Manages compliance, with proper delegation to staff, of all internal control procedures such as those involving bank accounts, cash disbursements and receipts, payroll, purchasing, insurance, contracting, leases, and required tax filings.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

Position is located in Two Harbors, Minnesota. Some travel required, mostly in-state along trail corridor or as needed to represent the organization at meetings and events. Evening and weekend hours are necessary for meetings, external relations and volunteer management. Hours may increase during hiking season.

Staff includes two full-time and several part-time or seasonal employees and contractors.

Position is salaried exempt with salary commensurate with experience and qualifications. Benefits include paid time off, retirement plan and health insurance.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

- Demonstrated passion, energy and enthusiasm for nature trails and the outdoors a must.
- Successful track record in a leadership position with an organization or program, preferably in natural resources or outdoor recreation.
- Non-profit leadership experience, at least three years, is preferred.
- Proven ability to build and maintain positive relationships with staff, board, partners, supporters and community.
- Knowledge and experience developing and communicating vision and strategy.
- Proven ability to effectively develop and motivate staff and volunteers.
- Proven organizational skills, such as planning, collaborating, supervising and delegating.
- Solid project management skills, with experience in procurement and construction management particularly relevant.
- Demonstrated experience in fundraising, budgeting and financial management.
- Demonstrated experience in marketing communications, including publications, media relations and social media.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Bachelor's degree. In lieu of degree, a minimum of seven years of relevant work experience.
- Physical requirements include ability to hike in rugged terrain to inspect trail and light lifting. Valid driver's license and car required.