

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

| Priority Applications Due
October 12, 2026

Pathwaves Washington is an Equal Opportunity Employer who cares deeply about its staff and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any kind. Employment decisions at Pathwaves Washington are based on organizational needs, job requirements, and individual qualifications without regard to race, color, national origin, gender identity, age, transgender status, religion or belief, family or parental status, or any other status protected by the law.

About Pathwaves

Early childhood systems in Washington state and throughout the country continue to be inequitable, with Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) children facing poorer outcomes due to systemic and structural racism. At the same time, leaders from BIPOC communities are grossly underrepresented in positions of power within policy development processes.

We believe the early childhood systems we collectively build now will impact generations of children and their families.

Pathwaves Washington creates pathways for leaders of color to hold decision-making roles in early childhood systems, so that they can equitably drive and shape the design of policies that affect children, families, and communities.

Our foundational program, the Pathwaves Fellowship, is a 20-month employment- and cohort-based program that builds the collective power of leaders of color in the early childhood policy sector.

Your Opportunity

Reporting to the Pathwaves Board of Directors, the Executive Director will have the opportunity to lead a strong and cohesive organization that is poised for its next season of growth and impact. Since its founding in 2021, Pathwaves has built a strong reputation, significantly expanded partnerships, and launched three cohorts of its competitive foundational fellowship program. The organization has benefitted from strong and organized leadership, as well as a values-aligned staff and board, resulting in stable and transparent operations, infrastructure, programming and organizational culture. Pathwaves is seeking a leader to sustain this work while also exploring future strategic goals.

Role: Full Time, Exempt

Remote: Some travel; Must live in WA

Salary: \$150K

Benefits: Medical/Dental/Vision;
Generous Leave; 401k Match

Organizational Budget: \$2M

Team: Staff of Two & Key Consultants



Executive Director Responsibilities

The Executive Director will serve as the organization's public spokesperson and leader, working with staff and key consultants to oversee management of the organization. This leader will work to cultivate relationships and investment in Pathwaves' vision and programming, while collaborating with a collective community of early childhood policy leaders in Washington state. Specifically, the Executive Director will lead in the following capacities:

Vision, Culture & Organizational Leadership

- Provide visionary, relational, and adaptive leadership to grow, and sustain supporters of Pathwaves' work, building power to transform Washington's early childhood policy ecosystem.
- Nurture and uphold the organization's values and commitments to action in all aspects of planning and implementation with staff, board members, fellows, placement organizations, and broader community members.
- Model vulnerability and authenticity in relationship-building while driving clear progress toward the development and implementation of a strategic plan.
- Continue to define, refine, and operationalize racially just leadership structures for the organization, collaborating with the board and staff.
- Oversee the implementation of the Theory of Change and ensure the board, staff, and resources are aligned to meet those outcomes.

Fund Development & External Outreach

- Partner with the board, staff, and consultants to develop and implement a bold and innovative fund development plan by cultivating key relationships and ambassadors across Washington state and nationally.
- Lead year-round philanthropic, corporate, and major donor efforts to ensure that the organization can continue to provide robust programming in the future.
- Initiate opportunities for broader community and speaking engagements, and serve as primary external spokesperson for the organization in Washington state and nationally.
- Support and implement a grant management system to track grants, deliverables, budgets, and compliance with funder expectations.
- Cultivate, develop, and maintain robust funder relationships to secure ongoing funding.

Organizational & Financial Management

- Lead, manage, support and hire staff and key consultants in the day-to-day programming of the organization, including communications, human resources, placement site cultivation, fellowship recruitment and planning, and curriculum implementation.
- Support continued program evaluation to ensure ongoing alignment with the strategic plan and community priorities.
- Collaborate with staff and the board to provide ongoing financial updates; develop and finalize an annual budget for the organization.
- With support from key staff and consultants, manage, monitor, and report on ongoing revenue/expenses, ensuring proper implementation of financial policies and controls.
- Foster and support ongoing professional development for staff.
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with placement organization supervisors and representatives to support employment structure and cultivate long-term connections to the organization.

Board Development & Engagement

- Foster and deepen a culture of ongoing learning, engagement, and influence among board members to drive the sustained leadership of the organization.
- Support the engagement, recruitment, and onboarding of board members as key thought partners and advisors.
- Serve as the key liaison between the board and staff, providing timely and transparent reporting of financial, fundraising, program, and strategic partnership development.
- Engage board in collaborative fund development strategy-building to increase/expand organizational visibility.



Desired Qualifications

We understand that no candidate will bring expertise in every area of the role. *We encourage anyone with a deep passion for our work and significant experience in a majority of the areas below to apply.* Specifically, we are seeking an Executive Director who is:

- Values-driven and deeply aligned with Pathwaves' mission; able to demonstrate how they have translated values into practice and responded when those values were challenged.
- Visionary and also systematic; someone who is able to articulate a compelling future while translating that vision into priorities, systems, staffing, and execution.
- Collaborative, humble, and emotionally intelligent. A demonstrated relationship-builder across partners, advocates, funders, and broader communities.
- An experienced fundraiser, eager to support both strategy and direct implementation.
- A transparent, direct, and highly communicative leader who brings issues forward, cuts through ambiguity, and builds trust with staff and board. A listener and learner, willing to understand our work and values, and receptive to feedback about proposed changes or shifts.
- Adaptable and steady, able to navigate complexity, personnel nuances, legal counsel, and the realities of leading a small remote organization.
- A strong manager and coach, able to empower staff, delegate effectively, and help our small but mighty staff grow in their roles.
- Experienced in working with nonprofit Boards of Directors. Bonus if a candidate has experience with complex legal employment structures.

Successful candidates will bring significant leadership experience in advocacy and policy and/or programmatic experience in early childhood OR K-12 education, child welfare, human services, housing, healthcare, food justice, or related systems impacting families and children.

Salary, Benefits & How to Apply

The Pathwaves team is primarily remote, with some limited travel required within Washington. Position is full-time with a salary of \$150k. Pathwaves deeply values staff wellbeing and time away from work. Benefits include employer-sponsored medical/dental/vision, 18 days of vacation leave, 8 days of sick leave, 10 paid holidays, 2 floating holidays, a pre-designated 40 hour break between program cycles, and a year-end paid office closure (Dec. 25 – Jan. 1). Position is eligible for enrollment in a 401(k) program with an employer match up to 4%.

To apply, please send a Cover Letter and Resume to ED@pathwaveswa.org. The priority application date is October 12, 2026.