

SMYAL Executive Director




empowering LGBTQ youth

Status: Full-time, exempt employee
Reports to: Board of Directors
Location: Washington, DC
Deadline: Resume reviews begin immediately. Best considered by May 1, 2022.

SMYAL seeks an experienced leader to guide a high-impact nonprofit dedicated to supporting and empowering lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ+) youth. The Executive Director will continue to build organizational capacity to sustain its recent rapid growth, serve as a thought leader for the LGBTQ+ community, and raise SMYAL's profile locally, regionally, and nationally.

SMYAL was founded as the Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League in 1984 by local youth service professionals and community activists who came together to meet the needs of LGBTQ+ youth in the Washington, DC region. Over time, SMYAL has become the leading organization for LGBTQ+ youth to safely access affirming programs and services, build self-confidence, develop critical life skills, and engage with peers and community through service and advocacy. SMYAL reaches youth ages 6 to 24 through programs such as:

- *Youth Housing.* SMYAL has become the largest housing provider for LGBTQ+ youth in the region in just four years. SMYAL provides safe and stable shelter, food, case management services, mental health counseling, crisis intervention, and community engagement for 61 youth residents in partnership with the Department of Human Services, The Community Partnership, and the Department of Health.
- *Clinical Services.* In 2021, SMYAL launched free affirming and accessible mental health services in response to a study showing that 70% of LGBTQ+ youth assessed that their mental health was “poor” most of the time or always during the COVID-19 pandemic. SMYAL's holistic variety of offerings includes individual and group therapy, trauma-informed yoga, and mindfulness for LGBTQ+ youth.
- *Little SMYALs.* As one of the nation's only programs that offers queer and trans youth aged 6 to 12 safe space to meet and gain support from their peers, Little SMYALs connects younger youth and their families to free community resources and services.
- *Leadership Programs.* SMYAL offers programs that empower LGBTQ+ youth as community leaders. A few examples include the Rise Up! Conference, which equips queer youth with community organizing and advocacy skills; Peer Health Fellows, who provide peers with inclusive sexual health education; and a regional Genders & Sexualities Alliance (GSA) network, which offers training and support to high school, middle school, and college alliances. The Youth Leadership Awards recognize emerging LGBTQ+ leaders with \$5,000 college scholarships.

The Opportunity

For nearly four decades, SMYAL has advanced the lives of thousands of LGBTQ+ youth through empowering services and resources that aim to affirm belonging, support basic needs, advocate for policy changes, and develop new generations of LGBTQ+ leaders.

Recent years have further exposed competing crises for LGBTQ+ youth: rising housing and food insecurity, widening unemployment gaps, worsening mental health concerns, intensifying police violence, and increasing anti-gay and anti-trans legislation across the country. These crises are compounded by the affects of racism that disproportionately impact Black and Latinx queer and trans youth and require a deeply intersectional approach to resources and programs.

With demand never greater, the SMYAL team continued to build upon its history of culturally responsive and trans inclusive services by dramatically increasing its resources and deepening its reach within the community. Increased support doubled SMYAL's housing capacity and a continued relationship with the DC Department of Human Services supported free mental wellness services. As a result, SMYAL's budget has tripled and staffing grew from a dozen to nearly 50. SMYAL is positioned to share its models with like-minded organizations serving queer and trans youth across the country.

Given that the past few years have required rapid responses to emergent needs, one of the Executive Director's early priorities will be to engage stakeholders to revisit SMYAL's successes and evaluate youths' needs through a formal strategic planning process. A new strategic plan will refine SMYAL's strategic direction, stabilize and scale its infrastructure and staffing model, and identify opportunities to raise its profile.

Position Overview

SMYAL's Executive Director will be an inclusive and affirming champion for LGBTQ+ youth. They will be passionate about SMYAL's mission and be driven by the opportunity to support and empower queer and trans youth through the organization's high-quality programs and services.

The Executive Director will lead an organization with operating revenues of over \$2.5 million, a robust programmatic portfolio, and facilities that include an administrative office and program site as well as four housing properties. They report to a 13-member Board of Directors that actively governs the organization and raises funds for its programs.

The Executive Director will be an inspiring leader for a staff of 28 full-time employees, nine part-time employees, and six contractors. They will co-create a positive team culture, develop internal talent, and empower staff to meet youths' needs. The Executive Director has five direct reports: a Deputy Executive Director, a Director of Development, a Communications Manager, a Director of HR and Operations, and an Accountant/Grants Manager.

The Executive Director will bring a record of strategic management and business acumen to strengthen the organization's infrastructure and support its recent growth. They will be a

systems-thinker with a keen understanding of procedures, tools, and processes that solidify and unify internal operations. They will align staff across departments, and promote clear departmental communication and effective decision-making practices. They will advance racial, LGBTQ+, gender, disability, and economic justice throughout SMYAL's culture, structures, and operations.

Additional areas of responsibility include:

Strategy, Leadership & Governance

- Champion SMYAL's mission, vision, and goals in collaboration with the Board of Directors, staff, and stakeholders.
- Ensure policies, programs, and partnerships advance inclusion, equity, and justice.
- Conduct planning processes to refine SMYAL's strategic direction and ensure that mission, operations, programs, and resource development remain aligned.
- Collaborate with the Board of Directors to achieve good governance, raise funds, and recruit new board members.
- Lead and mentor a diverse and values-driven team. Support a work culture that values collaboration, transparency, accountability, and continuous learning.

Fundraising & External Relations

- Set fundraising strategies that cultivate donors through campaigns, proposals, events, and sponsorships in partnership with the development team and Board of Directors.
- Cultivate and maintain relationships with a broad range of supporters, including government support, local and national foundations, and corporate sponsors.
- Serve as the primary spokesperson to a broad constituency including youth, funders, community partners, government officials, corporate and individual donors, and the media.
- Maintain and elevate SMYAL's brand and reputation. Identify opportunities, strategies, and partnerships that enhance the visibility of SMYAL's priorities and programs.
- Advocate for the LGBTQ+ community through authentic and bold actions to address equitable policies and systems-level change.
- Foster and sustain a regional network of allied partners committed to advancing progress for housing, employment, mental wellness, and affirming healthcare for LGBTQ+ youth.

Organizational Management

- Maintain responsibility for day-to-day operations including finance, human resources, fundraising, marketing, communications, and programs.
- Supervise and develop a senior management team with the skills and expertise to administer programs with creativity, professionalism, and sustainability.
- Prioritize professional development and mentorship opportunities across the entire team.
- Assure program quality and consistency with goals. Direct processes that ensure programs achieve clear, measurable results and that impact is evaluated and communicated.

Finance, Operations, and Facilities

- Monitor income and expenses, oversee budget preparation, ensure long-range budget planning and analysis, and provide the Board with comprehensive reports.

- Ensure creation, adherence to, and maintenance of organizational policies and procedures to facilitate effective workflow, decision-making, and communication protocols.
- Determine and secure supportive workplace arrangements for virtual, hybrid, and in-person settings in collaboration with the operations team.
- Supervise planning and implementation of SMYAL's facility maintenance and acquisitions.

Experiences, Skills, and Qualities

The Board of Directors encourages applications from a wide range of candidates. The most competitive applicants will likely have many, if not all, of the following attributes:

- 7+ years in a leadership position within a nonprofit, association, or similar setting.
- Deep commitment to social justice and centering marginalized voices. Professional experience advancing LGBTQ+ causes is considered a major plus.
- Consensus-oriented with emotional intelligence, compassion, and active listening skills.
- Success with senior-level fundraising efforts, including strategizing and securing support through partnerships, foundations, corporations, and/or individuals.
- A skilled spokesperson comfortable engaging diverse stakeholders across a variety of settings (e.g. youth program participants, key partners, government officials, and donors).
- A significant supervisory record, with experience developing team members and fostering a culture that centers racial, LGBTQ+, gender, disability, and economic justice.
- A capable administrator with a working understanding of multi-year budgeting, human resources, marketing, contract negotiations, and finance and IT systems.
- Prior experience working with or serving on a nonprofit board; understands the importance of governance, board development, and collective decision-making.
- Past involvement with strategic planning, implementation, and change management.

Compensation

Starting base salary in the \$160,000 - \$175,000 range, plus benefits such as health and dental insurance, a retirement plan, paid time off, and paid family leave.

Location & Travel

SMYAL is headquartered in Washington, DC, and accommodates a range of on-site and remote work arrangements depending on the position. The Executive Director should allocate 15-20% of their time to travel for conferences, events, and donor meetings.

Application Process

SMYAL is conducting this search in partnership with Good Insight, a national executive search firm serving nonprofits and associations. Resume reviews begin immediately. Applicants should upload a resume and a detailed cover letter to www.good-insight.org/careers.

For best consideration, please apply by May 1, 2022. Early applications are encouraged due to the pace of the search. Please direct confidential inquiries to Ginna Goodenow-Schirf or Erin Lau at SMYAL@good-insight.org.

Equal Opportunity Employer

SMYAL believes that people of color, queer and trans people, and people with disabilities must be centered in our work. We strongly encourage applications from people with these identities. As an equal opportunity employer, SMYAL will recruit and employ individuals without regard to race, color, religion, creed, age, gender, gender identity, sex, national origin, ancestry, marital status, pregnancy, familial status, ability, veteran status, sexual orientation, size, status with regard to public assistance, or genetic information.

SMYAL is committed to providing access, equal opportunity, and reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities in employment, its services, programs, and activities. Request reasonable accommodation by contacting SMYAL@good-insight.org.

COVID-19 Requirements

SMYAL follows all regulations and guidelines as determined by the DC Government, which currently requires vaccines and boosters for government contractors.