



## **National Recreation and Park Association Vice President of Education & Chief Equity Officer Position Description**

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*The National Recreation and Park Association seeks a visionary and inspirational Vice President of Education and Chief Equity Officer to realize the organization’s strategic equity goals.*

### **About the National Recreation and Park Association**

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is the leading nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of public parks, recreation and conservation. The organization creates far-reaching impacts of success generated at the local level through piloting, scaling and promoting projects and programs. NRPA has a membership of more than 60,000 park and recreation professionals and advocates representing public spaces in urban communities, rural settings and everything in between. NRPA’s mission is “to advance parks, recreation, and conservation efforts that enhance the quality of life for all people.”

NRPA believes in the power of parks and recreation to increase the health, wellness, vitality and resilience of communities everywhere. Rooted in social equity, NRPA advocates on behalf of all people, delivering funding, resources and innovative solutions to the issues impacting our communities. True to the very philosophy of public parks and recreation is the idea that all people – no matter the color of their skin, age, income level or ability – have access to programs, facilities, places and spaces that make their lives and communities great. Yet, historical and chronic disparities have meant that not everyone has access to quality parks and recreation programs, and the health and environmental benefits they offer. NRPA’s work is even more important to these communities, and the organization is committed to broadening and deepening its programs to increase access to quality parks and recreation programs.

Please visit [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org) to discover more about NRPA.

## **The Opportunity**

The Vice President of Education & Chief Equity Officer (VP) position is a new role on NRPA's senior leadership team. The VP will work to advance NRPA's mission and vision through engaging with and growing its more than 60,000 members and advocates. This strategic new role reflects the priority of the CEO, Board and the organization to advance its equity work, particularly its racial equity and intersectional work in the parks and recreation field.

The VP will lead the development and execution of innovative membership engagement and education programs. Key areas of focus include: preparing the parks & recreation field for the future by increasing the diversity among the profession and training up the field to lead and manage programs with a focus on equity and inclusion; engaging the leadership of parks and recreation nationally on innovative management practices; and building out and promoting tools that advance equity and inclusion in parks and recreation programs.

As a member of the executive leadership team the VP provides thought partnership to the CEO and NRPA team. The VP supervises the VP of Membership and Certification and the Director of Professional Development, partnering with them to ensure that NRPA's educational offerings, membership and certification programs, and affiliate and affinity group engagement efforts support NRPA's educational goals and its core pillars of social equity, health and wellness, and conservation. The VP works closely with other staff and leadership within NRPA who share responsibility for advancing the organization's social equity pillar.

## **Key Responsibilities**

Specifically, the VP:

### **Leadership, Management and Governance**

- Serves on NRPA's executive team and contributes to the leadership, direction and evaluation of the organization.
- Provides human resource management and team leadership by being responsible for effectively recruiting, hiring, training, coaching, and developing individual employees and the team as a whole. As a supervisor, establishes, monitors and supports employees' efforts to achieve individual, team and organization goals, including professional development, learning and understanding of best practices in their field of expertise.
- Contributes to a strong culture of diversity, equity and inclusion through championing and modeling NRPA's pillars and values.

- Leads the department's annual budget planning and development process, and oversees, monitors and adheres to department budgetary objectives, supporting the organization's fiscal health and sustainability.

### **Equity in Parks & Recreation**

- Builds on NRPA's six years of work developing its social equity pillar by listening and developing a learning and engagement agenda for NRPA's members.
- Partners with NRPA staff and the Equity Advisory Panel to identify relevant innovative theories and practices, including those undertaken at agencies across the country to advance equitable access to quality parks and recreation centers and culturally relevant and inclusive programs.
- Evaluates current NRPA member tools that advance diversity, equity and inclusion within parks and recreation programs and identify opportunities to improve upon same, while identifying and developing new tools.
- Promotes effective practices in diversity, equity and inclusion, developing national standards where relevant (e.g., community engagement, equitable capital budgeting).
- Partners with the VP of Operations & CFO, who leads staff and board-focused diversity, equity and inclusion goals to ensure alignment of efforts, including development of internal capacity and expertise to support NRPA's learning journey and that of its members.
- Learns from and stays abreast of innovative and effective diversity, equity and inclusion programs, particularly across the nonprofit, association and public sectors.

### **Education & Professional Development**

- Leads the development of a strategic education agenda that advances NRPA's three pillars of social equity, health and wellness, and conservation and informs professional development, communications, research and program efforts.
- Contributes to NRPA's work to identify trends with the current or future potential to impact parks and recreation, as well as pilot projects or innovative solutions to same, leveraging learning from staff, park and recreation agency thought leaders, members-at-large, strategic partners, and other sources.
- Ensures certification and accreditation programs are well managed in accordance with all substantive, ethical, pedagogical and other key considerations.
- In partnership with key stakeholders, oversees design and implementation of diverse talent pipeline strategies for the field of parks and recreation, including internship and other programs.

- Partners with the Communications, Professional Development, Research and Conference teams to curate content that is responsive to impactful trends, trendspotting and innovative solutions.
- Informs the Programs & Partnerships and Research teams' efforts to investigate and better understand trends of concern or opportunity.
- Supports the Programs & Partnerships team's efforts to identify opportunities for funding to support the development or expansion of innovative solutions.

### **Member Engagement**

- Partners with the VP of Membership & Certification to ensure that membership engagement efforts advance member growth and retention.
- Ensures that engagement strategies with affinity groups advance NRPA's three pillars, program priorities and relationships with members.
- Leads the design of an outreach and engagement strategy to create a strong network of connection across urban directors and a curriculum of substantive topics to advance same.
- Partners with the Professional Development, Research and Conference teams to curate content that is responsive to urban directors' needs and priorities.

### **Experience and Qualifications**

The ideal candidate will have:

- A Bachelor's degree and advanced degree in a related field required.
- Minimum of 10+ years of professional experience in a relevant field; a combination of government and nonprofit sector experience a plus.
- Minimum of 7+ years of staff and team management experience coupled with demonstrated institutional leadership experience in roles of increasing responsibility.
- Deep knowledge of the parks and recreation or (closely) related field, gained through experience as a practitioner and/or educator.
- Strong commitment to and demonstrated skill and expertise in leading equity initiatives. Demonstrated experience effectively working and establishing rapport with diverse populations with strong working knowledge of social justice theories and history.
- Knowledge of the prevailing and emerging trends in parks and recreation generally and diversity, equity and inclusion programs particularly.
- Experience in designing relevant programs for constituents.
- Experience in developing and implementing an organizational change management strategy, including building organizational capacity to align change management work streams.
- Desire and capacity to position self and organization as a thought leader.



## Attributes

The successful candidate will have:

- A high degree of emotional intelligence and self-awareness.
- An entrepreneurial mindset and ability to solve problems creatively and seek innovative solutions.
- The ability to work effectively and collaboratively across a complex organization.
- The ability to facilitate dialogue and engage stakeholders across the organization, membership, partnerships and other stakeholders in NRPA's work and success.
- An ability to navigate ambiguous situations successfully.
- An ability to articulate thought leadership and a clear point of view.
- A commitment to continuous learning and reflection.

To apply or nominate an individual please provide a cover letter and resume expressing your interest in this position to [search@blueridgeadvisorsllc.com](mailto:search@blueridgeadvisorsllc.com) with "NRPA-VP of Education and Chief Equity Officer" in the subject line. All applications and nominations will be held in the strictest confidence.

NRPA is committed to providing an environment of mutual respect where equal employment opportunities are available to all applicants and teammates without regard to race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy (including childbirth, lactation and related medical conditions), national origin, age, physical and mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information (including characteristics and testing), military and veteran status, and any other characteristic protected by applicable law. NRPA believes that diversity and inclusion among its staff is critical to its success as it seeks to recruit, develop and retain the most talented people from a diverse candidate pool.