

Death Penalty Abolition Campaign

Executive Director

Position Description

Campaign Overview

Leading advocates, philanthropists, and issue experts from across the death penalty abolition movement have come together to strengthen the coalition of organizations working to abolish the death penalty into a directive campaign. The Death Penalty Abolition Campaign will be a coordinated campaign to permanently end capital punishment and will require the vision, leadership, and management skills of a seasoned Executive Director.

In the last six years, six states have abolished capital punishment. Polling shows that public support for the death penalty is the lowest that it has been in 40 years, and the number of new death sentences and executions is near its lowest level since capital punishment was reinstated in the United States. A number of Supreme Court justices have expressed concern over the use of the death penalty. Justice Anthony Kennedy has said, “[w]hen the law punishes by death, it risks its own sudden descent into brutality, transgressing the constitutional commitment to decency and restraint.” Researchers, scholars, and advocates believe that abolition is possible with inspired leadership, an efficient use of resources, and a determined and coordinated campaign.

The Death Penalty Abolition Campaign will build on this momentum by identifying and directing resources in only the most efficient and effective ways. This includes coordinating litigation strategies, as well as driving legislation and policy, communications, grassroots organizing, and electoral strategy. It also includes fostering and coordinating partnerships between national organizations, state groups, litigators, advocates, and funders.

Position Overview

The Executive Director will be responsible for the oversight, coordination, and focused implementation of the Death Penalty Abolition Campaign.

In addition to providing overall campaign vision, leadership, and daily management, the ideal candidate will have the appropriate legal and political experience to advance an ambitious public policy agenda, implement successful fundraising and communications plans, and expand and energize existing efforts underway to abolish the death penalty.

This campaign will also include an oversight structure comprised of the following entities: 1) a fiscal sponsor responsible for fiduciary and legal oversight; 2) a collaborative responsible for funding and development; and 3) an advisory board to provide expertise and guidance to the Executive Director and campaign staff as needed.

The Executive Director will be responsible for submitting an annual work plan to the campaign oversight structure for review. The funding collaborative and advisory board will work with campaign leadership to build out the campaign plan, the terms of the plan will be memorialized in a memorandum of understanding between fiscal sponsor and the Executive Director.

Position Responsibilities

1. Provide vision, leadership, and management for the campaign. With advice and guidance of staff and advisory board, set priority projects and efforts of the campaign nationally – ranging from specific state repeal campaigns to crucial litigation support and critical policy and legislative reforms – and assist in channeling funding support and other assistance to those priority areas.
2. Lead, develop, and manage overall campaign strategy, executive staff, and day-to-day activities.
3. Establish, develop, and maintain strong relationships with staff, existing and allied movement leaders, and oversight and advisory boards.
4. Maintain strong relationships and communication with donors.
5. Ensure all activities of the campaign align with its overall objectives and are integrated with each of its elements.
6. Monitor activities to meet financial and operational deadlines and deliverables.
7. Monitor and adjust campaign plans as necessary based on changes in the landscape.
8. Manage the investment of emergency funding to ensure the campaign remains nimble and able to take advantage of new opportunities.

Qualifications

1. Bachelor's degree required. Juris Doctor strongly preferred. Minimum of seven years of professional experience preferably in capital punishment or criminal justice reform also preferred.
2. Experience in management, program development, and implementation in complex public policy, political, and advocacy arenas and/or campaign experience highly valuable.
3. Willingness and ability to incorporate research-driven tactics into overall campaign strategy. This includes identifying and prioritizing opportunities where campaign resources can be optimized to ensure success.
4. Proven ability to manage and develop high-performance teams, set and achieve strategic objectives, and manage a budget.
5. Background in capital defense litigation, criminal justice and/or death penalty policy reform preferred.
6. Demonstrated ability to work successfully with multiple constituencies, both internal and external.
7. Experience working with high-level advisors, funders, and activists, and

- ability to cultivate these kinds of existing relationships a plus.
8. Excellent oral and written communication skills.
 9. Mission-driven and self-directed, with passion, integrity, and a positive attitude.

Salary is based on experience, with benefits package. Minimum two-year commitment. To apply, submit cover letter and resume to: ehira@civitaspublicaffairs.com.

Confidential applications accepted.

Application deadline March 7, 2014. (Early submission encouraged. Position will be filled as soon as possible.)