



Mission: *"To protect, improve, provide access to, and promote the preservation of waterways, open spaces, and green places in Indian River County for the benefit of all today and tomorrow."*

[www.irlt.org](http://www.irlt.org)  
Vero Beach, FL  
In-Person Employment

## DIRECTOR OF PHILANTHROPY

### ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITY



Founded in 1990, Indian River Land Trust (IRLT) is a conservation organization that protects critical spaces in Indian River County in perpetuity. IRLT promotes conservation throughout Indian River County by preserving habitat, protecting the scenic waterfront, and providing access for public recreation and education. Under IRLT's thoughtful stewardship, the organization has successfully protected 1,300 acres of land in Indian River County, including 12 miles of Indian River Lagoon shoreline, in its first 35 years.

IRLT is at an exciting moment in its history. The organization has recently committed to a five-year strategic organizational plan and five-year strategic fundraising plan with the goal of increasing IRLT's relevance in Indian River County, ensuring its sustainability, and guaranteeing the protection of Indian River County's preserved lands and important natural resources.

IRLT seeks a seasoned Director of Philanthropy (Director) to build and operationalize a comprehensive fundraising program focused on the diversification of philanthropic income sources. The successful candidate will create a major and planned giving program and carry a portfolio of major gifts prospects, with responsibility for prospect research, qualification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship. In parallel, the ideal candidate will lead emergent, short-term capital campaigns to fund mission-critical land acquisition and public access projects while overseeing the annual fund and events. The Director will preserve and foster long-term alliances with existing donors while systematically identifying and targeting new prospects in Indian River County and beyond.

To ensure philanthropic growth, the successful Director will serve as a change agent responsible for deepening the culture of philanthropy and building strong collaborative relationships with leadership, Board members, and colleagues. The ideal Director will work closely with the Executive Director to provide meaningful engagement opportunities and effective support. The candidate will report to the Executive Director and lead the development team with two direct reports: Assistant Director of Philanthropy and Donor Relations / Database Manager. S/he will staff the Philanthropy Committee of the Board of Directors.

IRLT has retained [Freeman Philanthropic Services, LLC](#) to assist on this critical recruitment.

## ABOUT IRLT

Indian River Land Trust (IRLT) envisions Indian River County as a place where:

- drinking water sources are protected and waterways are healthy and clean;
- aquatic life and wildlife have room to thrive;
- preserved waterfront and scenic areas provide a backdrop of beauty and tranquility; and
- all people can access and experience the splendors of nature and expand their knowledge and appreciation of the natural world.

Founded in 1990 to save McKee Botanical Garden, IRLT purchases and conserves critical places in Indian River County in perpetuity. IRLT actively manages protected properties by removing invasive plants, restoring native species and habitats, and ongoing land stewardship, with the goal of protecting wildlife corridors and scenic waterfront areas.

IRLT continues to promote the conservation of the Indian River Lagoon and areas throughout Indian River County by preserving habitat, protecting the scenic waterfront, and providing access for public recreation and education. Protected land provides important public benefits including the opportunity for residents



to learn about and enjoy the natural environment and take advantage of our protected lands and waterways to enjoy hiking, boating, fishing, and observing fish and wildlife.

After completion of the McKee Garden project in 2003, IRLT has protected 1,300 acres of land in Indian River County, including 12 miles of Indian River Lagoon shoreline.

To learn more about IRLT's mission, programs, and impact, [please click here](#).

## LEADERSHIP



### Ken Grudens, Executive Director

Ken Grudens has served as Executive Director at the Indian River Land Trust since 2004. Ken has successfully developed and implemented a variety of programs which protect, improve, provide access to, and promote the preservation of waterways, open spaces, and green places in Indian River County. Ken has a Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture from the College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse, New York and a Bachelor's Degree in Architecture from the University of Buffalo. He previously managed the New York State Farmland Protection Program. Ken formerly served as Chair of the Indian River County Conservation Lands Committee and on an Advisory Committee of the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program. Currently, he is a Board member of the Alliance of Florida

Land Trusts, where he served as President for two years.

### Board of Directors

IRLT's Board of Directors is comprised of dedicated and engaged leaders committed to IRLT's mission, vision, and continued growth. The Board is a diverse group of esteemed corporate and community leaders.

For a complete list of members of the Board of Directors, [please click here](#).

## REPORTING AND IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIPS

The Director of Philanthropy will report to the Executive Director and lead the development team with two direct reports: Assistant Director of Philanthropy and Donor Relations / Database Manager.

The successful candidate will staff the Philanthropy Committee of the Board of Directors.

## STRATEGIC PLANS

IRLT is in the second year of a five-year strategic organizational plan designed to enhance IRLT's relevance, ensure its sustainability, and guarantee the protection of Indian River County's preserved lands and important natural resources. The four pillars of IRLT's strategic plan are below:

1. Increase the pace of protection and expand conservation priorities to enhance the quality of life and wildlife habitat;
2. Employ comprehensive land management tools to improve and restore wildlife habitat, public access, and the health of the Lagoon and other waterways;
3. Provide the community with more opportunities to learn about the area's natural lands and waterways through outreach, engagement, and outdoor recreation; and
4. Inform and influence community land use and environmental protection decisions as a welcomed collaborator.

To read IRLT's 2024 – 2028 Strategic Plan, [please click here](#).

In parallel, IRLT has recently commenced its 2024 – 2029 Strategic Fund Development Plan, which is designed to expand and accelerate IRLT's philanthropic support to achieve the ambitious vision articulated in the 2024 – 2028 Strategic Plan.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Director of Philanthropy will further build IRLT's fundraising program. The successful candidate will:

- Develop an extensive understanding of IRLT's mission, culture, programs, and fundraising priorities;
- Implement IRLT's five-year fundraising strategy with the goal of expanding and diversifying philanthropic income sources;
- Create and build a major and planned giving program, expand and diversify the prospect base, and cultivate relationships for solicitation;
- Lead ongoing, short-term capital campaigns to fund emerging land acquisition and development projects;
- Create and carry a portfolio of major gifts prospects and donors at the major gift level, including prospect research, qualification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship, while creating and staffing the Executive Director's portfolio of top prospects;
- Lead moves management, including the identification and migration of annual giving donors to the major gifts level;
- Deepen the culture of philanthropy at IRLT and build strong collaborative relationships with leadership, board members, and colleagues;
- Strategically engage the Executive Director and members of the Board of Directors in public outreach and fundraising activities, providing meaningful engagement opportunities and effective support;
- Provide professionally mature, effective, and transparent management;
- Implement policies and best practices that will ensure greater staff collaboration and accountability through quantitative measurement of results;
- Preserve long-term alliances with existing donors, while systematically identifying and targeting new prospects; and
- Create compelling cases for support and collateral materials for solicitation.

## IDEAL QUALITIES AND ATTRIBUTES

The Director of Philanthropy will have the proven ability to effectively meet the responsibilities listed in the preceding section. The ideal candidate's qualities and attributes include:

- Passion and commitment to IRLT's mission, vision, and values, with a personal connection to nature and passion for conserving the natural world;
- Stature and sophistication to build strong, collaborative relationships across the organization and build a deeper culture of philanthropy;
- Actively represent IRLT to the Indian River County community, serving as an effective and active leader in the community;
- Confidence, professionalism, and follow-through to effectively engage and support the Executive Director and Board of Directors;
- Cheerful, energetic, and engaging demeanor with high emotional intelligence;
- Demonstrated track record of delivering philanthropic growth, with the ability to maintain a clear focus on meeting annual financial goals;
- Track record of planning and implementing capital campaigns preferred;
- Strategic and fearless problem-solver with interpersonal skills;
- Demonstrated track record of personal identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship experience with the ability to bring creative and effective strategies to the major gifts process;
- Genuine and transparent team player with a creative and proactive manner of approaching issues and devising sound solutions based on good judgment and collaboration;
- Excellent communication (writing, proofreading, speaking, presentation, and listening) skills and keen attention to detail, with the ability to effectively communicate with all levels of the organization, as well as external constituencies;
- Inclusive management and team building skills to help guide a development team, while maintaining best practices, camaraderie, clear goals, and shared accountability;
- Knowledge of land and water conservation preferred, though not required;
- Knowledge of Raiser's Edge preferred; and
- Bachelor's degree required.

## DIVERSITY

IRLT is an equal opportunity employer and will not allow discrimination based upon age, ethnicity, gender, national origin, disability, race, size, religion, or any other status prohibited by law.

## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The compensation and benefits package will be competitive and commensurate with the selected candidate's background and experience. The Director of Philanthropy will work five days a week in the office.

## CONFIDENTIAL INQUIRIES AND HOW TO APPLY

IRLT has retained Freeman Philanthropic Services, LLC to assist on this recruitment. FPS is a national leader in executive recruitment for the not-for-profit sector and brings a proven track record of recruiting top talent to diverse institutions.

Please send all inquiries, applications, and nominations directly to FPS via email at **IndianRiverLandTrust@glfreeman.com**.

All applications must include: (1) an up-to-date resume; and (2) a formal letter of interest (addressed to Gail L. Freeman, President of FPS) that specifically cites the experiences that best prepare the applicant for this role and why this particular opportunity at IRLT is the logical and desired next step in their career. Additional materials and information will be requested during the search and interview process.