



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Announcement & Opportunity Description

Overview

The Urban Water Institute (UWI) is seeking a visionary, collaborative water leader to serve as its Executive Director in a part-time, independent contractor capacity. The selected candidate will oversee implementation of UWI's Strategic Plan, lead UWI's two annual conferences, foster collaboration among UWI's Board of Directors, and expand UWI's relationships, memberships and sponsorships to grow the organization with the support of two part-time contractors.

Who & What Is UWI?

UWI is a relationship-based, membership organization that serves as a valuable resource for water professionals, elected officials and other water stakeholders. We provide a critical forum for discussion and debate, enabling decision makers to gain key insight and consider diverse perspectives on water issues impacting the western United States.

In all our activities and operations, we are mindful of the value of developing, nurturing and sustaining professional relationships and serve as a gathering place to build collaboration and partnerships. Through our relationship-based interactions, we successfully engage in beneficial dialogue that reflects and respects different views, perspectives and policy positions. We believe it is through this candid dialogue that we can create durable solutions to our collective water challenges.

The Board of Directors (Board) adopted mission of UWI is to provide non-partisan information of timely and pertinent interest to the water resource industry, including public agencies and private firms, with particular emphasis on water economics, management and resource policies as they affect consumers and the general economy.

Over the past eight years, UWI has achieved significant improvements in operations, conference planning, outreach, engagement, fiscal planning and management, including:

- Approximately 25% increase in conference registrations
- Over 30% increase in memberships, with enhanced diversity of memberships/Board members
- Significant organizational administrative upgrade with electronic automated data management systems for conference registrations, membership management, sponsorships, financial tracking and reporting
- Roughly 25% growth in sponsorships due to updated sponsorship programs/opportunities
- Enhanced membership recruitment materials and value proposition
- Major efforts in website update and social media use



Governance – UWI Board of Directors

UWI is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors drawn from hands-on policy makers, elected officials and water industry leaders. Every member of the Urban Water Institute is eligible for a seat on the Board, if they desire to serve the organization. Day-to-day operations are led by committees of the Board, as described below:

- **The Executive Committee** is responsible for the day-to-day oversight of the organization. The Executive Director is a voting member of the Executive Committee.
- **The Finance Committee** is chaired by the Treasurer and is responsible for recommendations to the Executive Committee and full Board regarding financial matters. The Treasurer works closely with a contract accountant.
- **The Conference Planning Committee** is comprised of the Board Planning Chair, along with members representing the topics selected for each of the two conferences. As a result, the membership essentially changes for each conference program.
- **The Membership Committee** taps Board members as necessary to enhance and grow the membership base and be responsive to membership needs.
- **The Policy Committee** relies on various Board members to report on key policy issues in which the membership may be interested or have concerns. The committee may recommend when an item on a conference program should address a particular policy matter. UWI is not a lobbying organization, however.

Board Adopted Strategic Plan

UWI is focused on providing timely, compelling and diverse discussion of water policy, economics and resource management issues.

Below are the five key goals in UWI's Strategic Plan, adopted at the Board Strategic Planning Workshop on December 20, 2023:

- Influence western water policy by facilitating an exchange of ideas
- Deliver conferences, events and content that feature timely, thought-provoking and sometimes controversial programs
- Inspire an engaged water community by fostering enduring relationships
- Create opportunities for water policy makers to exchange ideas and expand their knowledge
- Expand water policy dialogue by welcoming new voices, perspectives and ideas



Role of Executive Director

The key responsibilities of the Executive Director (ED) are organized into 3 categories: leadership, management, and financial viability. They are summarized below:

LEADERSHIP

- The ED works collaboratively with the Executive Committee, Board of Directors (Board) and two part-time contractors (Marketing & Admin Director; Events & Sponsorships Director) to create a forward vision.
- The ED is responsible for leading periodic Strategic Planning sessions of the Board. The Strategic Planning workshops are facilitated dialogues designed to achieve consensus on organizational priorities and strategic goals.
- While the organization relies heavily on collaboration in developing programs and priorities, the ED (in concert with the Board Chair and Conference Planning Chair) sets the tone and vision for the two conferences and other organization events.
- The ED establishes, maintains, and supports strategic partnerships with other stakeholders and organizations.
- The ED establishes the broad values and ethical standards under which the organization is represented and managed.
- The two contractors organizationally report to the ED but are encouraged to work collaboratively with the Executive Committee, other committees and full Board as needed.

MANAGEMENT

- The ED works collaboratively with the contractors and the Executive Committee to:
 - Arrange regular meetings, strategic planning retreats, and other events for the Board
 - Working collaboratively with the Board Planning Chair and Events & Sponsorships Director, establish dates and programs for two conferences each year: Spring conference (generally in February in Palm Springs); Annual conference (generally in August in San Diego).
- The ED ensures delivery of member services, working collaboratively with the contractors on key communications and deliverables.
- The ED monitors visibility of the organization through communications and the website.
- The ED is responsible for:
 - Reviewing contract support performance, approving invoices and recommending compensation adjustments



- Providing contract support resources with leadership and guidance to achieve organizational objectives
- Advising the Executive Committee on policies and procedures
- Approving all other invoices for payment by the Treasurer

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

- The ED works collaboratively with the Board Chair to support the Treasurer in matters such as:
 - Development of any 'next level' funding strategies: consideration of ways to diversify funding sources and achievement of long-term financial stability
 - Ensuring organizational revenues, expenses, and net income goals are adhered to.

Experience, Skills & Expertise

UWI values a diversity of professional abilities that will enhance our success. However, a few key areas are considered desirable, including:

- Familiarity with the California and Western Water industry
- Understanding of California public (and private) water agency governance requirements and operating guidelines
- Familiarity with private companies providing services to the water industry
- Familiarity with experts and resources in the academic, federal, state, regional and local agencies that may be called upon to educate and enhance UWI's events and operations
- Effective written and oral communications expertise
- Non-partisan leadership practices and behaviors (UWI operates in a non-political environment.)

Work Environment

UWI operates in a virtual office environment with a mailing address attached to a post office box. Most of the work is conducted via zoom and email correspondence. Contractors and volunteers conduct their work remotely, with frequent electronic meetings. However, onsite events require in-person attendance by the Executive Director.



Application Process

Applicants are invited to submit a resume and cover letter describing their interest and qualifications, including any attributes or experience they may have that would enhance UWI. They are welcome to suggest ways to achieve success in the areas identified above, as well as any ideas for new activities and ventures that can help grow the organization.

The successful candidate is expected to be engaged as an independent contractor. This is not an employee position, and no benefits are included. Third-party firms/employers interested in filling this position will have to apply with the resume(s) of those who will be assigned to fulfill this role, and those individuals will need to be available to interview.

Applications: Candidates should email their application materials to the UWI Board Chair at: alee@ekiconsult.com.

Compensation: Pay will be negotiated based upon the applicant's experience, knowledge, and new or innovative attributes. The current compensation for the role is \$50,000 annually. Additional funds are allocated for travel and support.

Due Date: Applications will be accepted until the position is filled, with a preferred submittal no later than July 11, 2025.