

## Call for Executive Director or Team of Executive Directors

The Holden Board seeks an Executive Director or team of Executive Directors for Holden Village. The primary responsibility of the Executive Director(s) is to nurture and keep the Holden Village Mission, Vision, and Core Values as the animating center of the Village's life and work.

All friends of Holden are encouraged to nominate individuals or teams of individuals with the gifts and skills to lead Holden Village. Interested persons may apply directly. The usual term is five years. This term will begin in September 2020.

### Holden Village Executive Director(s) Position Description and FAQs

To nominate someone or to ask questions, please contact:

Eric Lansverk, [ericlansverk@holdenboard.org](mailto:ericlansverk@holdenboard.org), 206-470-7634 (o) 206-484-3517 (m)

An **application** consists of a resume (including names of at least three references) and three essays (double-spaced, maximum 1000 words each):

1. Describe your spiritual journey.
2. Describe your leadership experience, how it relates to leading an organization like Holden Village, and your vision for Holden leadership at this time.
3. Choose one or more of the Holden Village core values and describe how you would use it (or them) in implementing the vision you describe above.

Please submit application materials on or before **Friday, December 20, 2019** to:

Eric Lansverk  
Hillis Clark  
999 Third Ave, Suite 4600  
Seattle, WA 98104  
[ericlansverk@holdenboard.org](mailto:ericlansverk@holdenboard.org)

## **Holden Village Executive Director(s) Position Description**

### **Context**

Holden Village, a remote Lutheran retreat center and community in the wilderness of the Cascade Mountains of Washington state, seeks Executive Director(s) for a five-year term beginning September 1, 2020. A former copper mining village gifted to the Lutheran church in the 1960's, Holden has offered year-round hospitality to all who come to the bustling summer community (400+ people) and/or the smaller winter community (100+) for over 50 years. Holden Village is rooted in the Lutheran expression of the Christian faith, while also striving to be a place of ecumenical and interfaith collaboration. In offering year-round hospitality to all who come to Holden, the Village seeks to serve the wider church and God's beloved world.

Holden is emerging from an earlier period of heavy construction in connection with mine remediation (2013-2016) and a recent forest fire (2015) to grow back to full capacity for education, worship, and recreation for people of all ages. Looking forward, the Board and the Executive Directors will continue negotiations regarding the possibility of another remediation project in the valley and are engaging in a Strategic Planning process to help guide Holden into the future.

The Board of Directors of Holden Village hires, oversees, and supports the Executive Director(s), who is/are expected to maintain a consistent presence in the Village and lead the community during this time of complex ecological, ecumenical, and societal change. Leadership of the Village has many times consisted of 1-3 Executive Director(s) who, in turn, manage a corps of staff and volunteers, ranging from roughly 70 people in the winter months to 130 in the summer. The directorship involves relationships with staff, guests, donors, the Church, synods, and outside organizations, including the National Forest Service, regulatory agencies, and Rio Tinto, the mine remediation company who runs a local water treatment plant in Railroad Creek Valley.

The Board seeks Executive Director(s) who, first and foremost, is/are deeply committed to articulating and embodying the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of the Village. Leadership in this setting requires great personal resilience; an ability to strategically envision Holden's place in the complex, changing world; ongoing focus on ecological regeneration and sustainability; commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion; interaction with Rio Tinto; oversight of renewal and/or construction of buildings; and changes in the volunteer and employment landscape of our constituency. The Board is open to receiving proposals for executive leadership that mirror historic models and/or innovative approaches and team compositions to lead Holden Village.

### **Position Overview**

The Executive Director(s) is/are responsible to the Board of Directors to nurture and keep the Mission, Vision, and Core Values as the vital center of the life and work of Holden Village.

<http://www.holdenvillage.org/about-us/mission-core-values/>

### **Essential Functions**

#### **Leadership for a collaborative, welcoming community**

- Articulate and live out the Mission, Vision, and Core Values with all Villagers
- Collaborate with the Board to implement the Strategic Plan

- Build and maintain relationships with all Villagers and community partners, such as the National Forest Service, Rio Tinto, the Yakima Nation, and Chelan School District
- Develop and oversee the design, execution, and evaluation of programs and education consistent with the ministry of Holden Village, including the Summer Teaching Programs
- Oversee fundraising and develop other financial resources with Board approval and support
- Ensure through staffing, programming, outreach, and training that Holden upholds a commitment to racial equity, social justice, accessibility, and inclusion of people from a wide diversity of communities, including racial, ethnic, religious, socioeconomic, gender, sexuality, and ability identities

### **Staffing and Management**

- Hire and supervise all managers and oversee recruitment, hiring and training of year-round staff and seasonal volunteers (staffing models like leadership teams have varied over the years)
- Nurture a sense of community for all Villagers, in and out of Holden
- Engage practices for diversity, equity, and inclusion on multiple levels
- Create a work culture of cooperation, supportive delegation, and empowerment
- Oversee Village's facilities and business operations, delegating and prioritizing a wide variety of critical tasks

### **Financial Oversight**

- Provide general oversight of the development of proposed budgets for Board review and approval
- Oversee and be accountable for finances, including income, expenditures, external contracts, and all other financial matters

### **Public Relations**

- Serve as the spokesperson for the ministry of Holden Village to cultivate relationships with existing and potential guests, staff, faculty, donors, and partners
- Oversee the writing, printing, and distribution of all Holden's promotional and informational materials

## **Requirements**

### **Qualifications, Experience, and Skills**

- Baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university, required, Master degree preferred
- Demonstrate a living connection with a Lutheran community of faith, a broadly ecumenical understanding of Christianity, and an ability to engage in faith-based learning in a variety of contexts
- Executive leadership experience, representing a wide span of organizational control
- Experience training and engaging others in both large and small groups
- Demonstrated commitment to and experience with organizational practices for diversity, equity, and inclusion, particularly related to racial justice
- Adaptive communication skills, including interviewing, coaching, and intercultural collaboration
- Experience in recruiting, selecting, nurturing, and evaluating staff
- Committed to living full-time at Holden Village for 5 years

### **Physical and Mental**

See Question #18 on the FAQ document

## **Compensation**

Salary and benefits are dependent upon experience and composition of the executive leadership team

Refer to FAQs for additional detail

## **Applications**

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Holden Village recognizes that there is much work to be done in the Church, the world, and the Village to honor, respect, and celebrate diversity and all its gifts. As such, the Holden Board of Directors affirms and supports diverse applicants and/or teams for the position of Executive Director(s). People of any race, ethnicity, national origin, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability status, or relationship with Holden are encouraged to apply.

## F.A.Q.s

### Re: Holden Village Executive Director(s) Position Description

1. What is the primary responsibility for which the Executive Director(s) of Holden Village are accountable to the Holden Board?

**The primary responsibility is to nurture and keep the Holden Village Mission, Vision, and Core Values as the animating center of the Village's life and work.**

2. Are the Mission, Vision, and Core Values set in stone?

**Though Holden Village's spirit and purpose have been remarkably durable over the half-century of its history, the current version of the Mission, Vision, and Core Values were formulated and written down by the Holden Board in 2006. Since that time, they have been revisited and reaffirmed by the Board three times, most recently in Nov. 2018. Because language is ever-evolving and understanding is a dynamic process, the Board commits to revisit the Mission, Vision, and Core Values every 3-5 years, making adjustments and affirmations as necessary.**

3. Is the identity of Holden completely fluid then?

**Like every healthy organization, Holden Village has maintained a fine balance between continuity and change. Maintaining this balance requires prudence and collaborative leadership. There is no simple formula laid down in advance for how to do this well. The Board is one mechanism through which the Village strives to maintain this balance, through staggered 4-year terms.**

4. Can you give an example of how Holden has maintained this "balance?"

**For many years, days at Holden have consistently concluded with a half-hour Vespers Service. At the same time, the worship experience changes as teachers and the worship leaders bring differing liturgical styles, Biblical interpretation, pedagogical style and theological training. Worship activities are broadly participatory and reflect ongoing theological and liturgical developments around the globe.**

5. Is Vespers mandatory for everyone?

**The Vespers service is the one community discipline in which all Villagers must participate. It has become a meaningful part of the day when everyone comes together in stillness and connection. These evening gatherings are also the time when all newly arrived Villagers are welcomed and all departing ones are blessed.**

6. Are there any crucial features of Holden that are *not* captured explicitly in its Mission and Vision statements but that everyone tacitly understands?

**One in particular stands out: Holden’s communal character. Holden is a village, not a resort or an institution or an enterprise. It welcomes people not as “consumers” or “producers” but as Villagers whose gifts enrich and strengthen one another across generations. Each person who gets off the bus is welcomed as either a returning or a new community member. In this way, Holden community goes down the lake to be shared in other places, so that Holden is best thought of as an unintentional community – a place where the people there at any particular time create community among an ever-changing group of people. Holden belongs as well to those yet to come.**

7. What does this sense of community mean in actual practice?

**It means that all staff, including teaching faculty, share meals, serve on dish-washing teams and help to dispose of the Village’s refuse. It means that paid and volunteer staff attend teaching sessions right along with the paying guests. It means that all guests “pitch in” on a voluntary basis to clean tables, clear fire breaks, and weed gardens. It means that Holden Board members and their spouses volunteer during their time in the Village, for a variety of tasks. Though the terms ‘guest’ and ‘staff’ and ‘faculty’ and ‘board member’ are occasionally used to designate certain functional differences, the over-arching term ‘Villager’ captures the fundamental reality of community that is Holden.**

8. The position description indicates that the Holden Board would be open to creative leadership models for how to structure the Executive Director position. What does this mean?

**Holden has learned from its own history that no one model is ideal in all seasons or years. Some have seemed to work better than others, but excellent performance depends not simply on the model but on how well the model fits the needs of the time and the distinctive gifts of the director or co-directors. The Holden Board welcomes candidates who have thought through the question of what administrative structure would best enable them to carry out their numerous designated tasks responsibly and sustainably.**

9. Again, can you give some concrete examples from history or from general experience?

**At times Holden has had a single Executive Director and a business manager. At other times, there have been 2-3 Co-Directors who have divided responsibilities between themselves and a number of managers.**

10. What are some examples of a leadership models that have not yet been tried?

**Models that have not been tried might include a directorship some of whose members are in residence all year while others live out of the Village most of the year. Or there might be a single director who in turn appoints someone (a kind of provost) to manage the Village on site while the other director(s) spend some of their time on the road for development and other activities like staff recruitment. The models are endless, constrained only by the Village's budget and by the respective gifts, imaginations, and financial needs of the applicants.**

**Different models of team leadership may attend differently to the needs of a consistent presence in the Village and the various responsibilities outside the village. The Executive Directors will have housing at Holden Village and use of the lake house down lake.**

11. What is the structure of the Holden Board and how will the Executive Directors relate with the Board?

**The Holden Board structure is currently under review by the Board, particularly with regard to the size of the Board. It currently has twenty members organized into committees where the majority of the ongoing work gets done. The Executive Committee is made up of the Board officers who meet at least monthly via phone with the Executive Directors. Executive Directors are also expected to attend a Summer Board Meeting in the Village and a Fall Meeting in November outside of the Village.**

12. The job description references emerging from mine remediation and a potential future project. What does that mean?

**The largest portion of remediation has been completed but monitoring continues. As such, there is a potential for another remediation project that would extend the barrier all further downstream of east of the Village. The Record of Decision establishes a timeline for compliance with water quality metrics and describes a second phase of activity to address non-compliance.**

13. The job description references the Strategic Plan. Will this be completed before the new Directors are appointed?

**The Holden Board hopes to complete and adopt the Strategic Plan at its November 2019 meeting. The full text of that plan will be made available to finalists for Executive Director before they are interviewed for the position.**

14. Can you give some sense of the key emphases in the Strategic Plan at this point?

**At present the Strategic Plan includes emphases on ecological responsibility, active opposition to racism and oppression, efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, and commitment to financial sustainability for the Village, even as it maintains and enhances accessibility for people across the full spectrum of socioeconomic classes.**

15. Does the Holden Board understand the Strategic Plan as the operative agenda for the future Directors?

**The Holden Board understands the Strategic Plan as a roadmap for the Board, the Directors, and Holden Village generally. The primary responsibility of the Executive Directors will remain what is outlined in answer to the first question above. Each year, the Executive Directors will be evaluated on their management of the several areas outlined in the job description. The Strategic Plan provides overall direction for the entire Village to enable and justify the establishment of priorities and policies as these are formulated on an ongoing basis.**

16. What are the major challenges that Holden faces in the future?

**Holden faces both the challenges of any faith-based institution, and challenges particular to its unique place in the world. Like many non-profits, it faces issues of financial sustainability in the face of increasing costs in areas of compliance, insurance, and deferred maintenance; the need to adjust its communication to account for the changing character of its constituencies; and ongoing dialogue about the language of faith in a changing ecumenical context. More particularly, Holden continues to face the impacts of climate change, including ongoing fire danger. The first phase of remediation is completed, but after a period of monitoring water quality, more remediation may be required, and the ongoing relationship with Rio Tinto and regulatory agencies is critical.**

17. What are the major risks to Holden?

**Holden recently engaged an outside consulting firm to do a full risk management audit, and they just completed and submitted their report. That report will be made available to finalists for the position of Executive Director before their interviews.**

18. What are the challenges associated with living at Holden as an Executive Director?

**Holden is a remote location. This means that several hours of travel are required for medical appointments, to visit loved ones, or tend to other out-of-Village matters. It also means that all food is shipped by barge and loaded by hand onto Holden vehicles, a task shared by all Villagers. The remote location also means that Executive Directors must be able to set and maintain clear personal and professional boundaries as they live with the people they lead in a small community, which sometimes makes privacy and space a challenge. Holden is also a**

**mountainous location. Living in the Village requires an ability to move over uneven terrain, climb a large hill, and navigate fluctuations of temperature and precipitation, including the potential of hundreds of inches of snowfall and little direct sunlight in the winter. Finally, Holden's location means that Executive Directors must respond effectively to urgent, unforeseen situations, such as medical emergencies, fires, community conflict, etc.**

19. What are the desirable traits that an Executive Director should possess?

**Though no applicant or applicants could have all of the desirable traits, the Board has recently agreed upon four as particularly desirable:**

- **a deep understanding of and commitment to the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of Holden;**
- **adaptive communication skills to build relationships with multiple constituencies and diverse communities;**
- **strong management and staffing aptitudes with a preference for a collaborative leadership style; and**
- **a capacity for development work, broadly understood to include program development, relationship development, and fundraising.**

**Though self-knowledge is not on the list, it is presumed by many of the other traits. A secure sense of identity combined with an equally sure sense of limitations, strengths, and weaknesses will inform any proposed structural model for the Executive Directorship, which will in turn be crucial to success.**