

**Port Townsend Marine Science Center
Executive Director
Position Description**

Our Vision

Generations of environmental stewards living in balance with marine ecosystems.

Our Mission

Inspire conservation of the Salish Sea.



Our Context

The Salish Sea is one of the nation’s largest and most complex estuarine systems, located in Washington state and the Canadian province of British Columbia. It includes the Straits of Georgia and Juan de Fuca, Puget Sound, and an intricate network of connecting channels and adjoining waterways. The sea is partially separated from the open Pacific Ocean by Vancouver Island and the Olympic Peninsula.

The Salish Sea is unique not only in its physical oceanography, marine habitats, and species diversity, but also as home for one of the country’s densest urban populations, extensive legacy of shoreline development, and a long history of intensive maritime use—tribal, commercial, private, and military.

This is the homeland for seven tribes, with cultures established long before first contact. Marine resources are part of First Foods-- species that indigenous peoples have relied on for generations for subsistence, medicines, and cultural ceremonies. Harvest rights are shared across both tribal and non-tribal entities, and management of those resources is also shared.

The region’s intensive focus on marine resource conservation reflects an ongoing need to maintain viable populations and habitats that sustain both consumptive and non-consumptive uses. At the same time, we see increasing public concern for the overall health of the Salish Sea in and of itself as a vibrant and functioning ecosystem. The Salish Sea is subject not only to diverse regional human impacts, but also to the effects of accelerated climate changes on top of already complex natural processes. Considering these ongoing pressures, success in balancing human use and marine resource function requires science-based stewardship at multiple scales across virtually every community, and requires the participation of an informed and motivated citizenry within those communities.

Port Townsend is one of those communities. Located in Jefferson County at the tip of the Olympic Peninsula, this lively seaport and arts community has a distinct Victorian aura. The historic downtown features many local retail establishments, restaurants, theaters, and a ferry terminal. The arts flourish—Centrum, a music workshop and performance nonprofit located in historic Fort Worden State Park, offers chamber concerts and annual Blues, Fiddle Tunes, and Jazz Festivals. Other annual festivals including the Wooden Boat, Film, Rhody, and Kinetic draw thousands of diverse and enthusiastic participants.

Residents of Port Townsend number just shy of 10,000 with both young and old well represented. About one third of the town falls between the ages of 45-64, with similar percentages on either side. Across the spectrum, people are remarkably active; they embrace the outdoors and intellectual vigor; they contribute significant expertise, time, and money to the well-being of the region. Their connection to and concern for stewardship of marine resources is evidenced by strong support of conservation initiatives and organizations.

Port Townsend Marine Science Center (PTMSC) is one of those organizations. PTMSC strives to be a leader and collaborator with the numerous marine conservation, management, and research entities in the region by supporting efforts to recognize the uniqueness of the Salish Sea and ensure its long-term health through a thoughtful and thorough strategic plan. This strategic plan is founded on three key values, underscoring that PTMSC

- relies on the process and findings of science,
- integrates diverse viewpoints and interests toward creating a more ecologically sustainable and equitable future, and
- is committed to a culture of accountability with measurable impact.

Based on those values, the strategic plan advances marine resource conservation of the Salish Sea through goals organized around PTMSC's three core competencies:

- *Lifelong Education*. PTMSC will draw participants in with compelling stories of marine life's interdependence with humans. Grounded in science, programs will connect participants with the natural world, evoking empathy and providing ways to become better marine stewards.
- *Community Science*. PTMSC will recruit, train and support hundreds of marine community scientists, setting a standard for rigorous data collection, best practices, and inspiring stewardship. PTMSC will accomplish this in partnership with agencies and academic institutions by prioritizing the most impactful projects.
- *Visitor Experience*. PTMSC will feature exhibitions and online experiences that invite people from all walks of life to deeper engagement with the marine world. These explorations illustrate unprecedented changes in marine ecosystems, inspiring and offering ways to become better stewards.

Our Future

Lifelong education, community science, and an exemplary visitor experience have been hallmarks of PTMSC since two teachers founded it in 1982. Initially the organization was entirely run by volunteers. Now preparing for its 40th anniversary, PTMSC employs 10 full-time and 7 part-time/seasonal staff, relies on a committed corps of 60 volunteers, and has a current annual budget of \$1,343,011.

The organization currently operates two sites: a marine science museum on the grounds of Fort Worden, and a public aquarium on the ocean pier across the street. This pier is scheduled for demolition in 2024. Recognizing an opportunity for growth, in 2021 PTMSC acquired a new property, Flagship Landing, in downtown Port Townsend adjacent to the ferry terminal. The organization's future calls for development of this property as a new marine science museum and aquarium. The current marine science museum building at Fort Worden will be retained as an environmental learning center field station.

The new Executive Director will join PTMSC at a critical inflection point. Under their visionary and entrepreneurial leadership, the organization is poised to inspire conservation of the Salish Sea on a higher level of capacity, competence, and community inclusion than ever before.

Executive Director Position

Expectations and Challenges

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director (ED) implements the Port Townsend Marine Science Center's strategic plan by leading people, leading change, exercising business acumen, and building coalitions.

Lead People

In leading people, the Executive Director is expected to:

- Work in collaboration with the Board of Directors to continually develop PTMSC's organizational capacity, competence, and community inclusion.
- Articulate and refine the PTMSC vision, mission, strategic plan, budget, and policies with the Board of Directors; within those agreed-upon directions, the ED has considerable discretion in the use of human, fiscal, and other organizational resources to advance the PTMSC mission.
- Oversee the staff on all aspects of day-to-day operations, developing an efficient staff structure and optimizing staff diversity and talent to deliver relevant lifelong learning, engaging community science opportunities, and an inspiring visitor experience.
- Work particularly closely with Directors of Programs, Development, and Finance to optimize effectiveness in each focus area and create a cohesive leadership team.
- Engage, invite to invest, and steward both existing and new donors to PTMSC, particularly in preparation for and implementation of a capital campaign.

Lead Change

In leading change, the Executive Director is expected to:

- Lead the transformation of PTMSC from its current stage to a more mature organization capable of delivering on its long-term vision.
- Work closely with the Board to lead PTMSC into the future—anticipating change, determining solutions, and embracing opportunities that arise from fiscal, programmatic, or marine science developments.
- Focus particularly on optimization of PTMSC's new property of Flagship Landing and its potential to enhance the organization's core competencies. This includes the launch and successful completion of a capital campaign to provide necessary resources.
- Advance PTMSC's commitment to diversity and equity in all areas of the operation, making the organization authentically welcoming and inclusive, and embracing diverse viewpoints as valuable to current and future success.
- Enhance PTMSC's use of technology to reach more people more creatively, enrich community science projects, and engage with multiple audiences to achieve strategic objectives.
- Ensure ongoing programmatic excellence and rigorous program evaluation.

Exercise Business Acumen

In exercising business acumen, the Executive Director is expected to:

- Ensure the financial health and resiliency of the organization by building earned income and philanthropic contributions, with a commitment to both minimizing expenses and identifying strategic investments for future growth.
- Oversee the financial status of the organization including developing long and short-range financial plans, developing an annual budget in partnership with the board, monitoring the budget and ensuring sound financial controls are in place; setting financial priorities accurately

to ensure the organization is operating in a manner that supports the needs of programs and staff.

- Oversee Flagship Landing’s facility management, increasing the organization’s capacity for its new role as building owner and landlord.
- Engage contractors, vendors, and financial institutions with ethical and effective selection practices, contract negotiations, and work oversight to ensure wise deployment of PTMSC resources and a commitment to community investment.

Build Coalitions

In building coalitions, the Executive Director is expected to:

- Cultivate strong working relationships with PTMSC marine resource stewardship stakeholders, including but not limited to peer organizational leaders, tribes, local authorities, state, and federal entities.
- Maintain and strengthen working relationships with marine resource managers and the science community in the Salish Sea region, as a source of opportunities for PTMSC to contribute to conservation efforts, create new and enhanced community science projects, and provide an outlet to inform the public about regional research.
- Engage actively with local tribes, recognizing their relationship with the Salish Sea and incorporating indigenous practices of living in balance with marine ecosystems in PTMSC programs.
- Maintain visibility as a Port Townsend leader, particularly downtown as a fellow member of the business community.
- Cultivate philanthropic, business, and political support, looking for opportunities to collaborate on initiatives, policies, and funding that result in mutual benefit.

Qualifications, Experience, and Skills

In addition to demonstrating executive-level skills in leading people, leading change, business acumen and building coalitions, the Executive Director must have:

- Demonstrated evidence of visionary, creative, and strategic thinking, complemented by a commitment to lifelong learning.
- Working knowledge, professional credibility, and high literacy in science of the coastal ocean habitat and the near-shore environment through a combination of professional experience and academic training.
- Experience facilitating the science of the coastal ocean and engaging the public to participate as community scientists.
- Competence in delivering an exemplary visitor experience through exhibitions, public programs, and/or online offerings.
- Demonstrated experience in and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in nonprofit management and program implementation, informed by lived experience and/or personal study and reflection.
- Excellent communication skills in both formal/informal speaking and writing; ability to be an active listener; charismatic and compelling in representing the organization.
- Demonstrated experience in and comprehensive understanding of nonprofit organizational leadership including strategic planning, financial management, fundraising, board relations, human resources, and marketing.

- Experience in coaching, managing, and developing high-performing teams that demonstrate commitment and accountability.
- Proven fundraising success and enthusiasm for a new capital campaign.

Salary Range: \$70,000–\$80,000