



Executive Director Job Description

Position Overview

The Executive Director (ED) of **The 437 Project** provides strategic leadership, administrative oversight, and operational management. Working closely with the Board of Directors, the ED is responsible for growing the organization's impact, ensuring financial sustainability, expanding statewide fundraising efforts, and managing day-to-day operations.

The 437 Project has rapidly grown into a statewide movement—headlined by its annual 437-mile relay across South Dakota—raising over \$1 million to bolster mental health awareness and suicide prevention. As the leader of a highly collaborative, community-driven initiative, the ideal candidate is a hands-on, passionate professional who can balance high-level strategic growth with the grassroots execution required to mobilize runners, volunteers, corporate sponsors, and community partners across the state.

Key Responsibilities

1. Strategic Leadership, Vision & Growth

- Partner with the Board of Directors to execute and scale the organization's vision: ensuring no South Dakotan faces mental health challenges alone.
- Lead strategic planning to expand the organization's year-round impact, community reach, and critical partnerships.
- Keep the Board fully informed of operational conditions, financial health, and emerging trends or opportunities within the mental health advocacy space.
- Develop organizational systems, policies, and succession strategies that ensure long-term sustainability and continuity beyond an individual leader or annual event.

2. Fundraising, Sponsorship & Resource Development

- Design and execute a robust, diversified fundraising strategy targeting individual major gifts, corporate sponsorships, grants, and community campaigns.
- Cultivate, secure, and retain corporate sponsorships by effectively communicating the vital human and community impact of The 437 Project.
- Research, draft, and manage grant proposals for private foundations and government entities.

3. Event Oversight & Campaign Management

- Act as the project lead overseeing the operational logistics of the flagship 437-mile relay run across South Dakota, including the coordination of community stops (e.g., Rapid City, Pierre, Madison, Sioux Falls).
- Oversee adjacent initiatives, such as the *4.37 Community Run/Walk* and the *Memory Mile Walk*.
- Support the selection, orientation, and engagement of the 12 community-leader runners each year, ensuring they have the tools to act as powerful ambassadors.
- Develop and empower event committees, volunteer leaders, and community partners by delegating operational responsibilities while maintaining overall accountability for successful event execution.

4. Financial Management & Compliance

- Develop and manage the annual operational budget in partnership with the Board Treasurer to maximize funds funneled directly toward mental health resources.
- Maintain rigorous financial controls, compliance, and transparent reporting required for a 501(c)(3) public charity.

5. Public Relations, Advocacy & Marketing

- Serve as the primary statewide spokesperson and ambassador to media outlets, civic organizations, and public health partners.
- Oversee marketing, social media presence, and public relations campaigns to continue destigmatizing mental health, sparking honest conversations, and bringing hope to South Dakota communities.
- Develop methods to measure and communicate the organization's community impact, demonstrating how fundraising efforts, partnerships, and outreach initiatives advance the mission.

Qualifications & Skills

- **Experience:** 3+ years of progressive leadership experience, preferably within nonprofit management, event production, or public health sectors.
- **Mission Alignment:** A deep commitment to mental health advocacy, suicide prevention, and promoting the foundational connection between physical and mental wellness.
- **Proven Fundraising Track Record:** Strong experience in corporate sponsor acquisition, donor cultivation, and grant writing.
- **Logistical & Event Competency:** Proven ability to manage large-scale events, logistics, or multi-community campaigns. Familiarity with the South Dakota geographic landscape and community networks is a significant plus.

- **Communication & Public Speaking:** Exceptional storytelling and interpersonal skills; highly comfortable engaging with media, corporate executives, and families impacted by mental health challenges.
 - **Adaptability:** A "roll-up-your-sleeves" collaborative mindset, capable of operating effectively with a small core team and a vast network of dedicated volunteers.
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Compensation & Benefits

- **Job Type:** Full-time
 - **Compensation:** Negotiable
 - **Benefits:** Flexible schedule, professional development opportunities
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To Apply

Visit <https://the437project.org/careers> to submit your application.