

**HIGH
LINE** 

Major Gifts Officer

Friends of the High Line

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BOSTON | NEW YORK

Friends of the High Line is seeking a dynamic, entrepreneurial and results-oriented professional to join their talented fundraising team as their new Major Gifts Officer.

About Friends of the High Line

Friends of the High Line (the High Line) is both a nonprofit organization and a public park on the West Side of Manhattan. Through their work with communities on and off the High Line, they are devoted to reimagining public spaces to create connected, healthy neighborhoods and cities.

Built on a historic, elevated rail line, the High Line was always intended to be more than a park. You can walk through the gardens, view art, experience a performance, enjoy food or beverage, or connect with friends and neighbors—all while enjoying a unique perspective of New York City. The High Line was once destined for demolition. Luckily, the community rallied together to repurpose it instead, creating the park you see today, for everyone to enjoy. It has since become a global inspiration for cities to transform unused industrial zones into dynamic public spaces.



The High Line offers family, teen and education programs including interactive, nature-based, and art-making programs, paid job opportunities for local youth, and in-school and after-school programs for thousands of NYC public school students .

In 2019, The High Line launched the Sustainable Gardens Project, a pilot program that supports the initiation or expansion of innovative urban gardening projects focused on cultivating pollinator plants across New York City. The participants in the inaugural session are Brighter Choice Community School, Kelly Street Garden, JM Rapport School for Career Development Farm/Garden, The Farmers Garden, and DeWitt Clinton High School Campus. These five gardens will work with the horticulture team to attain technical assistance and knowledge, but, most importantly, to start a peer network of community-led, self-determined gardens.

The High Line is owned by the City of New York and they operate under a license agreement with NYC Parks.

About Philanthropy at Friends of the High Line

Philanthropy at the High Line is a strategic priority, and funding has grown steadily over the last few years. With the support of leadership and the Board, opportunity exists to continue to grow philanthropy at the High Line.

With a 2019 annual operating budget of \$18M, and a slightly reduced 2020 operating budget, the High Line provides virtually all of the park's operating budget. Individual giving accounts for more than \$4 million annually, in addition to fundraising for additional restricted giving for specific projects. Nearly 100% of the High Line's annual budget comes through donations.

With the help of a tremendously generous board, the High Line was able to cut their deficit in half during these unprecedented times. With a capital campaign on the horizon in the next few years, a prospect pool with exceptional potential and a robust membership, there is no better time to join the thriving development team at the High Line.

About the Position



The Major Gifts Officer (MGO) will oversee strategy, research, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship for a portfolio of approximately 150 donors and prospects with significant potential, focused on gifts of 5 figures and greater. The MGO will have the opportunity to deepen relationships with existing donors as well as conduct discovery work to identify and cultivate new prospects.

The MGO will maximize direct engagement with donors and develop a robust, personalized mail and digital program to support that engagement. They will develop a strong, concisely stated case for support for the organization's vital programs and annual operations and will effectively utilize moves management systems in support of advancing direct solicitations of the major gifts portfolio. Reporting to the Senior Director of Individual Giving, the MGO will collaborate with the Chief Advancement Officer, Executive Director, and Associate Director of Development on overall program and donor strategy, while prioritizing a focus on direct donor engagement.

The position offers a unique opportunity for a high energy, creative, and entrepreneurial development professional to advance the mission of the High Line and help take their individual giving to new heights.

Key Responsibilities

- Develop and implement rigorous strategies and schedules for identifying prospects, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship for major gifts and future campaign fundraising
- Maintain an active schedule of donor engagements, maximizing direct donor interaction when possible
- Work with the individual giving team, organizational departments (art, horticulture, High Line Network, programming, and education), and board members to actively engage donors and exceed annual fundraising goals
- Help grow a culture of philanthropy among the High Line's individual networks, shaping the messaging for compelling fundraising appeals solicitations
- Maintain a portfolio of donors with an emphasis on 5-figure gifts or greater, in support of maintenance and operations, High Line Art, High Line Network, programming, education, and special projects
- Develop customized briefing documents, solicitation materials, proposals, correspondence, and gift acknowledgements, all informed by a consistent, well-articulated case for support
- Create and implement a stewardship plan to ensure best practices for accuracy in processing and tracking gifts, as well as gift acknowledgement, donor records, donor recognition, and reports
- Regularly attend cultural and civic events during the evenings, virtually and in-person when possible

- Plan cultivation and stewardship events throughout the year in partnership with special events team
- Pursue research on prospective and existing donors, provide accurate and timely management of portfolio, and contribute to bi-weekly prospect review sessions
- Identify new prospects and oversee income and expense tracking
- Work closely with the Senior Director of Individual Giving, Associate Director of Development, Development coordinator, and Prospect Researcher

Key Qualifications

- Minimum 8 years' frontline fundraising experience
- Demonstrated success with raising 5+-figure gifts and exceeding contributed income goals in a competitive fundraising environment
- Proven track record of strategically using moves management to maximize revenue and donor retention
- Experience with volunteer leadership and committees
- Competent in the planning and implementation of multiple, concurrent projects and events
- Personable, highly organized, detail-oriented, and collaborative
- Ability to make in-person solicitations and assist Executive Director, board and other staff with solicitations, through portfolio development support and strategic counsel
- Ability to see and understand the objectives of the major gifts group, the larger individual giving group, and the advancement division, and to integrate the major gifts program with those objectives
- Excellent writing skills
- Entrepreneurial spirit and sense of humor
- Proficiency in computer applications, including Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, and Raiser's Edge or similar fundraising database
- Knowledge of and enthusiasm for parks, public spaces, arts and culture, and public/private partnerships a plus
- An understanding of cultural fundraising and NYC donor/philanthropic landscape a plus



All qualified candidates will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Please email your cover letter and resume in confidence to:

HighLineMGO@developmentguild.com

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For more information about Friends of the High Line please visit <https://www.thehighline.org/>

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About Development Guild DDI

For 40 years, Development Guild DDI has consulted to leaders across the nonprofit spectrum. With offices in Boston and New York, we have successfully collaborated with more than 650 clients nationwide in the sectors of health & science, education, environment, the arts, and social justice. We are experts in executive search and fundraising and are at the forefront of delivering best practice in these services.

With each engagement, we work in teams tailored to a client's particular needs, providing sector-specific intelligence, cross-sector insight, and hands-on functional expertise. We combine our perspective on nonprofit leadership with our knowledge and experience in both fundraising and executive search. This distinct perspective enables us to deliver the most strategic and measurable impact.

