

Director of Development

Neighborhood House, Inc.
Wilmington (Southbridge), Delaware

Reports to: Executive Director

Works closely with: Board of Directors, Development Committee, Administrative/Development Support, Current and Prospective Funders

Status: Full-time, exempt

Salary: \$75,000–\$85,000, commensurate with experience

Location: On-site in Wilmington with regular travel throughout New Castle County; some flexibility available

About Neighborhood House, Inc.

Founded in 1927, Neighborhood House, Inc. (NHI) has served Wilmington’s Southbridge, and surrounding communities for nearly a century, serving low-to-moderate income individuals and families. Operating on a foundation of Christian principles, NHI delivers critical social support programming spanning early childhood education, youth development, family services, and comprehensive housing counseling — helping neighbors obtain the tools and resources they need to be self-sustaining.

NHI approaches its 100th anniversary at a defining moment. Approximately 75% of the organization’s income currently comes from government sources. Private philanthropy — including foundations and individual giving — represents significant untapped potential. Following a recent strategic plan and an external development assessment, the Board has committed to building a strategic, professional, relationship-based fundraising program. The Director of Development is the central hire in that commitment.

Position Summary

The Director of Development designs, builds, and executes NHI’s annual fundraising program. This is a builder’s role: working with the Executive Director and the Board’s Development Committee, the successful candidate will identify and establish the infrastructure, plans, and donor relationships that shift NHI from transactional fundraising to an intentional, relationship-based program capable of sustaining and growing the organization’s services.

The Director of Development will manage a portfolio of individual, corporate, and foundation donors and prospects; create and implement NHI’s first comprehensive annual development plan; strengthen data and systems; launch a planned giving program; and partner with the Executive Director and Board to cultivate a durable culture of philanthropy across the organization.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategy and planning

- Working from priorities set by the Executive Director and Board, create and implement a comprehensive annual development plan outlining fundraising goals, strategies, tactics, timelines, and metrics.
- The Development Director will be responsible for implementing the existing Strategic Plan while socializing approaches and improvement recommendations with the Executive Director and Board.
- Evaluate the operating budget and prior three years of fundraising results to set realistic, but ambitious annual goals across individual, corporate, foundation, event, and planned giving revenue.
- Monitor progress against goals throughout the year, keeping the Executive Director and Development Committee informed, and adjust strategy to keep NHI on track.
- Build a communications calendar that coordinates appeals, the annual impact report, stewardship touchpoints, email, social media, and other donor outreach.
- Support the Development Committee: prepare materials, set agendas with the committee chair, and drive follow-through between meetings.
- Coordinate with Development Committee to equip Board members to fulfill fundraising expectations — opening doors, making introductions, participating in solicitation visits, writing thank-you notes, hosting cultivation gatherings, and giving personally.
- Provide fundraising reports at every Board meeting, including progress against dollars raised, grants secured, and donor metrics.

Major gifts and individual giving

- Manage a portfolio of current and prospective donors, with responsibility for identifying, qualifying, cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding individuals, corporations, and foundations. The portfolio is expected to grow as the program matures.
- Conduct meaningful donor interactions or meetings, with strong emphasis on in-person visits.
- Develop written cultivation and stewardship plans for high-potential donors, ensuring timely acknowledgment and consistent follow-up.
- Use wealth screening results, giving history, and volunteer engagement data to build and prioritize a qualified prospect pipeline.
- Make direct, specific, in-person asks based on documented capacity and giving history.
- Leveraging our outside service provider Radiant, design and execute two to three annual appeals (spring and calendar year-end), incorporating impact messaging, reply devices, and online giving options.

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Foundations and corporations

- Oversee the grants calendar, applications, and reporting in partnership with the program directors and administrative development support.
- Cultivate relationships with current and prospective institutional funders in advance of requests.
- Develop corporate engagement opportunities that pair volunteering, sponsorship, and philanthropic support.

Planned giving

- In coordination with the Board, establish NHI's planned giving program, including a gift documentation policy and a Legacy Society to recognize and steward legacy donors.
- Build a planned giving prospect list, make in-person asks where appropriate, and promote planned giving through the website, appeals, and impact reports.

Systems, data, and stewardship

- Serve as the owner of NHI's CRM tool (currently Little Green Light): ensure accurate gift and constituent records, document relationship notes and next steps, and complete the cleanup of the existing database.
- Produce quarterly reports on dollars and donors, revenue by source, retention rate, gifts by dollar level, and top individual, foundation, and corporate supporters; maintain a dashboard to support data-driven decisions.
- Develop and steward essential policies covering gift acceptance, gift naming, and acknowledgment.
- Ensure all donors receive prompt, personal, and specific thanks and clear reporting on the impact of their gifts.

Case, communications, and events

- Partner with staff and Board to refine NHI's case for support — its second-century vision, the multigenerational impact of its wrap-around services, and its distinct position in the regional philanthropic landscape.
- Work with program staff to establish consistent outcome tracking so that impact can be demonstrated with data as well as story.
- Manage one signature fundraising event and one cultivation/stewardship event annually, capturing attendee information and conducting strategic follow-up so these events feed the donor pipeline rather than standing alone.
- Keep the giving section of the website, appeals, newsletters, and annual impact report current, compelling, and aligned with the case for support.

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Team

- Collaborate with and provide direction to administrative development support personnel on NHI's overall fundraising and annual campaign execution.
- Direct the work of administrative support staff on gift entry, acknowledgments, and database management.
- Meet weekly with the Executive Director to set priorities and coordinate donor strategy.

QUALIFICATIONS

Required

- Five or more years of progressively responsible nonprofit fundraising experience, including direct, personal solicitation of individual major gifts.
- Demonstrated success building or significantly growing an annual giving program and moving donors up a giving pyramid.
- Experience managing a donor portfolio and a documented moves-management process.
- Working knowledge of donor databases and comfort using data to set strategy and measure results.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to tell an organization's story persuasively to varied audiences.
- Skill in working with, and motivating, Board members and volunteers in fundraising roles.
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent professional experience.
- Valid driver's license and reliable transportation; willingness to work occasional evenings and weekends for donor meetings and events.

Preferred

- Experience making the transition from transactional to relationship-based fundraising.
- Established personal and professional connections in New Castle County and the greater Wilmington philanthropic community.
- Grant writing and foundation relations experience.
- Familiarity with planned giving vehicles and legacy society management.
- Experience with Little Green Light or a comparable CRM.
- CFRE certification.
- Comfort working within an organization that has a faith-based heritage and with individuals in the human services or community center sector.

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Attributes for Success

This role is suited for someone who is entrepreneurial and energized by building something rather than maintaining it. NHI has deep community trust, a compelling century-long story, and supporters who describe it as a top philanthropic priority — but NHI has not yet asked them consistently or in a way that propels increased giving. The right candidate is a self-starter comfortable with ambiguity, genuinely enjoys asking people for money in person, is patient with the unglamorous work of cleaning data and writing policies, and can partner with an Executive Director and Board who are willing but new to major-gift fundraising.

Compensation and Benefits

Salary range of \$75,000–\$85,000, commensurate with experience. Benefits include employer-sponsored health, life and disability insurance coverage, 401(k) plan, and paid time off. NHI supports professional development, including AFP membership, conference attendance, and coaching from the organization's fundraising counsel.

To Apply

Please submit a resume and a cover letter describing your major-gift fundraising experience and your interest in Neighborhood House to Gwendolyn Henry at ghenry@neighborhoodhse.org. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled.

Neighborhood House, Inc. is an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to building a staff that reflects the communities we serve and encourage applications from candidates of all backgrounds.