Executive Director Position Profile

**Location:** Augusta, Maine

**Website:** [https://mainewomen.org/mwl](https://mainewomen.org/mwl)

**Overview**
The Maine Women’s Lobby (MWL) is seeking a movement-building, feminist leader committed to building on our past policy and advocacy successes and growing our power to advance policy reform.

For 40 years, Maine Women’s Lobby (MWL) has been Maine’s only advocacy organization focused on the broad range of issues affecting the lives of Maine women and girls. We work to create a future that is free from violence, free from discrimination, with access to health care, and real economic security.

Maine Women’s Lobby’s successes and assets include:

- **A history of successfully working with the Maine state legislature to enact key legislation.** Recent legislative wins include: “An Act Regarding Pay Equality” prohibiting employers from asking for prior wage history; “An Act to Protect Pregnant Workers” requiring reasonable protections and accommodations for pregnant workers; and, “An Act To Prevent Discrimination in Public and Private Insurance Coverage for Pregnant Women in Maine” requiring public and private insurance in Maine to cover abortion care when prenatal care coverage is also available.

- A strong network of coalitions, key partner relationships, and a 17 member advisory committee of longstanding MWL champions.

- The popular biennial Economic Security Summit, which drew almost 300 legislators, coalition members, partners, and community members in 2019. This year’s theme: “#MaineToo: Taking Action Against Sexual Assault, Harassment and Exploitation” featured keynote speaker [MeToo Founder Tarana Burke](https://mainewomen.org/mwl). The 2017 Summit featured keynote speaker [Alicia Garza](https://mainewomen.org/mwl), one of the co-creators of #BlackLivesMatter and special projects director for the National Domestic Workers Alliance, as well as Loretta Ross, an expert on reproductive justice, racism, and intersectionality.

- Annual Girls’ Day at the State House, which brings 100 eighth grade girls from across the state to Augusta to learn about how public policy decisions are made and the importance of women’s leadership within the state legislature and beyond.

Like other nonprofit advocacy organizations, MWL is comprised of two structural entities, the Maine Women’s Lobby, a 501(c)(4), and the Maine Women’s Lobby Education Fund, a 501(c)(3). MWL employs 4.0 staff, augmented by contract positions that provide project and administrative support, and has 17 board members. MWL offices are located in Augusta, which is Maine’s capital city. The average annual operating budget is $400,000 with a revenue base of donations, foundation support, event fees and corporate sponsorships. The organization has approximately $435,000 in financial assets.
**Strategic Priorities**

During the 2017-2018 40th Anniversary year, following the success of the Economic Security Summit, MWL hosted intergenerational discussion circles. The organization heard the clear internal and external call to action to strongly center both power building and the leadership of the communities they serve throughout the organization’s policy work, community-building, practices, and leadership.

As part of this executive transition, MWL engaged in an intensive organizational assessment process which included conducting regional community gatherings with people who identify as women and non-binary people across race and class, many of whom were unfamiliar with the Maine Women’s Lobby. The gatherings explored:

- What does feminism mean to you?
- What could/does a feminist politics look like in Maine?
- How can we center the vital intersections of gender with race, class and other identities in our political work?
- How could an explicitly feminist, anti-racist political agenda improve your life, and the lives of your family/community?
- What examples, if any, have you seen of this type of work in Maine or elsewhere?
- What would engage you and others?
-What is needed from the Maine Women’s Lobby to make the political impact women in Maine need to improve their lives today?

MWL has identified the following key strategic and operational priorities to be led and shaped by the next executive director:

- **Continue MWL’s transition into a movement building organization that builds power for intersectional feminist policy development and change.** Lobbying in Augusta remains the essential activity and will become exponentially more powerful and effective through community-informed policy development and a demonstrated base of mobilized, grassroots support.

- **Align and develop organizational governance, a sustainable financial model, and infrastructure (policies, practices, staffing) to support the values and strategy of the MWL transition.** MWL is at the beginnings of a process to realign the internal operations of the organization to ensure that how the organization functions day-to-day reflects feminist values and a social justice analysis of power.

- **Strategic Planning and Ongoing Learning:** MWL is at the beginning of a transition process. Strategic planning is essentially an organizational learning process to answer the transitional questions of “what does success look like?” and “how will we get there?” MWL will engage in a strategic planning process that builds upon the organization’s equity learning begun in 2017 with the Economic Security Summit, and will answer the questions of how the organization will build and share power externally, prioritize its influence through policy development and advocacy, and structure its internal operations.

- **Financial Model:** The revenue model is a blend of individual donations (for 501c4 and 501c3) and event fees, corporate sponsorship, and foundation support (501c3 only). MWL currently relies heavily on grant support. Moving forward, MWL will focus on strengthening donor relationships and developing a robust membership base to support non-tax deductible lobbying activities.

- **Governance:** MWL will strengthen board recruitment and retention, with attention to recruitment across race, ethnicity, class, and gender identities, and establish meaningful board member engagement, both individually and through committees.
Infrastructure: Key infrastructure priorities include: clarifying roles, responsibilities, and decision-making process for staff and board - and between the c3 and c4 entities; developing strong relationships with staff and board, creating an environment of consistent communication, mutuality, and trust; establishing internal policies and procedures, specifically compensation (salaries and benefits) and personnel policies; and capturing institutional knowledge.

Focus programming and communications on education/consciousness raising to build awareness of systemic misogyny and inform policy development. MWL will use popular education and consciousness raising activities, including a more defined and broader presence through social media, to create a base of people who are aware and ready to organize, become members, and maintain interest in further actions.

Prioritize strategic partnerships and collaborations to move feminist policy change forward. MWL will work through collaboration and coalition building to develop and move a policy agenda forward, strongly centering social justice throughout the organizations’ policy work. MWL will act as a convener on priority policy issues as needed, collaboratively engaging key partners to educate, grow grassroots support, and advance policy reform through an intersectional feminist lens.

Ideal Candidate
Maine Women’s Lobby is seeking a movement building leader who brings feminist values and a social justice analysis of power to the role of the Executive Director. The ideal candidate will build on our past policy and advocacy successes and grow our power to advance policy reform.

The ideal candidate is experienced in working with grassroots organizing models and has developed and managed boards of directors and staff to support organizing for policy change. A strong communicator and connector, they are able to challenge people’s thinking while bringing them along in a shared vision. They have achieved sustainable organizational change through thoughtful engagement of diverse stakeholders, great listening skills, and genuine curiosity.

A personable leader who will enthusiastically nurture relationships, they are passionate about their role as “Chief Fundraising Officer” and truly enjoy engaging donors of all levels in supporting the work of the organization.

The ideal candidate understands the political landscape of a rural state, brings an informed political analysis and understands how government works, and can translate their relationship-building skills to lobbying and policy development.

They are a strong external bridge between the organization and strategic partners and coalitions as well as between board and staff. They are known for their skill at consistent and thoughtful communication of information.

An experienced manager in a nonprofit environment, the ideal candidate willingly steps into the day-to-day work of running an organization. They are team oriented (versus hierarchical) and an effective delegator. They listen, listen, listen. They have grown organizations through building on people’s strengths. They are skilled at developing and managing budgets, institutionalizing the policies and procedures of a small nonprofit, and ensuring plans are well executed. They are expert at prioritizing at all levels of an organization, sometimes very quickly given sudden and emerging issues, and are willing to say no to lower priorities.

Tolerant of risk and the messiness of both political advocacy and organizational change, they are able to see beyond perceived scarcity and constraints. They experience challenges as opportunities for learning and growth.
The ideal candidate can move seamlessly from a staff meeting to a funder meeting, to facilitating a conversation among legislators and strategic partners, to meeting with Maine’s legislative leadership, to being a face of the organization with the media. They are able to assume a regional or national leadership role.

They are optimistic, have a direct and transparent communications style, and can handle the soup-to-nuts nature of the work with grace and good humor. Adaptable and self-aware, they practice self-care and create systems to support professional growth, health and wellness across the organization. They infuse energy and joy into the work and culture of the organization.

**Primary Characteristics and Experience**
- Demonstrated feminist values and a social justice analysis of power
- 5-10 years of leadership and management experience, preferably in organizing and advocacy organizations
- Successful experience diplomatically managing strategic and cultural change and charting a pathway for organizational transition and growth
- Successful track record in fundraising/development and experience engaging donors of all levels
- Experience cultivating strong board engagement, recruitment, and development, gained as a staff person or board member
- Experienced in growing strategic partnerships and working in coalitions, effectively stewarding relationships and building new connections
- An effective communicator with proven experience coaching, managing, and developing high-performing teams of staff and volunteers
- Demonstrated business savvy, financial and budgeting skills, and ability to communicate financial information across different audiences
- Knowledge of lobbying and policy development

Approximate annual salary range for this position is $75,000 - $85,000 with benefits.

**Candidate Guidelines**
This search is being conducted by transition consultant Cathy Kidman in partnership with Jodi Dowling, Executive Search and Recruitment Manager for TSNE MissionWorks. **Interested candidates should submit a resume and thoughtful letter of interest via this link:**

[Apply Here](#)

Electronic submissions sent through this link are preferred. All submissions are confidential.

*Please include in your cover letter where you learned of the position and a description of how your qualifications and experience specifically match Maine Women’s Lobby strategic priorities.*

Because of the pace of this search, candidates are strongly encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Review of materials and interviews of appropriate candidates will begin immediately. Resumes and cover letters will be accepted until the position is filled.

*Maine Women’s Lobby is an Equal Opportunity Employer and actively seeks a diverse pool of candidates. People from historically and currently under-represented communities are strongly encouraged to apply.*