

Title: Executive Director
Reports to: Oregon Tourism Commissioners
Position Base: Portland
Position Type: Hybrid
Status: Full-time, Exempt



POSITION PURPOSE

The Executive Director serves as the agency's chief executive, accountable for the overall performance and impact of Travel Oregon. This role provides strategic leadership and operational oversight across all agency programs; oversees public resources; advances destination stewardship; and builds statewide partnerships with public, private, Tribal, and community stakeholders to deliver economic, social, and environmental value for Oregon. This highly visible role administers the agency under the Commission approved strategic plan and biennial budget and within the authority of ORS 284 and in partnership with other state economic development related agencies.

Over the last few decades, Travel Oregon has helped propel the state as a top tourist destination on the West Coast. As a pivotal leader in Oregon's economic development ecosystem, this next leader will need to be an effective partner with state and industry leaders, fostering strong working relationships and aligning priorities as they continue to deepen tourism volume and spend across all state regions and seasons.

The Executive Director navigates complex, sensitive, and time critical issues with statewide impact on Oregon's economy and Oregonian communities and quality of life. This leader will need to ensure transparent, consistent communication, as a semi-independent agency, aligned with and accountable to state and public partners.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategy, Governance & Policy

- Lead development, implementation, and evaluation of the Commission-approved strategic plan; ensure alignment of agency policy, people, and resources to deliver measurable outcomes.
- Serve as the primary liaison to the Oregon Tourism Commission and State of Oregon; provide timely analysis, reports, and recommendations to inform Commission and state policy decision makers.
- Administer the agency consistent with Governor and Commission direction and authority provided in ORS 284, cultivating Oregon's tourism industry as an integral part of the state's economic development strategy.

Financial Stewardship & Operations

- Direct biennial budget forecasting, development, approval, and administration (approx. \$90M biennial; \$42.8M in 2025), ensuring rigorous compliance, transparency, and accountability.
- Oversee effective agency operations, including internal controls, procurement, and contracting, with a focus on efficiency and public trust.

Organizational Leadership & Culture

- Build and lead a cohesive executive team; set clear expectations and foster an inclusive, collaborative, accountable culture across a statewide hybrid workforce.
- Ensure cross-departmental integration, decision quality, and proactive, transparent

communication with internal and external audiences.

- Champion Travel Oregon's stewardship lenses, community agreements, equity and inclusion, and applicable affirmative action obligations in all programs and practices.
- Recruit, develop, coach, and evaluate executive leaders; ensure continuous talent development and engagement at all levels.

External Relations & Partnerships

- Represent Travel Oregon with the Legislature, industry, Tribal Nations, DMOs, local governments, community organizations, and professional associations; expand partnerships that advance the strategic plan and destination stewardship statewide with an equitable balance between regions, cities, and rural communities.
- Serve as an effective public speaker and spokesperson; communicate priorities, outcomes, and challenges clearly to build trust and alignment.

Performance, Learning & Accountability

- Establish enterprise KPIs, program metrics, and learning systems; monitor performance and report results to the Commission and stakeholders.
- Promote innovation, data-informed decision-making, and continuous improvement to strengthen statewide outcomes.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Organizational and Team Management

- Demonstrated executive level of complex programs, strategic plans, and budgets. Proven success engaging and developing a large, hybrid workforce. Demonstrated ability to advance equity and inclusion in the workplace and programs. Experience driving major change initiatives through an organization is strongly preferred.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Demonstrated ability to engage and collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders, including staff, Commissioners, industry partners, government partners, community members, and the media. Demonstrated success working with and presenting to governing boards and public sector leaders. Track record of cultivating partnerships that improve community and regional outcomes. An inspiring communicator and ambassador of an organization's vision and impact.

Strategic Vision

- Experience setting priorities across an organization and aligning business strategy with people and culture efforts, particularly at the intersection of government and private industry. Ability to set mission, key values, and key initiatives and make decisions in the best interest of long-term organizational and industry prosperity.

Industry Experience

- Deep understanding of tourism, economic development, or a related field, and the balance between tourism, economic, social, and environmental impacts.

EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

Qualifications

- A bachelor's degree in a relevant, related field OR any combination of education/coursework/training and work experience necessary to meet position requirements.
- Five (5) years of experience in roles with senior-level leadership in business, tourism, complex program management, economic development, or related field. With demonstrated management experience leading and developing a program, strategic plan, and budget with experience directly managing staff.
- Experience aligning and optimizing the business strategy and people and culture efforts.
- Experience in balancing public-sector accountability with private-sector opportunity for growth – all centered on benefiting Oregon's communities.
- Understanding of tourism principles, sustainability, and other destination stewardship approaches that address the intersection and balancing of economic, social, and environmental impacts.

To apply

Review of candidates will begin immediately, and the application window will close at midnight PST on Monday, March 30, 2026. Applications, inquiries, and nominations can be sent to:

TravelOregon@heidrick.com. Travel Oregon is a public entity, and the recruitment process and applications may be subject to disclosure under applicable requirements of Oregon laws governing public records and public meetings.

Hiring Range

The salary for this role is commensurate with other economic development positions within the state, with a starting range of \$235,000 to \$255,000.

Benefits

Travel Oregon offers competitive benefits, including:

- Accrual of 15 days paid vacation plus 3 days personal business leave, 12 days paid sick leave, 11 paid holidays, 3 days paid volunteer leave, and available paid bereavement leave.
- 100% of health care premiums for employees and families are paid by Travel Oregon for core benefits (medical/dental/vision).
- Optional health care and dependent care flexible spending accounts (FSAs).
- After six months of employment, participation in Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), including generous Travel Oregon contributions with no employee match required; optional participation in the Oregon Savings Growth Plan.

Equal Opportunity

Travel Oregon is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity, Fair Chance employer and encourage applications from members of historically underrepresented racial/ethnic groups, women, individuals with disabilities, veterans, LGBTQ+ community members, justice impacted and others to help us achieve our vision of a diverse and inclusive community.

Veterans' Preference

Oregon law requires that public employers grant specific preferences in the hiring and promotion of veterans and disabled veterans. Under SB 808, certain preferences will also apply to current and former members of the Oregon National Guard beginning January 1, 2026.

Job Effort and Conditions

This job operates both remotely and in a professional business office environment. It requires extensive public engagement including public speaking, testimony, listening to understand and parliamentary skills. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to maintain a stationary position for long periods of time (sitting or standing); communicate with employees, partners, and stakeholders; and use electronic devices to communicate, develop work products, and carry out responsibilities. When working at the physical office, the employee is required to move inside the office to attend meetings, access items, use equipment, and occasionally move or transport items up to 25 pounds. Work outside of normal business hours, including evening and/or weekend meetings and long hours during peak periods is expected. Extensive overnight travel and extensive time traveling by various modes and meeting with clients and stakeholders is required for this.