

# THOUSAND CURRENTS

## Executive Director

### Position Description

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*Thousand Currents seeks a visionary, inspirational Executive Director to realize the strategic goals of the organization while reimagining traditional philanthropy.*

### About Thousand Currents

Thousand Currents is a boldly unique 501(c)(3) charity dedicated to building an interconnected global community rooted in love, imagination and joy. Formerly IDEX, Thousand Currents has funded, connected, and humbly learned from over 750 grassroots initiatives led by women, youth and Indigenous Peoples in the Global South for the past 30 years.

Thousand Currents finds, supports and provides grants to [visionary leaders and organizations](#) in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Thousand Currents' partnership model differs from that of traditional funders, offering support in the following ways:

- Thousand Currents' grants have **no strings or conditions** attached.
- Thousand Currents' grants have **no arbitrary time frames**.
- Thousand Currents' flexible grants **empower the people who know best** - those *most impacted* by food, economic, and climate injustice - to identify and respond to their own communities' priorities.

With [a leader-full team](#) of individuals who have reimagined what philanthropic success looks like, Thousand Currents humbly recognizes that they have an opportunity and a responsibility to affect broad changes beyond grantmaking, and is **making waves in traditional philanthropy and impact investing**. Thousand Currents works with donors, [diaspora communities](#), foundations, affinity groups, and young professionals to highlight and create new models of collaboration that dismantle unequal structures and center on collective liberation and well-being. Thousand Currents offers [training to change-makers](#), creates [new models of investing](#), and sets up funds to address pressing issues such as [climate change, all which require grassroots solutions](#).

For more information on Thousand Currents, please visit [www.thousandcurrents.org](http://www.thousandcurrents.org)

### The Opportunity

The new Executive Director will have the extraordinary opportunity to contribute to the creation of lasting solutions to poverty and injustice in the Global South. They will lead an organization that is unafraid to take risks and challenge traditional funding practices and assumptions with courage and humility. Working with the board, senior management team and partners, the Executive Director will ensure that Thousand Currents remain committed as a learning organization that experiments and adapts and listens deeply to its partners.

The Executive Director will be expected to lead Thousand Currents' commitment to equal and full realization of the [Strategic Plan](#), ensuring that core values are manifested in all aspects of the organization's culture, programs, policies and operations; that the interests of Thousand Currents' partners are paramount; and that inclusion, creativity and cooperation are the norm in every part of the organization. Under the direction of the Executive Director, Thousand Currents will achieve its goal of building a stronger, more interconnected and better-resourced ecosystem of partners in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The Executive Director will elevate partners' work, strategies, and solutions as exemplars and beacons of a better future on a global stage. They will continue to form learning, grassroots partnerships to cultivate a just, equitable and inclusive philanthropic sector that centers on local solutions and reimagines wealth, well-being and giving.

## **Key Responsibilities**

### **Leadership**

- In collaboration with the senior management team, lead implementation of the strategy and develop plans of action, monitoring progress against strategic goals.
- Support and guide the collaborative and interconnected leadership of programs, innovations, communications, philanthropic partnerships and operations.
- Identify and monitor new challenges and risks for Thousand Currents, leading and coordinating the organization's response and flexible approaches to rapidly changing circumstances.
- Maintain the organization's leadership in connecting and supporting social change leaders with tools, practices and models.
- Work closely with the board on strategic issues and leverage board expertise.

### **Grassroots Partnerships**

- Exhibit deep trust in and respect for grassroots partnerships through listening, learning, and elevating partners' stories.
- Work in collaboration with the Deputy Director and Regional Directors to oversee and sustain ongoing responsibility for key program initiatives and major cross-program initiatives that promote the leadership of grassroots organizations such as the Thousand Currents Academy and Regional Learning Exchanges
- Support the design and leadership of new programs and sector-level collaborations, leading them through the development and launch phases, engaging current staff and recruiting new staff, consultants, and partners as needed.

### **Philanthropic Partnerships**

- Maintain key donor and investor relationships in collaboration with the Director of Philanthropic Partnerships and Director of Donor Organizing.
- Ensure that Thousand Currents' fund development activities and communications are consistent with the organization's Philanthropic Vision and that of the Association of Fundraising Professionals Code of Ethics.
- Lead strategy and fund development for the Baobab Fund and other long-term sustainability initiatives for Thousand Currents, including direct solicitation of support from high-level donors and foundation partners.
- Play a leadership role in the growth and promotion of the newly launched Buen Vivir Impact Investing Fund in collaboration with the Director of Philanthropic Partnerships and Director of the Buen Vivir Fund.
- Play a leadership role as chief strategist for the Grassroots Climate Solutions Fund – a collaborative of four public foundations - leading its philanthropic partnerships and overseeing its management.
- Engage in philanthropic sector-wide opportunities to experiment, collaborate, learn and innovate.

### **Financial and Organizational Stewardship**

- With the board, ensure strong governance and effective strategic and financial planning that reflects the organization's mission, vision and values.
- With the Director of Finance and Administration, build robust financial and operational structures that strengthen the experiences of partners, staff, and donors through diligent, efficient, and effective management of resources and relationships.
- With the senior management team, lead and model organization-wide excellence in operations and programs, strategize the organization's financial growth as it relates to the strategic plan, collaborating in course correction as needed.
- Spearhead financial growth and program innovation, and lead development and execution of major initiatives and partnerships, such as fiscal sponsorships and investment fund development.
- Participate in organization-wide learning, guide organizational culture as it manifests in hiring, employment policies and implementation, professional development, team building, cross-program partnership and administrative efficiency.

## **Experience and Qualifications**

The successful candidate will have:

- Master's degree or equivalent experience.
- At least ten years of professional experience including a leadership role, and significant supervisory experience in philanthropy, social justice, social entrepreneurship and/or public-sector experience.
- Experience working with community initiatives in Africa, Asia and/or Latin America.

- An educational background, personal experience and knowledge of one or more of the organization’s priority areas: food sovereignty, climate justice, alternative economies, and indigenous women- and youth-led solutions.
- Demonstrated ability to think strategically, define a vision, and establish and execute plans to achieve the mission.
- Significant skills and aptitude in philanthropic partnerships, including foundation and individual giving.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including well-developed public speaking and creative writing skills.
- Proven organizational skills and the ability to manage competing deadlines.
- The ability to support the board leadership in building a diverse membership that is representative of the community and is highly engaged at the strategy and governance level and willing to leverage and secure resources.
- Knowledge of and experience in strategic philanthropy in the social justice field.
- A proven track-record of challenging paradigms and reimagining systems.
- A social justice, women’s rights, anti-oppression, and anti-racism lens.

## **Knowledge / Skills / Attributes**

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- Proven experience and aptitude leading programs that advance community self-determination, organizational resilience, global solidarity, and social justice giving.
- Cultural and ecological competence, respect for grassroots-led practices and pedagogies of community organizing.
- A proven commitment to and deep understanding of the mission and vision of the organization.
- Excellent listening, public speaking, relationship building, and decision-making skills.
- Cultural competency, with the ability to inspire and motivate a multi-generational, multi-ethnic, international team.
- Accountability, with a high degree of emotional intelligence and self-awareness.
- Creativity, with the passion and fervor to consider and create new paradigms.
- Humility, with an eager willingness to study and learn from models outside of the United States.
- A commitment to continuous learning and reflection.

*Thousand Currents is an equal opportunity employer that embraces a diverse, multicultural work environment. People of all backgrounds, people with disabilities, and people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities are encouraged to apply.*

To apply, please provide a cover letter and resume expressing your interest in this position to [search@blueridgeadvisorsllc.com](mailto:search@blueridgeadvisorsllc.com) with “Thousand Currents – Executive Director” in the subject line. We also invite nominations of qualified candidates. All applications and nominations will be held in the strictest confidence.