



TREE FUND
Cultivating Innovation

PRESS RELEASE:

TREE Fund Board Opens Search for President/CEO and Operations/Governance Assistant Positions

January 18, 2023

Following the resignation of President/CEO Russell King in December 2022, and in anticipation of the retirement of longtime Grants and Operations Manager Barbara Duke in late February 2023, TREE Fund's Board of Trustees have convened a Transition Committee to oversee the identification and hiring of two new employees to continue the important work done by Mr. King and Ms. Duke in support of TREE Fund's organizational mission, goals and objectives. The two open positions for which the Board seeks candidates are:

- **The President/CEO** is the principal executive of the corporation and is responsible for guiding TREE Fund in fulfilling its mission and ensuring its financial success, per goals and objectives established by the Board of Trustees. The President/CEO is the chief fundraising officer for the corporation and serves as its primary spokesperson and champion.
- **The Operations and Governance Assistant** is a new part-time position established following an internal reorganization. This important role is intended to provide professional support of and coordination for TREE Fund's Board of Trustees, President/CEO, staff members, partners, contractors, agents and volunteers.

To fully support the Transition Committee and TREE Fund's current staff, partners, and volunteers, the Board of Trustees has engaged J. Eric Smith, who retired as the organization's President/CEO in November 2019, to act in an interim leadership capacity until the organization's new leader and key office member are hired and trained. The search for these two positions begins immediately, and it will continue until the successful candidates are fully onboarded.

“We consider our President/CEO and Operations/Governance Assistant positions to be highly attractive opportunities for skilled nonprofit professionals,” noted TREE Fund Board Chair Dr. Arnold “Beau” Brodbeck. “We’re deeply grateful for the work that Russell and Barb have done for TREE Fund, and we appreciate Eric’s willingness to return from retirement to help us through this transition process. As has been the case with so many businesses and organizations in our field, the COVID years have created immeasurable challenges in all facets of our business model, and in our case those challenges were compounded by the untimely and tragic death of our Board Chair, Will Nutter, in late 2021. But as is always the case, challenges also create opportunities, and we are confident that the work done by Russell, Barb and Eric will position our new leader and his or her new right-hand office colleague for great successes in the years ahead.”

Position descriptions for these two positions are available at the TREE Fund website. Applicants should provide a resume and cover letter via email to treefund@treefund.org before February 10, 2023. Phone calls or other direct contacts from candidates will not be accepted. Applicants are encouraged to review news, research grants, financial reports, and scholarship programs on TREE Fund’s website before applying to ensure they are familiar with the nature and outcomes of the organization’s efforts, and to allow cover letters to explain precisely how and why applicants are best suited for these roles. Candidates selected to move forward in the interview process will be asked to provide professional references and, in the case of the President/CEO, a writing sample on a topic to be selected and presented by the Transition Committee.

ABOUT TREE Fund: Tree Research and Education Endowment Fund (“TREE Fund”) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization established in 2002 for the benefit of urban and community forests, and the professionals who care for them, on a global basis. TREE Fund was founded by and is closely aligned with the International Society for Arboriculture (ISA) and the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA). TREE Fund is governed by a 15-member national Board of Trustees. Its mission is to support scientific discovery and dissemination of new knowledge in the fields of arboriculture and urban forestry. TREE Fund’s mission-based goals and objectives are met primarily through its fundraising for and administration of competitive grant programs for research, education, and scholarships to advance the fields of arboriculture and urban forestry. In addition, TREE Fund works to build and sustain an endowment that will support long-term research projects in a stable and perpetual fashion; the endowment is professionally managed by Chicago Community Trust (CCT). TREE Fund’s legal home is in Naperville, Illinois, but the organization currently operates virtually, employing four staff professionals located in Illinois and Iowa. The organization is also supported by independent contractors and volunteers. TREE Fund’s principal community engagement and fundraising event is an annual 400+ mile, five-day cycling event called the Tour des Trees, which is staged in a different market around the country each year. See treefund.org for more information about the organization.