



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

October 2025

Job Summary

The Executive Director of the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is a leader who brings passion and dedication to the role of advancing and supporting the aspirations of rural communities across Ontario. The Executive Director is hired by and accountable to the ROI Board of Directors and responsible for effectively and efficiently overseeing the administration, programs and strategic plan of the organization. Externally the Executive Director is a credible, informed spokesperson on rural matters and is capable of forging partnerships, collaborating across sectors and bringing resources together to enable innovative and impactful projects and programs that fulfill the mission of ROI.

General Responsibilities

In collaboration with the Board of Directors, develops and directs organizational strategy and key deliverables.

Drafts organizational policies and guidelines. Ensures annual operating plans are developed and implemented including regular reporting timeframes.

Prepares and implements a comprehensive leadership program strategy that aligns with strategic directions and key deliverables.

Positions the organization to build community capacity and share knowledge that enables rural non-profit organizations, municipalities and rural serving agencies to undertake capacity building and rural community development.

Engages with funders, sponsors, partners, community stakeholders and government representatives to develop and maintain strategic relationships that support and progress key deliverables.

Team Management and Administration

Develops and implements human resources plans, policies, protocols and processes including job descriptions outlining clear responsibilities, key deliverables and contributions toward strategic outcomes of staff in the organization.

Ensures hiring practices are in alignment with all legislative requirements and the mission, vision, culture and philosophy of the organization.



Coaches, mentors, supports and provides development opportunities for team members. Conducts regular engagement and performance reviews.

Ensures human resource management policies and procedures are in place, remain current and are effectively carried out.

Ensures resources and processes are in place for the effective and efficient management of office facilities, electronic and physical records and filing systems, services, equipment and systems, including computer systems, telephones and voicemail. Implements office and equipment leases.

Governance, Organizational Development and Effectiveness

Provides regular reports to the Board of Directors on progress toward strategic directions and key deliverables.

Ensures administrative support for the Board of Directors.

Makes recommendations to the Board on organizational matters as appropriate.

Ensures support for training and orientation of board members.

Public Relations, Marketing and Business Development

Acts as spokesperson for ROI on matters directed to the media and general public.

Ensures ongoing maintenance of an electronic media mailing list, direct preparation and issue of media releases with Board approval and respond to media inquiries.

Supports and enhances rural stakeholder networks and engagement opportunities with a clear comprehensive communication strategy that prioritizes relevant issues, shares objective information and communicates solutions with appropriate stakeholders.

Builds awareness and support for ROI initiatives within and across targeted government ministries and agencies, the private business sector, non-governmental organizations, provincial, national and international rural development organizations and academic research institutions through planned marketing/promotional strategies

Ensures the preparation and implementation of a comprehensive partnership and innovation development strategy that fosters relationships and strategic alliances by engaging the ROI network, various sectors and rural stakeholders..



Finance and Fund Raising

Leads the identification, management and implementation of fundraising and revenue strategies, goals and activities for both operational and endowment funds to sustain ROI and its products and services.

Works with the ROI Board, partners and volunteers to develop innovative funding models and entrepreneurial approaches for ROI's financial sustainability.

Oversees preparation of grant applications, maintenance of records of grant applications, fulfillment of the reporting requirements of successful applications and management of the projects for which funds are obtained.

Oversees ongoing bookkeeping, accounting, invoicing, tax remittance and banking activities.

Oversees day-to-day business activities including reporting on key deliverables.

Ensures the preparation of comprehensive budgets and financial reports. Oversees financial accounts.

Qualifications

- Post-secondary education, ideally in rural planning, community development, organization capacity building, resilience, health & wellbeing, policy analysis and/or community economic development
- 7 or more years of strategic and adaptive organizational leadership experience with demonstrated success in team engagement, innovative problem solving and partnership development and maintenance
- Superlative verbal and written communication skills including public speaking and advocacy skills and experience
- Financial planning and administrative management knowledge and experience
- Demonstrated government and media relations experience with an emphasis on municipal government and intergovernmental relations
- Current passport, valid Ontario driver's license and insured vehicle
- Able to work some evenings and weekends as required for job responsibilities



Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Demonstrated knowledge of:
 - grants and grant writing requirements
 - project management and program evaluation
 - marketing, communications and contact management
 - leadership development including youth engagement, adult education and online learning
 - non-profit management and governance
 - social innovation
 - policy analysis
 - rural and agribusiness issues and innovations
 - socio-economic research
- Flexibility and humility to perform any task that may be required within a small and collaborative team
- Analytical ability to enable responsiveness to appropriate opportunities while passing on those that may divert from strategic direction
- Ability to clearly delegate tasks and responsibilities including independent decision making parameters
- Maturity to develop and maintain effective and accountable relationships