

Houston  
Audubon

## President and Chief Executive Officer

Sorrell is proud to partner with Houston Audubon in its search for a seasoned leader to serve as its next President and Chief Executive Officer, advancing the mission of conservation of birds and their habitats in the region. Houston Audubon is a leading regional nonprofit and accredited land trust focused on protecting the natural environment for birds and people in the Houston Gulf Coast area. It envisions a future where birds are thriving in healthy natural areas, people are inspired, and diverse communities are connecting through a shared appreciation of the avian world.

Houston Audubon's commitment to excellence in land conservation, environmental education, community engagement, and science is foundational to advancing the conservation of birds and their habitats and improving our community for people and other wildlife. Houston Audubon owns and manages more than 4,100 acres of habitat, including 17 nature sanctuaries that serve as community assets, venues for quality education and recreation experiences, and collaborative research opportunities. The organization's annual budget is between \$1.8 to \$2 million and is growing to fulfill the strategy.

You may find more information on Houston Audubon (HAS) at <https://houstonaudubon.org/>.

### Position Overview

The President & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is accountable for the achievement of the organization's mission, strategy and financial objectives and reports to the Board of Directors (BOD). The CEO builds and leads the management team, overseeing the departments of Land Conservation, Development, Education, Outreach and Engagement, Finance, Operations, and Communications and Marketing, with 24 staff members. The CEO provides strategic vision and ensures the affairs of the organization are carried out effectively, in a manner consistent with the mission, values, policies, and strategies.

The ideal candidate will be passionate about the mission of Houston Audubon and have proven experience in organizational leadership, including knowledge of best practices in governance, financial management, and fundraising, as well as skills in building and leading diverse teams of employees and volunteers. They will have a strategic mindset and strong organizational skills to oversee daily operations, program implementation, and ensure effective use of resources. They will cultivate an environment of openness and fairness with structure, processes and clear accountability to ensure readiness to respond in the face of unexpected challenges or opportunities. They will be committed to fostering teamwork and professional development opportunities equitably across the organization.

## **Essential Duties and Responsibilities:**

### *Organizational Leadership*

- Build, lead, inspire and develop a strong management team of directors and staff.
- Execute the 2024-2034 Strategic Roadmap to Collaborative Conservation that Benefits Birds, Wildlife and People in the Houston Gulf Coast Region in collaboration with the staff and BOD.
- Foster a community approach to conservation through strong relationships with other nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, government, community and business leaders.
- Advance Houston Audubon's long-term conservation and outreach goals as well as its values of strategy, stewardship, inclusion, collaboration, and excellence.

### *Financial and Fundraising*

- Lead planning of the annual operating budget including budget development and monitoring, with the Controller, staff leadership, Finance Committee and BOD.
- Ensure sound financial practices, reporting, audit support and monthly financial status reporting to the BOD.
- Oversee grant proposal development and high-level fundraising activities, including cultivation and recognition of major individual, foundation, and corporate donors.

### *Organizational Management and Program Oversight*

- Manage the organization, including policies and practices to maintain land trust accreditation, risks management and insurance, personnel compensation and benefits, records management, and execution of legal documents.
- Promote core pillars and programs, including land conservation, sanctuary management, bird-friendly communities, community outreach and engagement, environmental education, conservation advocacy, science and monitoring, facility operations, volunteers, communication, and fundraising.
- Foster a culture of trust, mutual respect, collaboration, fairness and inclusion. Facilitate communication and collaboration across departments and within programs.
- Guide development of biennial action/workplans and lead annual organizational review.

### *Stakeholder Relations and Communications*

- Inform the Chair of the Board of Directors regarding the state of the organization and operations, and together develop the agenda and materials for board meetings.
- Ensure the programs and point of view of the organization are effectively articulated to agencies, organizations, and the general public and serve as the organization's foremost brand ambassador. Give public presentations and represent the organization at events.
- Develop and maintain strategic relationships and collaborations with nonprofit leaders, public and private stakeholders, community groups and public agencies.

- Contribute ideas and themes for strategic marketing and big-picture messaging for communications and write leading articles for organization publications and reports.

### **Essential Skills and Experience**

- B.S. or B.A. degree strongly preferred; advanced degree in a relevant field a plus.
- Demonstrated knowledge of and commitment to the mission of conservation.
- Seasoned leader with strong record of successful experience in fields relevant to conservation, stakeholder involvement and management, and/or fundraising.
- Executive leadership skills to attract, develop and retain a top leadership team; prior experience in a senior leadership role with supervisory responsibilities.
- Familiarity with the Gulf Coast Region and/or existing networks and relationships relevant to HAS and its work a plus.
- Ability to lead strategically while managing diverse teams in a complex organization.
- Demonstrated commitment to advancing equity and inclusion within the organization and in external program delivery, partnerships, and communications.
- Experience building and maintaining productive external collaborations or partnerships.
- Experience overseeing programs to advance land protection like conservation easements is a plus.
- Ability to implement a multi-year strategic plan, while ensuring ongoing stewardship of donor funds and intent.
- Excellent collaboration, communication and interpersonal skills.

### **Compensation and Benefits**

Compensation is competitive and commensurate with experience. An attractive benefits package includes medical insurance (75% of premiums for medical and dental plans), life insurance, 401(k) up to 3.5% match, and a competitive provision for vacation and sick leave. This role is based in HAS's Headquarters office at 440 Wilchester Boulevard in Houston, Texas.

### **Application and Referral Process**

Applicant review is currently underway and will continue until the candidate has been selected. To nominate or be considered for this position, please contact Priscilla Plumb at [priscilla@sorrellco.com](mailto:priscilla@sorrellco.com) / 281.224.0881 or Laura Sorrell at [laura@sorrellco.com](mailto:laura@sorrellco.com) / 713.854.5351. All inquiries will be held in confidence.

Houston Audubon is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability or protected veteran status. HAS is committed to fostering and nurturing an organizational culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion within its workplace and sanctuaries, and in its work in the community. HAS believes that the rich blend of ideas, perspectives, and viewpoints that come with diversity are essential to its long-term success.

## **About Sorrell**

Sorrell is a highly relational provider of executive recruiting. Our mission is to serve as partners with our clients to accelerate their efforts to attract, hire and retain talent that impacts the future of the organization. For more information, call 713.840.1870.