Development & Donor Relations Associate

Organization: North Carolina Coastal Land Trust

Reports to: Director of Development and Communications

Status: Full-time, non-exempt

Location: Wilmington, NC

Salary range: $48,000–$58,000, depending on experience

About the position

The Development & Donor Relations Associate makes sure every supporter of the Coastal Land Trust is known, thanked and kept close to our work. This person runs our donor database and the day-to-day operations of the development program: processing and acknowledging gifts, welcoming new members, producing appeals and mailings, honoring memorial and tribute gifts, and supporting grant proposals and reports. Working closely with the Director of Development and Communications, the Associate helps turn first-time donors into lifelong partners in protecting the landscapes of coastal North Carolina.

About the NC Coastal Land Trust:
The Coastal Land Trust is a high-performing, accredited, regional land trust with a reputation for excellence. It works to enrich North Carolina through the conservation of natural areas and working landscapes, education, and the promotion of good land stewardship in the 31 counties of eastern NC. Since 1992, more than 91,000 acres of land with scenic, recreational, historic, and/or ecological value have been protected.

Key responsibilities

Donor database (CRM)

- Serve as the primary manager of the donor database, keeping records accurate, complete and up to date.
- Enter gifts, pledges, contact changes and interactions promptly; run regular data clean-up, merges and address updates.
- Write and maintain procedures for data entry, gift coding and reporting so practices stay consistent.

- Produce regular gift, revenue and campaign reports for the Director of Development and Communications, the Executive Director and the Board.
- Reconcile gift records with the finance team each month.
- Support CRM automation setup and management.

Gift processing and acknowledgment

- In collaboration with Office Administrator, process all gifts, including checks, online, stock, IRA and recurring gifts.
- Prepare and mail timely, IRS-compliant thank-you letters for all gifts, including responses to annual and year-end appeals, with a goal of acknowledgment within 48 hours.
- Manage tribute giving: record in-memory and in-honor gifts and send tribute cards to families and honorees.
- Prepare and send new member welcome packets.

Appeals, newsletters and mailing lists

- Pull and segment mailing and email lists for the annual and year-end appeals, newsletters, event invitations and other outreach.
- Coordinate appeal production with the printer or mail house, including proofs, data files and schedules.
- Track appeal response rates and results and report on them.

Donor cultivation and stewardship

- Support cultivation and stewardship plans for members and major donors, including thank-you calls, impact updates and invitations to preserve visits and events.
- Track donor interactions and next steps in the database for the development team, Executive Director and Board.
- Help plan and staff donor events and field trips to protected properties.
- Flag upgrade, lapsed and monthly-giving opportunities from database trends.
- Contribute to event sponsorship asks

Grant support

- Assist in grant application submissions.
- Gather supporting documents (budgets, financial statements, Form 990, board list, audit) and keep them current.
- Help draft and edit proposal sections and reports, and track grant restrictions and deliverables.

Other duties

- Support communications, events, and outreach as needed.
- Uphold Land Trusts Standards and Practices and donor privacy best practices.
- Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications

Required

- Two or more years of experience in development, donor relations, database management or nonprofit administration.
- Hands-on experience with a donor database or CRM, with strong Excel or Google Sheets skills.
- Passionate about the mission and impact of NCCLT.
- Strong writing skills, with a warm and professional tone.
- Excellent communication skills, with the ability to communicate effectively with landowners, government officials, volunteers, Board members and business and philanthropic representatives.
- Discretion with confidential donor information.
- Excellent attention to detail.
- Good computer skills and familiarity with Microsoft Office, including Teams, and an understanding of workplace technology trends.
- Ability to work independently and on their own initiative, with a proven ability to work with efficiency, flexibility and good humor.
- Success in roles requiring execution of multiple tasks while responding to multiple demands.
- Proven ability to remain focused in the face of pressure and deliver against timelines, without being intimidated by tasks or time limitations.
- Familiarity with the State of North Carolina, its government, culture, people and natural resources.
- Flexibility to work some evenings and weekends.
- Valid driver's license.

Preferred

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience.
- Experience with appeals, mail houses and gift acknowledgment.
- Grant writing or grant management experience.

Compensation, benefits and how to apply

Salary: $48,000–$58,000, commensurate with experience.

Benefits: medical insurance; retirement benefits; disability and life insurance; generous paid holidays; vacation leave; family, medical and parental leave; professional development; wellness benefits and staff outings.

To apply: Submit one document that includes your resume and a cover letter outlining your qualifications and interests to the attention of Laura Wilson to jobs@coastallandtrust.org with the subject line “Development and Donor Relations Associate.” Priority application deadline is January 3, 2027. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled. For more information, visit www.CoastalLandTrust.org.

We believe a diverse workplace is critical to achieving our goals. We seek to recruit, develop and retain talented people from a diverse candidate pool, and we encourage people from structurally marginalized communities and experiences to apply. A frequently cited statistic shows that applicants from structurally marginalized and underrepresented groups often apply only if they meet 100% of the qualifications. No one ever does, so the Coastal Land Trust encourages you to break that statistic and apply. We look forward to your application!

The Coastal Land Trust is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes applicants of all backgrounds.