



Position Specification

POSITION	Executive Director
ORGANIZATION	Volunteers of Legal Service, Inc. https://volsprobono.org/
LOCATION	New York, NY
REPORTING RELATIONSHIP	The Executive Director will report to the Board of Directors https://volsprobono.org/team/#vols-board

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION:

VOLS harnesses the power of New York City’s legal community and neighborhood-based groups to provide free civil legal services to low-income seniors, veterans, unemployed workers, immigrant youth, children and their families, mothers in prison or jail, small business owners, and COVID-19 frontline & healthcare workers. Its programs reach underserved communities in New York City – inclusive of racial and gender identity, disability, veteran, and citizenship status – and last year benefited 4,359 clients and their household members.

VOLS was founded in 1984 by NYC Bar Association leaders to fill a void left by severe federal cuts to legal services. Since then, VOLS has nimbly responded to public crises such as the 1980s HIV/AIDS epidemic and the 2008 financial recession. Its track record and trusted partnerships position VOLS to ably stand by vulnerable New Yorkers during today’s COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath. Its staff of 20, including 13 attorneys, works with volunteer lawyers from over 70 law firms and companies to multiply impact. It partners with 210 community groups to ensure that its services are accessible and respond to local needs.

Beyond serving individual clients, VOLS functions as a thought leader and partner at the intersection of pro bono legal service and social change. It builds institutional capacity at participating firms and corporate law departments, and engages in policy advocacy in areas affecting its served communities. For more background, please see the links to videos from three recent events, including a [VOLS-hosted leadership summit on Pro Bono and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion](#), VOLS’ [35th anniversary special conversation honoring Women’s Leadership in Pro Bono](#), and a [VOLS Community Celebration](#).

ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITY:

VOLS' next Executive Director will join the organization at a time when it is experiencing significant growth but also confronting the challenge of assisting New Yorkers and communities served by civil legal services caused by the crises tied to the COVID-19 pandemic, public health, economic recession, and racial injustice. The Executive Director will work closely with the board and staff to steward VOLS' vision and mission through this critical and opportune time of change and impact.

The Executive Director will be responsible for overall direction, strategy, and management of the organization including: creating a vision for VOLS over the medium and long term with a commitment to pro bono legal service, DEI, and economic and racial justice; implementing strategic direction; leading private and public fundraising; providing detailed fiduciary, operational, legal, and HR oversight; and collaborating and connecting with VOLS staff, Board, law firms, local communities, and clients.

Key Responsibilities include:

Strategic Vision and Leadership

- Work closely with VOLS' highly engaged Board of Directors and staff to establish shared goals, direction, and a vision for the organization.
- Lead organizational planning, including assessing projects, aligning the allocation of resources with its mission, and supporting a creative and enthusiastic staff in their efforts to improve programs and launch new initiatives.

Community and Partnerships

- Build, maintain, and strengthen VOLS' vital network of relationships with law firms, corporations, community-based organizations, government agencies, and foundations.
- Lead the organization on all issues relevant to pro bono civil legal services and the intersection with diversity, equity, and inclusion issues as they impact VOLS' clients, communities, staff, and Board.
- Work with community partners to identify emerging legal issues and develop responsive programming.

Fundraising and External Affairs

- Diversify and expand funding sources, creatively addressing challenges and opportunities presented by the current economic and public health situation, including driving fundraising campaigns from individual donors, law firms, foundations, government, and corporations.
- Represent VOLS in the media and community, inspire VOLS' staff to serve as organizational voices, and promote its work and brand through traditional media, social media, and other channels.

Team and Talent Engagement

- Recruit, retain, support, mentor, and promote a diverse staff and Board of passionate, experienced professionals.

- Provide fiscally sound management and fiduciary oversight including managing resources and budgets, overseeing human resources needs, and ensuring best practice systems, processes, and procedures.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE:

The successful candidate will be an accomplished leader, executive, advocate, and manager fiercely committed to guaranteeing access to legal services through pro bono and direct representation and passionate about social justice and racial equity. The successful candidate will have the highest standards of ethics and integrity.

Key Professional Experience includes:

- Significant senior non-profit or legal-related leadership, management, fundraising, and operational experience; track record of organizational or programmatic growth.
- A track record of and enthusiasm for fundraising and governmental relations; a demonstrated ability to identify and solicit major donors.
- Understanding of the culture and organization of law firms, especially in New York City, and their capacity to provide pro bono legal services and work with non-profit partners.
- Engagement with community-based organizations in New York City and the populations they serve.
- Prior experience working as a public interest advocate or lawyer is a plus but not mandatory.

Personal Attributes include:

- A results-oriented leader and manager with a highly collaborative and inclusive approach to management and decision-making.
- An excellent communicator and relationship builder who can represent and advocate for the organization to law firms, companies, and across diverse socio-economic and multi-cultural communities.
- Enthusiasm for engaging with law firms and lawyers in pro bono service.
- Resourceful and creative with an entrepreneurial spirit to develop and bring to fruition new concepts, approaches, and strategies.
- Passionate commitment to VOLS' mission and values of social justice as well as lived experiences with the issues being faced by the communities and clients VOLS serves.

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree required; J.D. preferred.

COMPENSATION: Salary is competitive and commensurate with experience; benefits are generous.

TO APPLY: Please send a cover letter and resume to: VOLS@sandlersearch.org

VOLS is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality, creed, age, disability, sexual orientation, biological sex, gender identity/expression, family status, or any other basis prohibited by law. It strives to build and maintain a diverse staff, and encourages candidates of all backgrounds/identities to apply for this position.