

Lead Director of Philanthropy

Position overview:

The **Lead Director of Philanthropy** is a senior frontline fundraising leader responsible for driving performance, operational rigor, and consistency across IDEA's **major gifts team**. Overseeing a cohort of Directors of Philanthropy, the Lead Director provides coaching, portfolio strategy support, and operational oversight to ensure IDEA's multi-region **major gifts pipeline** delivers sustained, predictable revenue growth.

Reporting to the **Sr. Managing Director of Development**, the Lead Director translates organizational fundraising strategy into clear execution plans for the **major gifts team**, supporting Directors in portfolio segmentation, donor strategy development, impactful stewardship, and rigorous pipeline management. This role ensures that IDEA's **major gift practices** are aligned, data-informed, and relationship-centered across all regions.

In addition to people leadership, the Lead Director maintains a select portfolio of high-capacity donors, modeling best-in-class cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship practices. They partner closely with Development leadership to ensure major gifts fundraisers have the clarity, coaching, and operational support needed to achieve annual revenue targets.

The Lead Director strengthens IDEA's **major gifts fundraising infrastructure** by supporting team training, campaign readiness, talent development, and cross-functional coordination specific to the major gifts function—enhancing execution while ensuring the Sr. Managing Director of Development can focus on strategic growth, institutional partnerships, and organization-wide advancement priorities.

Location: This is a full-time, hybrid position based in Texas. Preference will be given to candidates who live in Texas, or who are willing to relocate.

Travel Expectation: The Lead Director supports multi-region donor strategy and frontline coaching, requiring travel for donor meetings, regional partnership, and team support across assigned markets. Expected **25–35% travel annually**, with higher volume during peak engagement periods (e.g., stewarding top prospects, supporting regional activation, College Signing Day, Annual Gala).

What You'll Do – Accountabilities

Essential Duties:

Strategic Portfolio Leadership & Major Gifts Execution

- Lead a high-impact portfolio of top institutional and individual donors, focusing on transformational gifts and multi-year commitments that advance IDEA's strategic priorities.
- Set the strategic direction for cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship across all Director of Philanthropy portfolios, ensuring alignment to the Foundation model and organizational goals.
- Oversee portfolio balancing, segmentation, and revenue planning, providing Directors with strategic guidance, portfolio reviews, and data-informed recommendations to strengthen donor pipeline performance.
- Model best-in-class major gifts practice through your own portfolio work, securing investments through multi-year commitments, donor-advised funds, endowed gifts, and planned giving opportunities.

Team Leadership, Coaching & Performance Management

- Directly supervise and coach a team of Directors of Philanthropy, building a culture of excellence, accountability, collaboration, and continuous improvement.
- Lead 1:1 coaching, portfolio strategy sessions, and performance check-ins, ensuring each Director is equipped with clear goals, tailored support, effective strategies, and strong execution.
- Develop the team's skills in qualification, major gift strategy, transformational giving, and donor advisement, strengthening IDEA's overall fundraising capacity.
- Partner with the Sr. Managing Director of Development to set and manage team-level metrics, KPIs, and long-term revenue goals.

Cross-Functional Alignment & Organizational Influence

- Work closely with program executives, regional leaders, and senior organizational leadership to translate IDEA's strategic priorities into philanthropic opportunities for donor engagement.
- Align major gifts work with the Donor Experience, Advancement Services, and Communications teams to ensure consistent stewardship, messaging, donor journeys, and reporting.
- Coordinate executive participation in donor meetings, briefings, site visits, cultivation events, and high-impact engagements, ensuring strategic alignment and preparation.

Strategic Planning, Forecasting & Revenue Accountability

- Lead annual revenue planning, forecasting, and progress-to-goal management for the major gifts team, ensuring clarity, accuracy, and proactive adjustments.
- Oversee team-wide pipeline management and moves-management strategy, identifying risks, opportunities, and resource needs across regions.
- Ensure the highest standards for data integrity and documentation across all Director portfolios in collaboration with Advancement Services.

Donor Engagement & Executive-Level Relationship Management

- Serve as a senior philanthropic advisor to IDEA's highest-capacity donors, connecting their interests with IDEA's long-term vision and impact.
- Craft and deliver compelling philanthropic cases that articulate IDEA's mission, growth strategy, and investment needs with clarity and confidence.
- Represent IDEA Public Schools at high-level engagements, events, and community opportunities, strengthening IDEA's philanthropic brand across multiple regions.

What You Bring- Competencies

Additional Skills

- Extensive experience securing and overseeing transformational gifts (\$50,000–\$500,000+), with mastery in multi-year, endowed, and planned giving strategies.
- Demonstrated success managing your own high-value portfolio *while* coaching and developing major gift officers to strengthen performance and pipeline health.
- Ability to design and implement portfolio strategy, prospect assignment, and revenue plans across multiple regions
- Confident thought partner to senior leaders—able to shape fundraising strategy, guide messaging, and represent the department at the highest levels
- Skilled at aligning diverse teams around shared donor strategies and organizational priorities

- Advanced ability to use analytics, forecasting, segmentation, and performance dashboards to drive strategy and accountability
- Deep understanding of IDEA's mission and long-term vision, with the ability to translate organizational priorities into a cohesive philanthropic strategy across regions
- Experience designing training, coaching, and performance systems for fundraisers
- High confidence managing up, across, and down—especially in distributed or multi-region environments
- Strong judgment, discretion, and problem-solving in complex donor and organizational scenarios
- Ability to navigate ambiguity and lead through change with clarity and confidence
- Willingness to work a flexible schedule, including occasional evenings and weekends during peak fundraising periods; must be comfortable working independently while traveling

Required Experience

- Bachelor's degree required
- **7+ years of major gifts experience**, including securing six- or seven-figure gifts and managing fundraisers or cross-functional teams

Preferred Experience

- Master's degree
- CFRE/CFRM

What We Offer:

Compensation & Benefits:

Salaries for people entering this role typically fall between \$108,100 and \$128,600, commensurate with relevant experience and qualifications and in alignment with internal equity. This role is also eligible for performance pay based on organizational performance and goal attainment.

Additionally, we offer medical, dental, and vision plans, disability, life insurance, parenting benefits, flexible spending account options, generous vacation time, referral bonuses, professional development, and a 403(b) plan. You can find more information about our benefits at <https://ideapublicschools.org/careers/benefits/>.

* IDEA may offer a relocation stipend to defray the cost of moving for this role, if applicable.

Application process:

Submit your application online through Jobvite. [Lead Director of Philanthropy in Texas, United States](#) Please note that applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis until the position is filled. Applicants are encouraged to apply as early as possible.

Learn more about IDEA

At IDEA the Staff Culture and Belonging Team uses our Core Values to promote human connection and a culture of integrity, respect, and belonging for all Team and Family members. Learn more about our Commitment to Core Values here: <https://ideapublicschools.org/our-story/#core-values>