

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS:

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR(S)

APPLY BY DECEMBER 20, 2024

Photo: Hannah Lauber



The [Holden Village](#) Board of Directors seeks an Executive Director (or team of Executive Directors) to lead the Village for **a term beginning September 1, 2025**. The usual term is five years, though the Board is open to proposals outside of this norm. The primary responsibility of the Executive Director(s) is to nurture the Village's Mission, Vision, and Values, animating them and keeping them central to Village life and work.

Included in this packet are: instructions for application/nomination, Holden's "Mission, Vision, and Values" + its statement regarding its Commitment to Justice, a job description, and a FAQ.

All friends of the Village are encouraged to nominate individuals or teams of individuals with the appropriate gifts and skills for consideration. Individuals and teams may also apply directly.

## A completed application consists of:

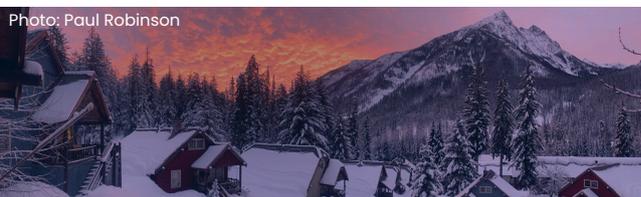
- Resume
- Three (3) references
- Three (3) total essays, with each essay (1000-word maximum, double-spaced) responding to each of the following prompts:
  - Describe your spiritual journey and identity
  - Describe your leadership/management experience and how it relates to an organization like Holden Village, and your vision for leadership at Holden
  - Choose one (1) or more of Holden Village's Values and describe how you would use it/them in implementing the vision described above.

Holden Village recognizes that there is much work to be done in the Church, the world, and the Village to honor, respect, and celebrate diversity and all its gifts. As such, the Holden Board of Directors affirms and supports diverse applicants and/or teams for the position of Executive Director(s). People of any race, ethnicity, national origin, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability status, or relationship with Holden are encouraged to apply.

Questions, nominations, and applications may be sent to [search@holdenboard.org](mailto:search@holdenboard.org).

**Applications are due via email no later than Friday, December 20 (2024).**

Photo: Paul Robinson



# Vision, Mission, and Values

## Vision

Holden Village cultivates a more just, sustainable, and compassionate world.

## Mission

Growing from the love of Christ, Holden Village is a courageous community that welcomes all people into the wilderness to form and renew their relationships with God, the earth, and each other.

## Values

Holden is a gift and invitation to build and practice community both within the Village and in the greater world.

### We value:

- Our place in the wilderness that nurtures spiritual, emotional, and physical growth
- Our Lutheran roots, which strengthen us to face the world with faith and good courage
- Community-building through hospitality, dialogue, justice, liturgy, humor, solace, and wholeness
- Our rhythms of Village life.

### We commit to be:

- A community in which daily life is meaningful
- A community that embraces the intellectual, spiritual, and emotional aspects of faith
- A community where questions are valued and encouraged
- A community that lives out its mission with joy, participating in the gracious love of God

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# Holden's Commitment to Justice

For the sake of Justice, Holden is called to...

...foster Diversity through deliberate invitation and welcome...

...deploy an ethic of Equity to confront and dismantle systemic oppression, and...

...practice Inclusion by listening to, learning from, and being transformed by marginalized voices...

...in order to become, together, the community for which God longs.

# Position Description

## Context

For over 50 years, [Holden Village](#) has operated as a remote Lutheran retreat center and community in the wilderness of the Cascade Mountains of Washington state. A former copper mining village gifted to the Lutheran church in the 1960s, Holden has offered year-round hospitality to all who join the bustling summer community (300+ people) and/or the smaller winter community (70-150). Holden Village is rooted in the Lutheran expression of the Christian faith and strives to be a place of ecumenical and interfaith collaboration. By offering year-round hospitality to all who come to Holden, the Village seeks to serve the wider church and God's beloved world.

Holden is emerging from a period of heavy construction in connection with a mine remediation project (2013-2016), a forest fire (2015), and the COVID pandemic (2020-2022) to grow back to full capacity for education, worship, and recreation for people of all ages. Looking forward, the Board and the Executive Directors will soon complete negotiations regarding another, less disruptive remediation project in the valley, finalize construction of and programming for an exciting new Village Museum project, and engage in a comprehensive Capital Campaign to support Holden into the future.

The Board of Directors of Holden Village hires, oversees, and supports the Executive Director(s), who is/are expected to maintain a consistent presence in the Village and lead the community during this time of complex ecological, ecumenical, and societal change. Leadership of the Village has consisted of 1-3 Executive Director(s) who, in turn, manage and lead a staff consisting primarily of long-term volunteers and a core of employees. Staff size ranges from roughly 70 people in the winter months to 130 in the summer. The position requires relationships with staff, guests, donors, the Church, synods, and partner organizations, including the United States Forest Service (USFS), state and federal regulatory agencies, local Indigenous tribes, Rio Tinto (the mining company responsible for the remediation), IMCO (the company contracted by Rio Tinto to operate the remediation-related water treatment plant in Railroad Creek Valley), and other companies subcontracted by Rio Tinto.

The Board seeks an Executive Director (or team of Directors) who, first and foremost, is/are deeply committed to articulating and embodying the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of the Village. Leadership in this setting requires great personal resilience; passion and connection to Holden and commitment to Christian/Lutheran beliefs; an ability to strategically envision Holden's place in the complex, changing world; ongoing focus on ecological regeneration and sustainability; solid business acumen; commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion; ability to foster meaningful relationships with Rio Tinto, IMCO, the USFS, local Indigenous tribes and other partner organizations; oversight of renewal and/or construction of buildings and physical infrastructure; understanding the role of the Board and changes in the volunteer and employment landscape of our constituency. The Board is open to receiving proposals for executive leadership that mirror historic models and/or innovative approaches and team compositions to lead Holden Village.

# Overview

The Executive Director(s) is/are responsible to the Board of Directors for nurturing and keeping the Mission, Vision, and Values as the vital center of the life and work of Holden Village. The position includes:

- Leadership of a unique Christian retreat center located in a remote alpine setting
- Curating a multi-generational year-round community that has tens of thousands of supporters worldwide.
- Being guardian of a highly relational ethos that has existed for over 60 years, defined by hard work, worship and gathering, hilarity, faith, and shared experience.
- Managing multiple strategic relationships that include the institutional church, schools, regional businesses, corporations, other nonprofits, the state of Washington, a particularly the USFS (which issues the permits that allow Holden to exist).

## Essential Functions

### Leadership of a collaborative, welcoming community

- Articulate and live out the Mission, Vision, and Values with all Villagers.
- Collaborate with the Board to implement the [Strategic Plan](#).
- Build and maintain relationships with all Villagers and community partners, such as the USFS, Rio Tinto, the Yakama Nation, and Chelan School District.
- Leadership of a community of faith and practice; collaborate with the Village pastor and staff in framing the worship experience of the community, including a required daily Vespers service for all villagers.
- Develop and oversee the design, execution, and evaluation of programs and education consistent with the ministry of Holden Village, including the Summer Teaching Programs
- Oversee capital campaign and fundraising, and develop other financial resources with Board approval and support.
- Through staffing, programming, outreach, and training, ensure that Holden upholds a commitment to racial equity, social justice, accessibility, and inclusion of people from a wide diversity of communities, including racial, ethnic, religious, socioeconomic, gender, sexuality, and ability identities.

### Staffing and Human Resource Management

- Provide overall day-to-day management of the Village.
- Hire and supervise all senior managers and the Village pastor, and oversee recruitment, hiring and training of year-round staff and seasonal volunteers (staffing models, like leadership teams, have varied over the years).
- Community-crafting, making sure that volunteers and employees have the right jobs and find their work meaningful.
- Nurture a sense of community and hospitality for all Villagers, inside and outside of Holden.
- Engage practices supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion on multiple levels.
- Create a work culture of cooperation, supportive delegation, and empowerment.

### Operations Management

- Oversee the Village's facilities and business operations, delegating and prioritizing a wide variety of critical tasks.
- Oversee the care and maintenance of Holden's physical infrastructure.

## **Financial Oversight**

- Develop and propose annual budgets for Board review and approval.
- Oversee and be accountable for finances, including income, expenditures, external contracts, and all other financial matters.
- Support ongoing fundraising, grant-writing, and the Advancement/Capital Campaign.

## **Public Relations**

- Serve as the spokesperson/spokespeople for the ministry of Holden Village, nationally and globally, to cultivate relationships with existing and potential guests, staff, faculty, donors, and partners.
- Oversee the writing, printing, and distribution of all of Holden's promotional and informational materials.

# **Requirements**

## **Qualifications, Experience, and Skills**

- Strong executive experience with nonprofit organization leadership and management (involving a wide span of organizational control), financial oversight, development, and Board governance.
- Have a demonstrated commitment to a Lutheran faith community or another denomination in full communion with the ELCA, a broadly ecumenical understanding of Christianity, and an ability to engage in faith-based learning in a variety of contexts
- Experience training and engaging others in both large and small groups.
- Demonstrated commitment to and experience with organizational practices supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion, particularly related to racial justice.
- Demonstrated experience with volunteer supervision, leadership development, and young adult formation.
- Adaptive communication skills, including interviewing, coaching, and intercultural collaboration.
- Experience in recruiting, selecting, nurturing, supervising, and evaluating staff (especially full-time residential volunteers).
- Baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university (or equivalent); Masters degree preferred.
- Committed to full-time presence at Holden Village for up to 5 years.

## **Physical and Mental**

- Ability to live, work, and lead in a remote alpine community without fast or consistent access to in-person medical, dental, and behavioral health care.
- Ability to live in a wilderness context, managing life in a community situated in a place that includes changes in elevation, lack of air conditioning in the summer, large amounts of accumulated snow in the wintertime, wildlife, and sometimes-inconsistent internet connectivity.
- The ability and willingness to serve as a leader in emergency situations, including medical and behavioral health emergencies, fire emergencies, wildlife management, and evacuations.
- Strong sense of self-care and sustainable work/life balance while living in a remote community with those you are leading.

# Compensation

Depending on the team composition, the estimated annual salary range for each full-time individual in this role is **\$60,000 - \$72,000** with bonus-earning potential and is based on the desired experience range at the time of this posting. Actual compensation will be dependent upon various factors, including, but not limited to, the candidate's relevant experience and qualifications.

Holden Village also offers the following benefits, per individual team member:

- Medical, dental, and vision insurance in accordance with the Village's general program for employees.
- Life insurance benefits in accordance with the Village's general program for employees.
- The Village matches employee contributions to a SIMPLE IRA retirement plan up to 3%.
- Forty-two (42) "out days" (ie. paid vacation days taken outside of the Village) per year.
- Because of the unique nature of both living and working at Holden, the observation of traditional paid holidays is not possible. Rather, the Village observes a monthly off-season (September through May) tradition called "Stop Days" wherein all staff enjoy a shared day off from Village work obligations. These days are scheduled by Village leadership.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **1. What is the primary responsibility for which the Executive Director(s) of Holden Village is/are accountable to the Holden Board?**

The primary responsibility is to nurture and keep the Holden Village Mission, Vision, and Values as the animating center of the Village's life and work.

## **2. How does Holden live out its Mission, Vision, and Values in a constantly changing world?**

Like every healthy organization, Holden Village has maintained a fine balance between continuity and change. Maintaining this balance requires prudence and collaborative leadership among the entire Holden community. There is no simple formula laid down in advance for how to do this well. The Board's guidance is one way the Village strives to maintain this balance, including staggered 4-year terms of its members.

## **3. Can you give an example of how Holden has maintained this "balance?"**

For many years, days at Holden have consistently concluded with a half-hour Vespers service (also referred to as Sacred Space). Amidst this regular cadence of practice, the worship experience changes as teachers and the worship leaders bring differing liturgical styles, Biblical interpretation, pedagogical style, and theological training. Worship activities are broadly participatory and reflect ongoing theological and liturgical developments around the globe.

## **4. Is Vespers mandatory for everyone?**

When we gather each evening for Vespers we enact our membership in the Holden community. The Vespers service is the one community discipline in which all Villagers participate. It is a meaningful part of the day when everyone comes together in stillness and connection. These evening gatherings are also the time when all newly arrived Villagers are welcomed, and all departing ones are blessed.

## **5. Are there other community expectations that aren't noted in the Job Description?**

All staff (including the Executive Director(s)) are expected to participate in a regular cadence of shared work responsibilities called "Work of the Village". These tasks include dishwashing, garbage sorting, boiler stoking, and staff meetings. Schedules range from once per week to once per month, depending on the work task and the staff population.

## **6. Are there any crucial features of Holden that are *not* captured explicitly in its Mission and Vision statements, but that everyone tacitly understands?**

One in particular stands out: Holden's communal character. Holden is a village, not a resort. It welcomes people not as "consumers" or "producers" but as Villagers whose gifts enrich and strengthen one another across generations. Each person that travels to the Village enters it welcomed as either a returning or a new community member. They then return downlake, sharing

their transformative experiences of Village life far and wide. This constant motion of arrival/sending underscores the Village's identity as an unintentional community – a place where an ever-changing group of Villagers creates and recreates community within a particular time, caring for one another while also preparing and stewarding Holden for those yet to come. In this way, future Villagers are as much a part of the community as past and present Villagers.

### **7. What does this sense of community mean in actual practice?**

It means that all staff, including teaching faculty, share meals, serve on dish-washing teams, and help to dispose of the Village's refuse. It means that paid and volunteer staff attend teaching sessions right along with the paying guests. It means that guests "pitch in" on a voluntary basis to clean tables, clear fire breaks, and weed gardens. It means that Holden Board members and their spouses often volunteer during their time in the Village, for a variety of tasks. Though the terms "guest" and "staff" and "faculty" and "board member" are occasionally used to designate certain functional differences, the overarching term "Villager" captures the fundamental reality of community at Holden.

### **8. The position description indicates that the Holden Board would be open to creative leadership models/structures for the Executive Director position. What does this mean?**

Holden has learned from its own history that no one model is ideal in all seasons or years. Some have worked better than others, but excellent performance depends not simply on the model but on how well the model fits the needs of the time and the distinctive gifts of the director or co-directors. The Holden Board welcomes candidates to think through the question of administrative structure and to propose models that would best enable them to carry out their numerous designated tasks responsibly and sustainably.

### **9. Again, can you give some concrete examples from history or from general experience?**

At times Holden has had a single Executive Director and a business manager. At other times, there have been 2-3 co-Directors who have divided responsibilities between themselves and several senior managers. Some multi-director teams have all lived in-Village full-time during their team's term. Some multi-director teams include a mix of Directors who live full-time in-Village while one or more Directors live primarily downlake but spend substantial amounts of time in-Village throughout the year.

### **10. What are some examples of leadership models that have not yet been tried?**

There might be a single Director who appoints someone (a kind of Provost) to manage the Village onsite while the other Director(s) spend substantial amounts of time on the road for development and other activities. Possible models are endless, constrained only by the Village's budget and by the respective gifts, imaginations, and financial needs of the applicants. Models of leadership may approach differently the need for consistent in-Village presence/leadership *and* the various Executive Director responsibilities based/focused outside the Village. The Executive Director(s) is/are provided housing at Holden Village.

**11. What is the structure of the Holden Board and how will the Executive Directors relate with the Board?**

The Board currently has twenty members organized into committees where most ongoing work gets done. The Executive Committee (made up of the Board officers) meets at least monthly via Zoom with the Executive Directors. Executive Directors are also expected to attend a summer In-Village Board Meeting and a fall Meeting in November outside of the Village, and one or two Zoom meetings in the winter and spring.

**12. The job description references mine remediation and a potential future project. What does that mean?**

The largest and most disruptive portion of remediation has been completed, but monitoring continues. As such, additional remediation may be required. The Record of Decision establishes a timeline for compliance with water quality metrics and describes a second phase of activity to address non-compliance.

**13. The job description references the Strategic Plan. What is the current status?**

The Holden Board completed and adopted its current [Strategic Plan](#) at its November 2019 meeting. In collaboration with the Executive Director(s), the Board may be interested in conducting a review and updating of the Strategic Plan in the upcoming years.

**14. Does the Holden Board understand the Strategic Plan as the operative agenda for the future Director(s)?**

The Holden Board understands the [Strategic Plan](#) as a roadmap for the Board, the Directors, and Holden Village generally. Each year, the Executive Directors will be evaluated on their management of the areas outlined in the job description with the Strategic Plan serving as a primary lens. The Strategic Plan provides overall direction for the entire Village to enable and justify the ongoing formulation and establishment of priorities and policies.

**15. What are the major challenges that Holden faces in the future?**

Holden faces the challenges of any faith-based nonprofit institution, as well as additional challenges particular to its unique place in the world. Like many nonprofits, it faces issues of financial sustainability given the increasing costs in the areas of compliance, insurance, and deferred maintenance; the need to adjust its communication to account for the changing character of its constituencies; and ongoing dialogue about the language of faith in a changing ecumenical and interfaith context. More particularly, Holden continues to face the impacts of climate change, including ongoing fire danger. The risks of fire and the aging of our physical infrastructure led to the launching of a major capital campaign during Summer 2024 that will extend over the next few years.

**16. What are the major risks to Holden?**

Holden engaged a firm to conduct a comprehensive risk management audit in 2019. That report and a summary of major actions taken since then will be provided to finalists before the final interview for the position.

## **17. What are the challenges associated with living at Holden as an Executive Director?**

Holden is in a remote location. This means that several hours of travel via bus and ferry are required for medical appointments, to visit loved ones, or to tend to other out-of-Village matters. It also means that all food and supplies are shipped by barge/ferry and loaded by hand onto Holden vehicles, a task shared by all Villagers. The remote location also means that Executive Directors must be able to set and maintain clear personal and professional boundaries as they live in a small community with the people they lead. Privacy and personal space can be a challenge. Holden is also in a mountainous location. Living in the Village requires an ability to move over uneven terrain, climb a large hill, and navigate fluctuations of temperature and precipitation, including the potential of hundreds of inches of snowfall and little direct sunlight in the winter. Finally, Holden's location means that Executive Directors must respond effectively to urgent, unforeseen situations, such as medical emergencies, fires, community conflicts, etc.

## **18. What are the desirable traits that an Executive Director should possess?**

Though no applicant or applicants could have all of the desirable traits, the Board has recently agreed upon five as particularly desirable:

- A deep understanding of and commitment to the Mission, Vision, and Values of Holden;
- Adaptive communication skills to build relationships with multiple constituencies and diverse communities;
- Strong personnel and financial management aptitudes with a preference for a collaborative leadership style;
- A capacity for development work, broadly understood to include program development, relationship development, and fundraising;
- Experience in managing and leading a complex organization, including physical plant operations, cutting-edge programming, multifunctional teams, and diverse stakeholders/constituencies in a remote/wilderness environment.

Though self-knowledge is not on this list, it is presumed by many of the other traits. A secure sense of identity combined with an equally sure sense of limitations, strengths, and weaknesses will inform any proposed structural model for the Executive Directorship, which will in turn be crucial to success.