

RECRUITMENT PROFILE

SOULFORCE Executive Director

The Client

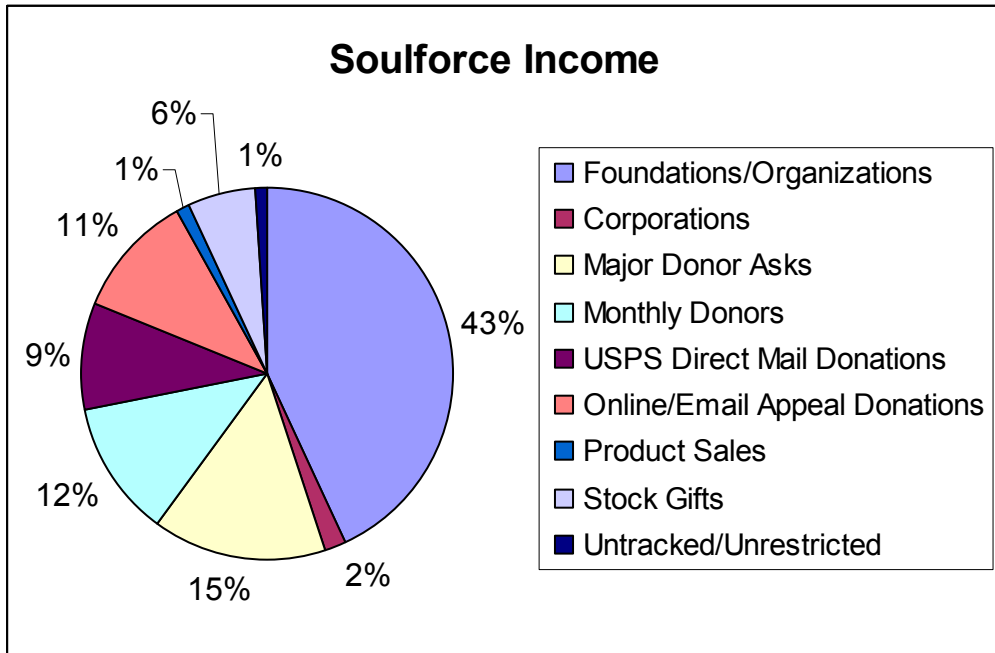
Soulforce is a US social justice and civil rights organization dedicated to ending religious and political oppression of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQ) people through dialogue and creative forms of nonviolent direct action. Soulforce is based on the principles of relentless nonviolent resistance as taught and practiced by Mohandas Ghandi and Martin Luther King, Jr and other nonviolence leaders. Soulforce was founded in 1998 by the Rev. Dr. Mel White, along with his life partner and spouse Gary Nixon. Dr. White had served as a pastor, seminary professor, best-selling author, prize-winning filmmaker, communication consultant and ghostwriter for Jerry Falwell, Billy Graham, Pat Robertson, and other conservative religious leaders until he came out as a gay man.

Soulforce has sought nonviolent dialogue with leaders of every Protestant denomination and the Roman Catholic Church, as well as religious leaders such as James Dobson, Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and others. When dialogue is denied, Soulforce, as directed by the principles of nonviolence, plans and implements direct actions which have included vigils, protest rallies, sit-ins, marches, and various forms of peaceful civil disobedience.

Through the American Family Outing project, LGBTQ couples and parents, as well as straight ally families, created opportunities for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity at six of the largest mega-churches in the country, including those pastored by Dr. Rick Warren, Joel Osteen, Bill Hybels, and Bishop T.D. Jakes.

Soulforce has also challenged policies at many Christian colleges and universities that deny academic freedom to LGBTQ students through an annual bus trip by young adult activists called the Equality Ride. Since 2006, Soulforce has supported this project, led by young adults known as "Soulforce Q" or "Equality Riders." In 2007 it was divided into two different trips (east and west), each leg visiting 15-20 different colleges. With the support of Soulforce, over 125 Equality Riders have made over 80 stops at religious colleges and universities with anti-LGBTQ policies. At nearly every school, these young adults find that many students are hungry to have conversations about faith, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Soulforce is governed by a twelve person Board of Directors, comprising business, civic and faith community leaders, and supported by the Executive Director's Round Table, a diverse group of distinguished individuals who provide counsel, professional knowledge, and public relations to supplement the skills of the Soulforce management team and Board of Directors. Soulforce currently has a virtual office with a ten person staff (some of whom are full time; some part time) and an annual operating budget of approximately \$1,000,000. Its funding sources break down as follows:



Soulforce provides numerous, books, videos and pamphlets and downloadable pdf files in English and Spanish on LGBTQ issues and faith through its website (www.soulforce.org)

Duties & Responsibilities Include the following:

The Executive Director is responsible for the administration of all Soulforce programs and accomplishment of the organization’s mission.

The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors and currently supervises direct reports with the following job titles: Business Director, Development Director, Communications Director, Director of National Actions, Equality Ride Director, two Program Associates, a Web Site Manager, Executive Assistant, and a Bookkeeper/Accounts Payable Manager.

Duties and Responsibilities include the following:

Leadership

- Leading the organization; maintaining the staff’s focus on the mission of the organization as they implement programs, and building a strong team with a high performance culture.
- Supporting and encouraging the Board and staff as they partner to expand community awareness, broaden interfaith connections, and expand financial support for Soulforce.
- Implementing the Soulforce Strategic Plan

Fundraising

- Working closely with the Development Director and the Board of Directors to identify, solicit and attract new sources of funding and to build long-term, sustainable sources of income (major donors, foundations, corporate sponsors) for the organization.
- Managing relationships with funders, ensuring specific measurable goals are met and Soulforce remains accountable to them.

Communications

- Along with the Founders and Board Chair, promoting Soulforce support among faith communities and the greater public; acting as a spokesperson for Soulforce
- Overseeing marketing, communications, and media relations

Program & Fiscal Management

- Managing a substantial budget with full accountability for achieving and documenting results.
- Providing regular operational and financial data to the Board.
- Overseeing all event-related activities, particularly in regard to finance, budgeting, staffing, and achievement of program goals.
- Attracting, selecting, motivating and retaining high quality, diverse employees and volunteers with backgrounds appropriate to the needs of Soulforce; committed to building a diverse and inclusive staff and Board membership; committed to building an organizational structure that is attentive to racial and economic justice, and welcoming to constituents of all backgrounds; providing guidance to the Board, Staff and volunteers to achieve this objective throughout the organization.

Professional Qualifications

Soulforce is seeking a mature professional with five to seven years of senior level experience with a \$1 million or larger not-for-profit organization (or comparable experience in the corporate sector) who can manage this organization for growth in an orderly and sustainable manner. It would be desirable for him/her to have experience in intersectional justice work.

The Executive Director should be a strong communicator and spokesperson who can represent Soulforce and its program initiatives effectively to the public – before a large audience or in a 30 second sound bite. A Master’s degree in business, nonprofit management, public administration or related area is preferred. Commensurate experience will be considered.

The successful candidate should be a proven fundraiser, ideally in the area of LGBTQ issues, social justice and/or equal rights. Experience with major donor fundraising is important for

success, and a familiarity with foundation, corporate and planned giving would be valuable as well. Program development and management experience and the ability to delegate effectively are required. The candidate must have a solid understanding of board dynamics and governance in a growing not-for-profit organization. Solid nonprofit strategic planning and financial management skills, either as a senior manager or as a volunteer, are essential.

Personal Characteristics

The ideal candidate will have a demonstrated passion for issues related to LGBTQ equality and will have the personal presence needed to share that passion effectively. S/he should have a vision for the growth and development of Soulforce that can be supported by board, staff and the organization's larger community of stakeholders. It will be critical to build upon the organization's success, working with its founders and Board of Directors, to take it to the next level by revitalizing its donor base and inspiring a new, young generation of activists to work for LGBTQ equality and freedom from religious and political oppression.

The ideal candidate will be a strong, charismatic leader who can inspire and motivate a team of workers and volunteers, and work in tandem with the Board and the Soulforce founder. S/he should be a person who has broad knowledge and experience with various religious and/or faith and/or spiritual communities (not necessarily of any particular one) but a person committed to working enthusiastically within these communities. S/he should be a person who understands fundamentalist religion and the tragic consequences of that fundamentalist doctrine.

The Executive Director candidate should have a demonstrated commitment to inclusiveness and diversity in all aspects of management and operations. S/he must have a strong personal vision, a focus on possibilities and opportunities, while demonstrating persistence and resilience. The ability to be a dynamic liaison between Soulforce and its constituents to promote the mission, programs and services of the organization, while maintaining the courage of conviction, is important. Adaptability and flexibility, as well as grace under pressure are a must. A sense of humor would be a valuable asset. Any experience as a participant in a Soulforce action would be of interest as well, though it is not required.

Compensation

Our client is offering a competitive salary, appropriate for an organization of its size, along with a wellness benefit package. This is a national search for a virtual organization, and the successful candidate may be located in any major metropolitan area with ready access to air travel.

Opportunity

This is a high profile opportunity for an experienced executive professional to make a major contribution at a critical historical moment to the growth and development of this eleven year old organization, one of the nation's most dynamic LGBTQ organizations, at the very center of the LGBTQ civil rights movement. Emerging from organizational adolescence, Soulforce is primed to take its rightful place as one of the nation's leading social justice organizations interfacing with communities of faith.

The successful candidate will have the personal satisfaction of contributing to an effort of enormous public importance and leading an organization on the frontlines of LGBTQ civil rights.

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