



WOODS HOLE
OCEANOGRAPHIC
INSTITUTION

Development Director, Major Gifts

Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

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Tracy Marshall

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SEARCH PRACTICE
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, PRINCIPAL

Development Guild DDI

tmarshall@developmentguild.com

developmentguild.com

BOSTON | NEW YORK

The Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution seeks an ambitious and mission-driven fundraising professional for the newly created position of Development Director, Major Gifts for the New York City/Metro area.

About Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

The Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) is dedicated to advancing knowledge of the ocean and its connection with the Earth system through a sustained commitment to excellence in science, engineering, and education, and to the application of this knowledge to problems facing society. WHOI's team of scientists and engineers are committed to understanding all facets of the ocean as well as its complex connections with Earth's atmosphere, land, ice, seafloor, and life—including humanity. This is essential not only to advance knowledge about our planet, but also to ensure society's long-term welfare and to help guide human stewardship of the environment.

To guide the Institution into the next decade and beyond, WHOI leadership crafted an ambitious plan, [Vision 2030](#), that focuses on three strategic actions: Investing in Inclusive Excellence, Leading Innovation, and Engaging the World. It is guided by a set of core values that frame how WHOI views itself and looks at the world, and how the scientific community, policymakers, funders, industry, and the public will be engaged in its work. These core values include:

- A passion for innovation and discovery
- The capacity to take on challenges of extraordinary scale and complexity
- An enduring commitment to rigorous, independent, and trusted science
- Distinctive capabilities in ocean science and engineering, exploration, education, and marine operations
- A close-knit community of distinguished, committed, and entrepreneurial staff



In addition, WHOI has embraced diversity, equity, and inclusion principles that will develop a more welcoming and supportive environment in which the voices of all people are fully represented and fully heard. Earth and ocean sciences are among the least diverse of the natural and physical sciences, so WHOI leadership will lead a community-wide effort to recruit and retain new generations of scientists and engineers from diverse backgrounds and to better reflect the larger society it serves. WHOI is proud of this commitment and believes it is essential to its future, its science, and its larger engagement with society.

For more information about Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, please visit: <https://www.whoi.edu/>

About Philanthropy at WHOI

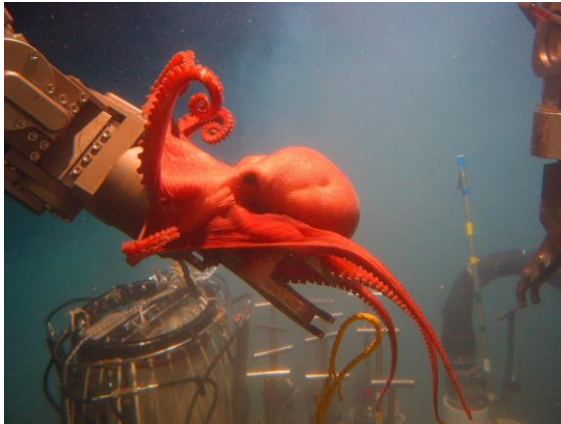
WHOI has a strong history of fundraising from a broad base of supporters, and the cultivation of philanthropic giving from individuals, corporations, and foundations has been instrumental to advancing the mission of understanding of the ocean. Private philanthropy in particular has been an integral part of WHOI's success since it was founded in 1930, and today gifts from major donors continue to support innovative ideas, technologies, and scientific discoveries.

With a collaborative 22-person development team, WHOI has been named a four-star charity by Charity Navigator for 11 consecutive years, a distinction achieved by only two percent of U.S. charities. Support for WHOI from donors reached \$90M in 2022, and results are projected to exceed \$65M in 2023.

WHOI is in the early phase of a comprehensive campaign and the new Director will play a significant role in the success of the campaign through the careful stewardship of WHOI's current supporters and ambitious identification and solicitation of donors in the New York City/Metro region.

About the Position

WHOI seeks a Development Director for Major Gifts (Major Gifts Officer) to manage and further cultivate a strong group of existing donors in the greater New York City region to support the ambitious and strategic fundraising growth of the organization. In particular, this position will be responsible for working with the team to drive WHOI's campaign and be responsible for identifying, cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major gift donors and prospects. The successful candidate for this position will need to be based in the New York City region.



Key to success in this role will be identifying and building relationships with new prospects, as well as strengthening relationships with existing donors to maximize philanthropic support. In addition to soliciting major gifts, this position will develop ways in which donors can support the future of WHOI through transformational campaign gifts.

This position will report to the Chief Development Officer and will work closely with other Development colleagues and key stakeholders to expand and grow the fundraising efforts of WHOI.

Key Responsibilities

Major Gift Portfolio Management

- Grow and manage a portfolio of 125-150 prospects capable of making five-to seven-figure philanthropic commitments.
- Meet quarterly benchmarks and goals based on activity with prospects/donors and annual fundraising goals.
- Identify and qualify new major gift prospects and create a comprehensive strategy for donor cultivation, solicitation, and retention based on the donor's giving history and capacity.
- Directly solicit major gifts and partner with senior staff and/or volunteers on solicitations by providing prospect briefings, strategic guidance, and assistance with donor communications.
- Track prospect activity by creating and sharing reports that accurately reflect donor relationships and support through the moves management system.
- Ensure that key prospects are actively managed by meeting and corresponding regularly with them; communicate fundraising goals and move prospects through the major gifts pipeline.



- Enhance the operational efficiency of WHOI's major giving program by developing, implementing, and ensuring that all systems and processes—from gift documentation to reporting—are accurate and align with the needs and requirements of the organization.
- Prepare and present written and oral briefings, follow-up materials, and contact reports on major gift prospects/donors in a timely manner.
- Work strategically, as assigned, with the Chief Development Officer, Director of Advancement Operations & Stewardship, staff, and volunteer leaders to communicate fundraising priorities.

Prospect Cultivation and Donor Stewardship

- Coordinate other individuals in the WHOI teams to develop, plan, and participate in strategic donor engagement opportunities, such as small events for select prospects under direct management and larger donor stewardship events.
- Develop a high-quality donor experience through regular correspondence, professional proposals, and timely acknowledgements.
- Lead the development and implementation of cultivation and stewardship for major gift donors in collaboration with colleagues.
- Engage prospects in volunteer activities (as appropriate) to further steward and cultivate those relationships.
- Personally acknowledge all gifts from assigned prospects.
- Visit specified regions across the country to cultivate prospective donors and build relationships.
- Represent WHOI at events.

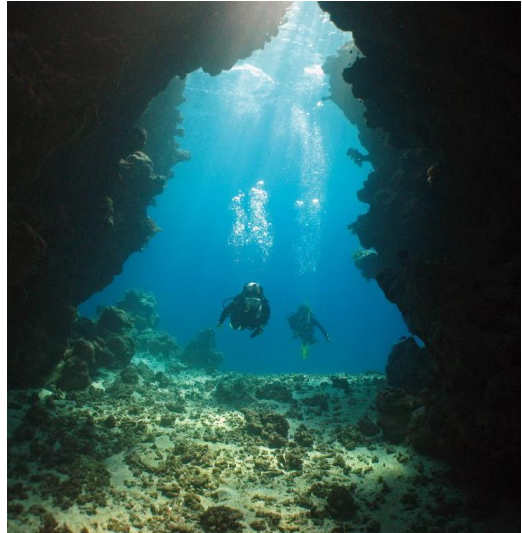
Advancement Responsibilities

- Ensure relationships are developed with other potential partners through engagement tactics that complement fundraising activities.
- Serve as a point person for the NY Chapter and its volunteer Steering Committee.
- Partner with the Development Events team on NY region event engagement activities.

- Collaborate with the engagement team to understand and learn demographic and personal information related to WHOI constituencies, prospects, and donors.

Key Qualifications

- Keen understanding of WHOI's mission and goals, and the ability to articulate its uniqueness and relevance.
- Minimum of 5+ years' experience in major gifts fundraising.
- Proven record of closing 5- and 6-figure gifts.
- Excellent communication skills, both verbal and written, and a strong ability to inspire and engage a wide range of donors and build long-term relationships.
- The ability to serve as senior member of the Development Team, providing thoughtful insights and high-level strategic input in all areas of fundraising and prospect management.
- A working knowledge of constituent management systems with an emphasis in Raiser's Edge/NXT, and Microsoft 365 suite of products. A strong understanding of best practices for tracking campaign and major gifts.
- A solution-oriented mindset and strong skills in diplomacy, communication, collaboration, demonstrated sensitivity in handling confidential information, and a sense of humor.
- Some travel and weekend and after-hours work required.
- All are welcome to apply!



WHOI is offering a salary of \$130,000 - \$150,000, plus benefits, commensurate with experience for this position.

WHOI is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer/Disabled/Veterans/M/F. They encourage Veterans and those with disabilities to apply. Applications are reviewed confidentially. Applicants that require accommodations in the job application process are encouraged to contact WHOI at (508) 289-2253 or email eeo@whoi.edu for assistance.

If you are interested in being considered for this search, please complete the application form here: <https://www.developmentguild.com/current-searches/major-gift-officer-woods-hole-oceanographic-institution/>

Please submit a cover letter in addition to CV.

For more information about WHOI, please visit: <https://www.whoi.edu/who-we-are/>
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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.

