



**MAJOR GIFTS OFFICER**  
**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY**  
**Location – Hybrid (Washington, DC)**



The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with National Geographic Society in the search for a Major Gifts Officer.

The Major Gifts Officer will support the growth and health of National Geographic Society's Advancement program in support of institutional revenue objectives. The Major Gifts Officer will qualify donors, build a donor pipeline, create and implement cultivation strategies for new and existing major gift candidates, solicit annual and major gifts, and thoughtfully steward donors. Working closely with colleagues in all Advancement disciplines, the Major Gifts Officer will develop, execute, evaluate, and refine strategies for assigned priority projects or regions to maximize their development potential.

The Major Gifts Officer will serve as a member of an Advancement Team that cultivates, solicits, and stewards individuals who invest in the Society to drive impact through science, technology, education, exploration, and storytelling. The Leadership Giving team collaborates with Society teams to build transformative and impact-driven strategic partnerships with individuals. The team also produces global events, in partnership with the Global Special Events team, that deepen connections and leverage the Society's power to convene, and directs robust annual, major, and planned giving programs empowering the Society with a broad base of public support.

For more than 130 years, the National Geographic Society has funded the best and brightest individuals dedicated to scientific discovery and understanding of the world. Its historic commitment to dauntless exploration dates back to its founding in 1888 when 33 prominent scholars and scientists established an organization dedicated to the "increase and diffusion of knowledge." Today, National Geographic Explorers are continuing to push the boundaries of knowledge, uncovering new insights about the natural and cultural worlds, and strengthening our connection to them and one another.

Well over a century after its founding, National Geographic continues to reach and resonate with millions of people worldwide. It has stayed true to its original mission to pursue and celebrate exploration, scientific excellence, education, and unforgettable storytelling while simultaneously evolving with nimbleness and fortitude in a rapidly changing world. The Society has embraced innovation and intentionally adapted, thoughtfully expanding its business model, global reach, and diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. In doing so, it has remained a vibrant, relevant, world-class brand at the forefront of exploration and knowledge.

## REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Major Gifts Officer will report to the Senior Director, Leadership Giving, Megan Kimmins.

## FROM THE SENIOR DIRECTOR

*Can you imagine our planet in 2030? I think we can start by saying that it looks different from the one Israel Russell lived in when he led National Geographic Society's first scientific expedition nearly a century and a half ago.*

*We are in a moment in time when we have an opportunity to make an impact on the world. I joined National Geographic not too long ago, because I recognized that the choices my teammates and I make today can shape the future of our organization, our planet, and the great diversity of life on earth. It is an amazing time to join NGS because our CEO Jill Tiefenthaler launched a strategic plan called "NG Next" over the summer. We are using it as the roadmap to guide our choices and lead us to continued success by harnessing the combined power of science, exploration, education, storytelling, and a spirit of innovation.*

*Since our founding in 1888, the National Geographic Society has awarded more than 14,000 grants to Explorers across all seven continents. One of the most unique aspects of NGS is that 100% of the funds we raise support our programs and Explorer-led work. In March 2019, The Walt Disney Company assumed the company's joint venture share in National Geographic Partners—creating a new partnership between the Society and Disney, one of the most beloved brands in the world. Disney is the greatest megaphone for our work, but also strengthened our endowment to cover overhead so that we could focus on innovative programming and our extraordinary Explorers.*

*One of the key areas of NG Next is creating a sustainable business model and establishing a culture of philanthropy. Every day the Leadership Giving team in the Advancement Department is finding new ways to work with our colleagues, as well as reaching out to new prospective supporters and old friends of the Society to engage with our work. We are creating leadership donor recognition societies and crafting a meaningful major gifts program. I am building an energetic team of experienced fundraisers with diverse backgrounds and perspectives who are excited to scale this work. I am looking for a teammate who is interested in brainstorming new ways to approach different philanthropic communities, innovating with fresh ideas, mapping your work back to our DEI guiding principles, pivoting to explore creative and non-traditional funding opportunities, travel and support our regional events objectives, and boldly cultivate new donors.*

—Megan Kimmins, Senior Director, Leadership Giving

## NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

National Geographic Society's yellow border is a portal to the world, showcasing all of the wonder and beauty that it has to offer. But the story of this amazing planet and the people in it only become complete when everyone's voice is included. The Society's mission is to "use the power of science, exploration, education, and storytelling to illuminate and protect the wonder of our world." To fulfill that mission, NGS aims to inspire, support, and elevate diversity and inclusion in every aspect of its daily work, storytelling, content, and product offerings, pushing the boundaries of what's possible. National Geographic Society promotes an inclusive and supportive environment for its community of employees, explorers, photographers, and storytellers—regardless of their age, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, ethnicity, nationality, or professional title.

NGS assembled a Diversity Council in 2018 which sought to make a bold statement about the Society's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, applicable to both staff and external constituents, to ensure its yellow border is a symbol of inclusion and truly represents diverse voices, allowing all members of its global community to thrive and succeed. The following statement recognizes the importance of diversity to the organization and serves as the basis for its ongoing actions to embrace an inclusive and equitable culture.

### ***Your Story Matters***

*You Bring the Yellow Border to Life*

*We are not all the same. It is our differences that make the National Geographic Society, and our world, a better place. We embrace each person's identity, experiences, and abilities, and we commit to cultivating an environment where everyone benefits from opportunity, mutual respect and a sense of belonging. We all have a story to tell. When we share and celebrate our stories, the yellow border comes to life.*

As part of the NG NEXT strategic planning process, the Society adopted its [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Guiding Principles](#): **Representation, Collaboration, Equity in impact, Transparency, Accessibility, and Accountability**. All members of the Society are committed to infusing these principles throughout their work, and the Advancement Team looks forward to welcoming new team members equally committed to approaching philanthropic and advancement work with a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

## **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Fundraising (80%)**

The Major Gifts Officer will

- move a portfolio of 125 donors and prospects through quality, strategic contacts and face-to-face visits to identify, qualify, cultivate, solicit, and steward donors to successfully close gifts ranging from \$25K to \$1M+;
- work with the Senior Director, Leadership Giving to meet or exceed dollar and visit goals, with a focus on new, increased, and multi-year gifts;
- develop, execute, evaluate, and refine strategies for the organization's priority projects;
- work with donors and organizational leaders to position Advancement to take full advantage of related organizational events and networks; and
- collaborate with the Major Gift Team to engage donors and prospects regionally, to include special events and other engagement opportunities.

### **Administration (20%)**

The Major Gifts Officer will

- develop and maintain a thorough and accurate understanding of National Geographic Society programs and funding priorities in order to effectively connect donors and prospects to its priorities and content;
- effectively communicate National Geographic Society priorities and successfully match donors' philanthropic interests to funding needs;
- provide and review written materials, including briefings, solicitations, and acknowledgements in a quality consistent with National Geographic Society and Advancement team standards; and
- utilize and update the Raiser's Edge database by recording activities, contacts, and strategies on an on-going basis consistent with department policies.

## LEADERSHIP AND KEY COLLEAGUES

### **Kara Ramirez Mullins**

#### **Chief Advancement Officer**

As the Chief Advancement Officer at the National Geographic Society, Kara Ramirez Mullins inspires philanthropy and drives strategic partnerships, comprehensive fundraising efforts, and global events for the organization. She also advances the Society's mission through membership strategy, as well as the corporate, foundation, and individual giving programs that broaden the Society's constituent base and generate financial support.

Mullins brings more than 20 years of fundraising and external relations expertise to the Society. Most recently, she spearheaded multimillion-dollar philanthropic and fundraising efforts as the Vice President for Advancement at the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business. In this role, Mullins expanded all endowed and operating funds, launched a \$400M capital campaign, and led five of the most successful fundraising years in the school's history.

Mullins' career also includes senior leadership positions with several esteemed Washington, D.C. organizations. She served as Associate Vice President for Institutional Advancement at the Brookings Institution, managing and directing annual and major giving efforts and a portfolio of high-level institutional donors for the think tank's \$600M campaign. She also served as Director of Development at the Phillips Collection and completed a decade-long tenure in development with the National Gallery of Art, connecting with donors, board members, and constituents in their philanthropic support of art and culture.

Mullins earned a bachelor's degree from Marymount University and completed graduate work at Georgetown University. In June 2018, Mullins graduated from the Executive Program at the Darden School of Business.

### **Lisa Herzog**

#### **Vice President, Leadership Giving**

Lisa Herzog is a passionate fundraiser with more than 15 years of experience in the nonprofit sector. She began her career at the George Washington University where she helped create and launch a mid-level giving society. More than a decade later, The Luther Rice Society continues to thrive as a nationwide community of GWU supporters and as a critical pipeline for leadership gifts. In 2012, Herzog joined the Brookings Institution where she managed primarily unrestricted giving – from individuals, corporations and foundations – throughout a \$600M campaign, established a young leadership giving society, and spent her final year serving as the Director of West Coast Initiatives. In 2018, Herzog joined Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, where she managed the Leadership Giving program, launched a \$50M capital campaign, and helped to direct foundation-wide fundraising strategy and efforts. In 2020, Herzog joined the National Geographic Society as the Vice President, Leadership Giving where she oversees the major gift program, planned giving program, and in October 2021 completed management of a feasibility study for the Society's first campaign.

### **Megan Kimmins**

#### **Senior Director, Leadership Giving**

Megan Kimmins is the Senior Director, Leadership Giving at National Geographic Society. At NGS, she is currently building a major gifts program, leading a very talented team of Major Gift Officers, and overseeing two leadership donor recognition societies. Prior to joining NGS, Kimmins served as the Director of Major Gifts and Leadership Campaigns at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC. While at the Kennedy Center for nearly seven years, she launched a critical sustainability effort, spearheaded five major annual giving campaigns, and led a team of burgeoning

fundraising professionals. Her portfolio consisted of Presidentially-appointed Trustees, as well as national and international donors. In her Major Gifts capacity at the Kennedy Center, she was also instrumental in the strategy creation, execution, and ultimately the closing of a \$250M capital campaign for the REACH. Before joining the Kennedy Center, Kimmins worked as an Account Executive for a luxury advertising firm in New York. Prior to that, her career also included stewarding the Board of Directors and the CEO of Snug Harbor Cultural Center and Botanical Garden, a distinguished Smithsonian affiliate in New York, at the peak of its revitalization. Kimmins earned a bachelor's degree from Fairfield University with concentrations in Marketing and Art History, as well as a Master's degree in Public Administration from The George Washington University. In 2021, Kimmins completed the Leadership of Greater Washington "Rising Leaders" program.

### **PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

National Geographic Society seeks a Major Gifts Officer with

- a commitment to the mission of National Geographic Society to explore and protect the planet and an appreciation for the hundreds of research and conservation projects around the world each year that inspire new generations through education initiatives and resources;
- experience with donor and donor candidate management and gift solicitation, including a proven track record of closing major gifts and stewarding donor relationships;
- highly developed communication skills and an ability to increase current donor support and attract new donors;
- experience managing high-visibility projects in a fast-paced environment;
- a high degree of self-motivation and an ability to work independently;
- strong oral and written communication skills and a demonstrated ability to write effectively for business and philanthropic communication purposes;
- attention to detail and an ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously;
- an ability to maintain high standards of confidentiality;
- a professional demeanor and good judgment when interacting with National Geographic Society staff, senior executives, high net worth individuals, and donors; and
- fluency with Microsoft Office and proficiency with Raiser's Edge database system.

A bachelor's degree is required for this position as is at least five years of development experience.

### **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

The base salary for this position is \$112,000 annually. National Geographic Society offers a comprehensive benefits package including medical, dental, and vision insurance; an engaging and comprehensive wellness program; 401(k) retirement savings plan with matching contributions after 6 months of employment; generous vacation and sick leave as well as a volunteer day; 10 paid holidays and 1 floating holiday; paid parental leave and adoption assistance; learning and development opportunities; pet insurance; transportation benefits; employer-paid life insurance and disability benefits; and a variety of National Geographic discounts and perks.

## LOCATION

This position has been designated hybrid. National Geographic Society hybrid staff are currently working remotely. When NGS launches its Flexible Workplace Pilot, this position will be expected to be in the office on three fixed days a week (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) and can work remotely for two fixed days a week (Monday and Friday). The in-office days are fixed rather than flexible to facilitate meeting scheduling, break down silos, and encourage cross-functional work, onboarding and mentoring colleagues, spur informal and creative interactions, build an inclusive culture, and reduce the Society's carbon footprint. All hybrid workers have the option to work fully remote in July and August.

The Society continues to monitor the public health situation and give staff at least 30 days advance notice before it intends to launch its Flexible Workplace Pilot. Additional flexibility to work remotely will be provided on a case-by-case basis.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of National Geographic 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:*

*[Major Gifts Officer, National Geographic Society.](#)*

*To nominate a candidate, please contact Patrick Key, [patrickkey@aspenleadershipgroup.com](mailto:patrickkey@aspenleadershipgroup.com) or Jeanette Rivera-Watts, [jeanetterw@aspenleadershipgroup.com](mailto:jeanetterw@aspenleadershipgroup.com).*

*All inquiries will be held in confidence.*