

# BGA

ILLINOIS' NON-PARTISAN  
FULL-SERVICE WATCHDOG

Better Government Association

Director of Development Opportunity Guide



[www.bettergov.org](http://www.bettergov.org)

# About the Better Government Association



The Better Government Association is a non-partisan, nonprofit news organization and civic advocate working for transparency, efficiency, and accountability in government in Chicago and across Illinois. The BGA uncovers waste and wrongdoing in government, holds elected officials accountable, litigates for open records and meetings, advocates for good government and empowers residents to engage and act. The Investigations team produces objective, high-impact reporting that enlightens readers and leads to better government. The Policy and Civic Engagement teams work in a non-partisan manner to advance good government in Illinois, taking action at times in response to BGA investigations. BGA's office is located in the Chicago Loop.

# The Opportunity: Director of Development



The Better Government Association is approaching its 2023 centennial during a time when the BGA's mission has never been more important. The Director of Development opening presents an ideal opportunity for an experienced fundraising professional who is interested in the impact that investigative journalism, policy and civic engagement can have on transparency and accountability in government. A member of the BGA's Leadership Team, the DOD is responsible for developing and implementing strategy to raise \$3 million annually to fund BGA's current expenses, and for growing contributed income to meet future mission priorities. This role reports to BGA President and CEO [David Greising](#).

The DOD will, independently and in conjunction with the Board of Directors and staff leadership, strengthen relationships with existing donors while identifying and engaging a new generation of philanthropists to invest in the long-term outcomes and societal changes brought by the BGA's policy initiatives and investigative journalism. Adhering to the priorities set in its 2019 strategic plan, BGA leadership created the Illinois Solutions Plan - an all-encompassing, multi-level initiative that will position the BGA as a fulcrum for change in government. This transformative project promises to firmly establish the BGA as a leading force in Chicago's nonprofit news ecosystem and has resonated with partner organizations and donors. The positive reception means that additional resources will be dedicated to the BGA's fundraising operation.

# Performance Objectives

## Strategic Leadership

- Serve as the primary face of all things relative to philanthropy within the BGA's established and prospective community of supporters.
- Support the Board of Directors and the President and CEO to exemplify the highest level of strategic donor interaction.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive Development strategy that meets or exceeds the BGA's annual \$3 million fundraising goal.
- Utilize the BGA's centennial to celebrate historic achievements while also raising the organization's profile, using the centennial as a tool to secure increased gifts from current and future donors. Partner with the Board and Leadership Team in planning and executing fundraising initiatives celebrating the organization's upcoming centennial.
- Approach the role with entrepreneurial enthusiasm and a can-do attitude that inspires and motivates others to support the mission of the BGA.
- Partner as appropriate with leadership volunteers to identify and secure visits with those in their peer networks, with past leaders of the organization, and other stakeholders and groups.
- Ensure success of all virtual or in-person fundraising events, through the lens of major donor engagement and employing creative strategies that invigorate existing and potential donors.
- Develop and implement strategies to grow the donor pipeline at all gift levels.
- Lead by example and ensure excellent service is provided to donors through accessibility to staff and leadership (as appropriate), timely responsiveness, speedy and accurate recognition of gifts and quality in all interactions and personalized communications.
- Work diligently to meet agreed upon monthly and annual activity and income producing goals, and be purposeful about every visit, communication, and the desired outcome for each individual encounter.
- Serve as the staff liaison to the Board's Development Committee and encourage engagement in the organization's fundraising efforts, both short- and long-term.
- Serve as both the driver and support for all fundraising activities and outreach of the President and CEO of the BGA and provide prospect information and guidance agendas, talking points, proposals, etc. for arranged meetings, phone calls, emails and events.
- At all times, internally and when donor-facing, adhere to, promote, and demonstrate the BGA's [Editorial Independence Policy](#), which emphasizes the independence and autonomy of the BGA's Investigations and Policy teams.

## Donor and Prospect Engagement

- Develop and manage a caseload of prospective major donors who give or have the capacity to invest at \$25,000 or higher.
- Identify and cultivate the next generation of major donors using the Raiser's Edge database, recommendations from stakeholders, and other means to identify and qualify donors for cultivation, solicitation and stewardship opportunities.

# Performance Objectives

## Administration and Management

- Create an annual and long-term Development plan and calendar with corresponding deadlines, deliverables, budgets, and goals.
- Demonstrate fiscal responsibility and efficient use of all organizational resources.
- Supervise the organization's Development Coordinator and grow the team with an additional grant writer within the Director's first several months. Prepare to hire and manage a new major gifts officer on an as-needed basis, in consultation with the CEO.
- Work with the Board's Development Committee, and identify and help recruit new board candidates, as part of a strategic BGA effort at board development.
- Lead foundation proposal design and development for grant-funded programming and work with colleagues to identify goal outcomes, and measurement methods.
- Oversee and ensure the integrity of regular reporting on fundraising goal achievement to demonstrate progress, identify areas of concern and revise strategies as needed.
- Monitor budget and revenue targets and ensure that the Development team performs within revenue and expense guidelines and expectations.
- Track industry trends, strategy, and best practices, including educating others and evaluating opportunities for continuous improvement. Act as a resource for current practice and strategy.



## External Relations

- With marketing colleagues, develop new and innovative marketing and outreach strategies using technology and social networks to increase visibility of the organization for diverse, new audiences and neighborhoods in Chicago and across Illinois.
- Serve as an articulate, passionate, and visible spokesperson for the BGA, and as a prominent face of fundraising throughout the community.
- Maintain a strong presence in professional organizations, community groups, and other spaces relevant to the work of the BGA and its mission.
- Create and implement a plan to identify and build strong relationships with key donors, community leaders, and volunteers, and engage organizations with which the BGA should partner.

# The Qualified Candidate



The Better Government Association is seeking a charismatic, creative development professional to expand philanthropy during a transformational phase of organizational growth. The successful candidate will be excited by the challenge that present and future opportunities hold to build resources during a time in which ethics in state government and equity and accountability and transparency are major needs of the State of Illinois. As Chicago's oldest nonprofit news organization, the BGA has a solid history of achievements to build upon.

The qualified candidate will have a minimum of 7 years of progressively increased responsibility in managing a donor portfolio and overall philanthropy program at a small to mid-sized nonprofit. Candidates with prior experience working in journalism, public advocacy or public interest fields are especially encouraged to apply.

## Specific Requirements Include:

- A minimum of 7 years of progressive development experience with proven success with individual and institutional giving, campaigns, and events.
- Proven ability to build strong external relationships with a variety of volunteers, civic leadership, partner organizations and other stakeholders.
- Track record in financial management, stewardship, and developing strategies to successfully increase revenue.
- Familiarity with the Chicago and national foundation landscape and past success with cultivating foundation relationships and successfully securing and managing foundation grants.
- Strong analytic and strategic-thinking skills, with demonstrated ability to create, implement and monitor complex plans, and translate those plans into goals and concrete strategies.
- High level of oral communication and writing skills. Poise and presence before high-net worth individuals and civic leaders.
- Experience with planning and execution of in-person events exceeding 500 guests and in creating smaller, intimate events for VIP donors.
- Familiarity with the public policy issues of concern and relevance to the city and state within the Chicago and Illinois governmental landscape.
- Bachelor's Degree required; Master's Degree preferred.

# How To Apply

This position offers a competitive salary with strong benefits.

The BGA is an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to diversity and inclusion in the workplace and strongly encourage applicants of color, LGBTQ, women, people with disabilities, veterans and/or those from immigrant backgrounds to apply for this position.

To assure confidential tracking of all applicants, no applications will be accepted via email. ALL INQUIRIES WILL BE HELD IN STRICT CONFIDENCE.

This search is being managed by Laura Weinman, Vice President, and Christine Eddy, Project Manager, of KEES. Questions may be addressed to [christine@kees2success.com](mailto:christine@kees2success.com).

**APPLY HERE**



## About KEES

KEES (formerly Alford Executive Search) is a nonprofit executive search firm that builds diverse teams and dynamic leaders in the nonprofit and public entity sectors. A woman owned and operated firm, KEES offers a full array of nonprofit consulting services including executive search, leadership development, interim staffing, and HR support. For more information, please visit [www.kees2success.com](http://www.kees2success.com).

