



**Role:** Director of Development at VELA

**Location:** Virtual Office

<https://talentmarket.org/veladod/>

### **About the Organization**

VELA is the nation's leading network of education founders who deliver alternatives to conventional schooling. The VELA Founder Network is comprised of more than 3,000 founders in all 50 United States and three U.S. territories. By providing early capital, access to a thriving community of entrepreneurs, and connections to resources and support, VELA is accelerating the exploration of new frontiers in education.

At VELA, we envision a future where families take charge of their children's educational journey. We strive for a dynamic market that responds to the unique values, priorities, and education practices desired by families. Now in our fifth year of operation, VELA has invested over \$38 million, impacting over 5 million learners and families. The VELA Founder Network is a powerhouse group of visionary entrepreneurs who are boldly building sustainable businesses that revolutionize education.

VELA's work rests on four key principles which are the foundation of our work:

- We believe in people – because every person has unique talents, motivations, and capabilities.
- We believe in self-determination – because founders and families have the dignity to make their own decisions about their lives.
- We believe in community – we know that self-determined people are eager to improve and learn from one another.
- We believe in voluntary engagement – because there are better results from mutually beneficial relationships where we win together.

In January 2024, VELA launched a three-year, \$60 million fund to catalyze a vibrant alternative education ecosystem within which learners and families can freely choose. Over the next three years, VELA will expand the VELA Founder Network to 6,500 members (currently 2,900) serving 8 million learners and families.

In order to achieve its ambitious Fund IV goals – and ultimately, its vision for enabling a dynamic marketplace in which families can freely choose – VELA is building additional capabilities including development.

### **About the Role**

We are seeking an experienced and dynamic Director of Development to lead VELA's fundraising efforts. In this role, you will be responsible for successfully raising a three-year, \$60 million fund to support our bold vision. As a critical member of our small-but-mighty team, the Director of Development will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our organization by devising and executing comprehensive development strategies to meet our ambitious fundraising goals. This role requires a strategic thinker with a proven track record in fundraising. You will work closely with the executive team to identify funding opportunities, cultivate relationships with major donors, and ensure the sustainability of our programs. This position offers a unique opportunity to drive sustainable growth and impact, ultimately transforming education in our country.

This role reports to the Chief of Operations and can be executed from a virtual office anywhere in the United States.

### **Key Responsibilities**

- **Develop and Implement Fundraising Strategies:** Create, manage, and execute comprehensive fundraising strategies to achieve annual and long-term fundraising goals.
- **Major Gifts and Donor Cultivation:** Prospect and cultivate relationships with anchor funders, major donors, foundations, and key stakeholders, ensuring successful solicitation of major gifts.
- **Grant Management:** Oversee the grant-seeking process, including research, proposal writing, and reporting to ensure a steady stream of grants.
- **Donor Stewardship:** Develop and implement creative and mutually beneficial stewardship plans to engage and retain donors, fostering long-term support and loyalty.
- **Collaboration:** Collaborate with the executive team, board members, and program staff to align fundraising efforts with the organization's mission and priorities.
- **Data Analysis and Reporting:** Monitor and analyze fundraising metrics to make data-driven decisions, and report progress to the leadership team and the board.

### **Qualifications**

- 10+ years of fundraising experience; development executive with demonstrated success raising significant funds, including major gifts and grants
- Ability to travel approximately 30%
- Track record of cultivating and maintaining donor relationships
- Excellent strategic planning skills with the ability to develop and execute comprehensive fundraising plans
- Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to articulate VELA's vision and impact to a diverse audience
- Experience in grant writing and management, including researching, writing, and reporting
- Proficiency in using fundraising software and CRM systems to track donor interactions and analyze fundraising performance
- Strong analytical skills with the ability to interpret data and make informed decisions
- Ability to work collaboratively with a small, dynamic team and manage multiple priorities in a fast-paced environment
- Deep commitment to VELA's vision and principles

### **To Apply**

Qualified candidates should submit the following application materials (in order) in one PDF document:

- Cover letter detailing:
  - Your interest in this position
  - Demonstration of your development skills in action
  - Your salary requirements
- Your resume

Applications should be submitted to Talent Market via this link: [talentmarket.org/apply-for-your-dream-job/](https://talentmarket.org/apply-for-your-dream-job/).

Questions can be directed to Katy Gambella, Director of Outreach at Talent Market, who is managing the search process: [katy@talentmarket.org](mailto:katy@talentmarket.org).

There is no application deadline for this position. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. This job will remain posted on our site until it is filled.

While we thank all applicants in advance for their interest in this position, we are only able to contact those to whom we can offer an interview. Only direct applications will be considered. No phone calls, please.

Talent Market is a nonprofit entity dedicated to promoting liberty by helping free-market nonprofits identify talent for critical roles. We provide consulting and recruiting services at no cost to 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations that clearly and directly focus on advancing the principles of economic freedom, free enterprise, free trade, free speech, property rights, rule of law, and limited regulation.