



Executive Director – Freedom's Way Heritage Association, Inc.
Managing Entity for the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area

Position Overview

The Executive Director (ED) of the Freedom's Way Heritage Association, Inc. (FWHA) provides visionary, strategic, creative, entrepreneurial, and operational leadership for the organization and serves as the chief steward of the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area (FWNHA). Reporting to the Board of Directors, the ED is responsible for implementing the organization's mission and vision, overseeing programs and partnerships across the multi-community region, ensuring compliance with National Park Service (NPS) requirements, managing staff and finances, and strengthening the visibility and long-term sustainability of the Heritage Area.

About the Organization

Freedom's Way Heritage Association is a nonprofit organization that manages and coordinates the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area—an interconnected landscape of historic sites, natural resources, cultural organizations, and stories across 45 communities in Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire. The Association fosters partnerships, supports community/partner heritage initiatives, and promotes the cultural, historical, and natural assets of the region.

The Freedom's Way Heritage Association was incorporated as a non-profit in 1994 and designated the local coordinating entity for the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area by the Congress in 2009. One of 62 congressionally designated National Heritage Areas in the United States, Freedom's Way is a nationally significant landscape where natural, cultural, historical and recreational resources combine to tell a uniquely American story.

FWHA operates on the federal fiscal year, with approximately 93% of its roughly \$500,000 annual revenue (2025) provided through the National Park Service Heritage Partnership Program (HPP). FWHA, through careful financial management, has consistently lived within its financial means. Funds are allocated annually through the Congressional appropriations process.



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Building on its track record of successfully working with hundreds of partners throughout the region, FWHA and FWNHA will continue to produce high quality programming and initiatives that showcase the landscapes, histories and cultures of the region to promote the underlying principles of freedom and democracy. Guidance from the Board and partner organizations, through an on-going strategic review, will ensure that the most impactful work remains a priority.

Adding to the framework for evaluating future efforts, in addition to impact, will be the lens of financial sustainability. Over the past year, as the board responded to the potential jeopardy of federal funding, the organization has begun to closely consider the degree to which programs might be supported more directly by additional sources including donors, sponsorships and grants. To that end, the organization has reviewed and considered various aspects of membership programs as well as the potential to produce a revenue generating publication. These options, and others yet to be considered, will be important work in the very near future. Creating a framework for assessing and prioritizing the ongoing programs of FWHA/FWNHA to include this work along with advocacy for continued federal support, will be a major priority in 2026 and beyond.

During 2025, the Board identified the need for review and strategic planning as the organization's ten-year management plan was concluding. Feedback from members of the Board and its many partners was completed and a preliminary framework for the future established. With this foundation in place, the organization is poised for the next stage of its development providing an exciting opportunity for the next Executive Director.

Other opportunities include enhancing governance processes, board engagement, and the engagement of partners.

Key Responsibilities

Leadership & Strategic Direction:

- Provide overall leadership in developing and executing strategic plans, annual work plans, and long-term goals for the Heritage Area.
- Work collaboratively with the Board Chair and Board of Directors to shape organizational priorities, evaluate progress, and ensure mission alignment.
- Represent the organization publicly as a compelling ambassador for the Heritage Area's values, history, and partnerships.



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- Develop, assess, and implement critical sources of diverse financial support for the FWHA.

Program Management & Partnerships

- Oversee the planning, implementation, and evaluation of all programs, grants, and initiatives within the National Heritage Area.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with community partners, municipalities, state agencies, nonprofit organizations, historical and cultural institutions, land conservation groups, and educational entities.
- Facilitate collaborative projects that advance preservation, interpretation, stewardship, and regional identity.
- Support the development and promotion of interpretive themes, trails, events, and public engagement activities.

National Park Service (NPS) Coordination & Compliance

- Serve as the primary liaison with NPS staff and ensure full compliance with federal guidelines, reporting requirements, and cooperative agreements.
- Oversee preparation of annual reports, performance metrics, funding requests, and documentation required by the NPS and other funders.
- Maintain strong working knowledge of federal heritage area legislation, standards, and policies.

Fundraising, Finance & Administration

- Develop and implement diversified funding strategies including grants, governmental support, donor engagement, sponsorships, and earned income.
- Prepare and manage the annual budget; ensure responsible stewardship of financial resources.
- Oversee financial reporting, audits, and compliance in collaboration with the Board Treasurer and financial staff/contractors.
- Manage organizational operations, systems, and policies to ensure effectiveness and transparency.



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Staff Management & Organizational Development

- Recruit, supervise, mentor, and evaluate staff, interns, and contractors.
- Foster a collaborative, respectful, and mission-driven organizational culture.
- Ensure organizational capacity and structure support current needs and future growth.
- Provide support and guidance to Board of Directors

Communications & Public Engagement

- Oversee communication strategies including branding, digital presence, media relations, and public outreach.
- Serve as a spokesperson for the organization at regional, state, and national levels.
- Promote the Heritage Area's stories, programs, and achievements to increase public awareness and engagement.
- Engage the diverse political and philanthropic leaders throughout the area.

Qualifications

Required

- Bachelor's degree in history, public administration, nonprofit management, planning, cultural resource management, or a related field.
- Minimum 5–7 years of leadership experience, preferably within a nonprofit, heritage, cultural, conservation, tourism, or community-focused organization.
- Demonstrated success in managing programs, budgets, and teams.
- Experience with partnership-building and cross-sector collaboration.
- Strong communication and public speaking skills.
- Proven ability to secure donations, grants and manage funder relationships as well as experience securing and managing grants



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Preferred

- Master's degree in a relevant field.
 - Familiarity with the cultural, historical, and environmental landscape of Massachusetts and New Hampshire.
 - Knowledge of heritage tourism, community-based planning, or preservation practices.
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Personal Attributes

- Visionary and strategic thinker with a collaborative leadership style.
 - Strong relationship-builder and facilitator.
 - Organized and detail-oriented project manager able to coordinate complex, multi-part projects.
 - Passionate advocate for history, culture, and regional heritage.
 - Committed promoter of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion.
 - Entrepreneurial leader with demonstrated creativity and flexibility.
 - A good listener
 - A willingness to act boldly
 - Comfortable in a variety of settings and willing to do whatever is needed
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Working Conditions

- Full-time position with a mix of office-based (offices currently in Devens and Concord) and remote work as appropriate.
- Regular travel throughout the Heritage Area region and occasional evening/weekend commitments.
- The salary range for this position is \$85,000 – \$100,000, commensurate with experience.
- Paid federal holidays, paid vacation, and benefits support are provided in addition to the salary.



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- The Executive Director will be hired by and reports directly to the Board of Directors.

Application

A firm deadline for applications is March 10, 2026. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. To apply: Submit a cover letter and resume in PDF format to the Search Committee via email only to: Hiring@freedomsway.org. Applications not submitting the letter and resume via email will not be considered. Applicants will be contacted by the Search Committee. No phone calls please.

We are proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer and are committed to providing a welcoming and inclusive space for all. We believe that a diversity of thoughts, experiences, backgrounds, personalities, and identities helps us think bigger and better, and enables us to reach our goals more effectively. We are committed to building a diverse staff and encourage individuals from all backgrounds to apply.



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