



DIRECTOR OF INDIVIDUAL GIVING
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

New York, New York



The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Wildlife Conservation Society in the search for a Director of Individual Giving.

The Director of Individual Giving will lead a NYC-based major gifts team focused on growing Wildlife Conservation Society's (WCS) private revenue. The Director will oversee the major gift program for the critical New York region, including identifying, cultivating, and soliciting individuals in support of WCS's vital mission. The Director will manage a high-value portfolio of donors with the capacity to give at the five-, six-, and seven-figure levels and work directly with Trustees and leadership donors to accelerate giving in the region. The Director will serve as a leading member of WCS's Individual Giving Team, which is responsible for generating \$40M+ in significant individual gifts annually contributing towards an overall departmental goal of \$100M+ a year in private philanthropy. The Director will be instrumental in helping WCS save 50% of the world's biodiversity, create nature-based solutions to climate change, and inspire the next generation of conservationists through its world-class zoos and aquarium and more.

WCS stands for wildlife and wild places. As the world's premier wildlife conservation organization, WCS has a long track record of achieving innovative, impactful results at scale. It runs field programs spanning 60 countries and the entire ocean. It builds on a unique foundation: its reach is global; it discovers through best-in-class science; it protects through work on the ground with local and indigenous people; it inspires through its world-class zoos, aquarium, and education programs; and it leverages its resources through partnerships and powerful policy influence. With more than 4,000 diverse, passionately committed team members in New York City and around the world, WCS works collectively to achieve its conservation mission.

WCS's goal is to conserve the world's largest wild places in 14 priority regions, home to more than 50% of the world's biodiversity. This is outlined in its [2020 Strategy](#), which positions WCS to maintain its historic focus on the protection of species while developing an ambitious plan to engage with a rapidly changing world. The challenges are greater than ever, but with the focus, dedication, and passion of a committed staff—combined with a unique mixture of field, zoo, and aquarium expertise—WCS continues to set the bar for science, conservation action, and education that has driven its success in protecting wildlife and wild places for over a century. It holds itself to the highest standards, adhering to core values of respect, accountability and transparency, innovation, diversity and inclusion, collaboration, and integrity.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Director of Individual Giving will report to the Vice President of Individual Giving, Stephen Ham. The Director will supervise and mentor two Major Gift Officers, a Development Manager (prospecting), and a Development Associate.

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT OF INDIVIDUAL GIVING

The next decade is a make-or-break moment for our planet as we confront the biodiversity and climate crises, and work to prevent future pandemics. With over 125 years at the vanguard of conservation, Wildlife Conservation Society's mission is at the heart of solutions to each of these threats. Through science, field-based protection, and nature-based solutions, WCS has a vision to not only protect over 50% of the planet's biodiversity—but also to give wildlife the space to rebound and thrive. Through our four zoos and aquarium, including our flagship Bronx Zoo, we inspire the next generation of conservationists and wildlife advocates.

Private philanthropy will play a critical role in determining whether we achieve our ambitious goals. More and more philanthropic revenue is being committed to protect the planet every day and good fundraisers need to help ensure it has maximum impact. WCS's Global Resources group has a strategic plan to raise in excess of \$100M annually by 2025—with the potential to far exceed that target.

As head of Individual Giving at WCS, I am building a passionate team of best-in-class fundraisers who are excited to scale our work. I am looking for an energetic, strategic fundraiser who has demonstrated their ability to secure transformational gifts, and to coach other fundraisers to do the same.

—Stephen Ham, Vice President of Individual Giving

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Wildlife Conservation Society values staff and community partners from all backgrounds and cultures with different skills, abilities, and perspectives. It is committed to ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to fully contribute to its mission.

Diversity and inclusion is included as one of the core values in WCS's *2020 Strategy*; it created a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Council and DEI working groups with more than 100 colleagues participating; and it has adopted a DEI plan for its New York facilities that was endorsed by its Board of Trustees. It has expanded its training for all staff to cultivate an inclusive workforce and reinforce its policies against discrimination based on race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, national origin, marital status, and similar categories. Despite the progress it has made, WCS recognizes that it still has much work to do. It pledges to take concrete action to address systemic racism and promote greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in its organization that reflects WCS's core values.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director of Individual Giving will

- create and lead the strategy for a portfolio of major and principal gift donors and prospects;
- manage a portfolio of 100+ donors at the \$25K level along with seven- to eight-figure prospects;
- develop bespoke cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship plans for each donor;

- provide leadership and coaching to four fundraising professional direct reports by providing guidance and strategic counsel to advance their portfolios and professional development;
- collaborate with the Chief Executive Officer, Executive Vice President, and Vice President of Individual Giving on the management of select high-capacity donors, including support for meeting preparation and follow up;
- partner with and support WCS's Trustees, Council members, and senior leadership to make the best use of their time and talent to bolster fundraising efforts and ensure their effectiveness as WCS ambassadors;
- establish supportive and cooperative working relationships with other Global Resources fundraisers in Individual Giving and Institutional Advancement, share best practices and new ideas, and collaborate on donor cultivation when needed;
- encourage and model a culture of Salesforce utilization to track and evaluate key performance metrics and activities, in close collaboration with the Donor Services Team;
- conduct and oversee data analysis to continually improve practices, drive action, and inform decisions across the team;
- build and manage meaningful relationships with prospects and donors through visits, correspondence, and consistent communication;
- with the support of the Research Team, continue to build a qualified pipeline of new prospects and implement effective donor engagement opportunities;
- develop and maintain familiarity with programmatic needs, budgets, and priorities for the Zoos and Aquarium and the Global Conservation Program;
- represent WCS's mission and persuasively articulate WCS's impact and conservation strategies;
- ensure the timely creation and distribution of customized fundraising and stewardship materials, collateral and briefings, and highly personalized proposals with support from the Global Resources Communications Team; and
- working with the WCS Donor Special Events teams, design and execute WCS events in the region that maximize major donor and prospect cultivation opportunities, and serve as a lead for these opportunities.

LEADERSHIP AND KEY COLLEAGUES

Stephen Ham

Vice President of Individual Giving

Stephen Ham has spent his life dedicated to the field of global conservation. Whether trekking mountain gorillas in Rwanda or whale watching in Antarctica, Stephen is a passionate advocate for wildlife and the wild places they inhabit, particularly for Africa. He received a degree in anthropology and environmental studies from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is a returned volunteer with the United States Peace Corps where he served in Ghana, West Africa. Before WCS, his most recent role was Senior Director with the African Wildlife Foundation and he also spent years as a special assistant to Dr. Jane Goodall. When not looking for leopards, Stephen lives in NY with his wife, daughter, and pup Daisy.

Paula Hayes

Executive Vice President and Chief of Global Resources

Paula Hayes began her tenure as Executive Vice President and Chief of Global Resources in April of 2017. Paula joined WCS after working at the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF). At WCS, Paula helps to chart a path for organizational growth.

Paula joined EDF as Director of Development, and prior to leaving served as Senior Vice President of Global Strategy. Previous to EDF, Paula served as a consultant and chief fundraising counsel for UNICEF and Women's World Banking as well as helping with fundraising at UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). She is a founding member of EarthShare, a consortium of environmental organizations, and served on the board of Oxfam. She is a graduate of Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois.

Theresa Duncan

Director of Individual Giving, Western Region

Theresa Duncan joined WCS in 2019 as the Director of Individual Giving, Western Region. Prior to WCS, Theresa served as Director of Philanthropic Engagement at Burning Man Project and as Vice President of Development at the Aquarium of the Pacific. She earned an MBA and a BA in Philosophy from California State University, Long Beach. Based in San Francisco, Theresa volunteers in the community and serves on the board of the Grinnell Art Museum. Theresa's greatest joy is sharing inspiring and urgent conservation stories from the field with philanthropists looking for opportunities to make a positive impact on the world. A pragmatic optimist and lifelong advocate for the environment and social justice, Theresa is passionate about protecting wildlife and wild places.

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Wildlife Conservation Society seeks a Director of Individual Giving with

- a commitment to the mission of Wildlife Conservation Society to save wildlife and wild places worldwide through science, conservation action, education, and inspiring people to value nature;
- success in closing gifts with significant institutional impact;
- a deep understanding of fundraising best practices and competency in developing and managing high-level gift strategy execution;
- an ability to interface effectively with the highest levels of WCS donors and senior staff members;
- an ability to manage and mentor staff and coach fundraisers to increasing levels of success;
- excellent interpersonal skills and high emotional intelligence, with an ability to develop and maintain long-term, productive relationships internally and externally;
- a creative, entrepreneurial approach; and
- experience with philanthropic communities in the New York region (preferred).

A bachelor's degree is required for this position as is at least eight years of experience in fundraising or donor relations, including a minimum of three years in a leadership position securing funds directly.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Wildlife Conservation Society offers a competitive salary and benefits package.

LOCATION

This position is located in New York City in WCS's Bronx office.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Wildlife Conservation Society as well as the responsibilities and qualifications presented in the prospectus.*** Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

To apply for this position, visit:

[Director of Individual Giving, Wildlife Conservation Society.](#)

To nominate a candidate, please contact Gregory Leet:

[gregoryleet@aspenleadershipgroup.com.](mailto:gregoryleet@aspenleadershipgroup.com)

All inquiries will be held in confidence.