

Science Vortex Executive Director Opportunity

Lead the Future of STEAM Education in the Verde Valley

Science Vortex is seeking an Executive Director to lead the organization into its next chapter of growth. This is a rare opportunity to build upon an established and growing nonprofit that is making a meaningful difference in the lives of children, families, educators, and communities throughout the Verde Valley. We are looking for a collaborative leader who believes curiosity changes lives, relationships build strong communities, and every child deserves opportunities to explore, create, and discover.

Who We Are

Science Vortex is a nonprofit STEAM learning center located in Cottonwood, Arizona. STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics, and we believe children learn best when these subjects come together through hands-on exploration, creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and real-world problem solving.

At Science Vortex, we believe every child deserves the opportunity to experience the wonder of discovery, regardless of where they live or their background. Founded in 2019, Science Vortex welcomed its first participants in 2020. Since then, the organization has grown each year through expanded programming, new partnerships, and an unwavering commitment to making high-quality STEAM experiences accessible to children and families throughout the Verde Valley.

Today, Science Vortex serves more than 8,000 children, families, educators, and community members each year through school field trips, free weekly family programs, summer camps, community events, outreach, and regional partnerships. Although we are a small organization, our impact extends throughout the Verde Valley and beyond. Science Vortex is proud to be a member of the Association of Science and Technology Centers (ASTC), connecting our local work to an international network of science centers committed to inspiring lifelong learning.

Science Vortex is located on a Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District campus. Maintaining a strong partnership with the District is essential, while our programs serve students, families, and schools from multiple districts throughout the Verde Valley. As a grassroots nonprofit with an annual operating budget of less than \$200,000, Science Vortex offers the opportunity for a resourceful leader to make a direct and meaningful impact.

Why Join Science Vortex?

- Established and growing programs
- Dedicated staff and volunteers
- A supportive Board of Directors
- Strong relationships with schools and community partners
- Recognition throughout Arizona
- Membership in the ASTC network
- A thoughtful leadership transition alongside the founder

Most importantly, you will have the opportunity to build upon a strong foundation while bringing your own ideas, leadership, and vision to the organization's future.

The Leader We're Seeking

- Builds relationships with authenticity, trust, and respect
- Holds themselves to high professional standards and leads with integrity
- Approaches challenges with optimism, creativity, and a can-do attitude
- Genuinely enjoys working with children, educators, families, volunteers, donors, and community partners
- Is comfortable developing long-term strategy and helping wherever needed
- Believes every child deserves opportunities to experience the wonder of discovery
- Leads with heart and a smile

Primary Responsibilities

The Executive Director provides both strategic leadership and day-to-day management of Science Vortex. Working closely with staff, volunteers, the Board of Directors, schools, community partners, and donors, the Executive Director will:

- Lead the organization and support its continued growth
- Supervise, mentor, and support staff and volunteers
- Oversee STEAM programs, visiting classes, camps, public events, and community initiatives
- Build and strengthen relationships with schools, community partners, donors, and grant funders
- Secure funding through grants, donations, sponsorships, partnerships, and earned revenue
- Oversee financial management, nonprofit compliance, and organizational operations
- Guide marketing, communications, and community outreach
- Work collaboratively with the Board of Directors to shape Science Vortex's future

Preferred Experience

A minimum of a bachelor's degree is required.

Strong candidates will bring experience in many of the following areas:

- Leadership in a nonprofit, educational institution, museum, or community organization
- Classroom teaching or other educational experience
- Grant writing and grant administration
- Preparation or oversight of IRS Form 990 filings
- Staff supervision and volunteer coordination
- Community partnership development
- Fundraising and donor stewardship
- Financial management and nonprofit administration
- Marketing, communications, or public relations
- Proficiency with Google Workspace
- Experience using Canva to create presentations, marketing materials, social media graphics, or organizational communications

The following qualifications are preferred:

- Current or previous teacher certification, preferably in science, STEAM, or elementary education (preferred, not required)
- Master's degree in education, nonprofit management, science, public administration, or a related field
- Experience leading or administering a nonprofit organization

Compensation, Benefits & Flexibility

Starting annual salary: \$50,000–\$70,000, commensurate with experience and qualifications. Science Vortex does not currently offer an employee benefits package. As the organization continues to grow, the Executive Director will have the opportunity to work collaboratively with the Board of Directors to strengthen financial sustainability and explore future employee benefits as funding allows.

This is a full-time position of approximately 40 hours per week with significant scheduling flexibility. The Executive Director has the autonomy to organize their workweek based on the needs of the organization. While some evenings and weekends are required for programs and community events, the schedule may be structured across Monday through Sunday rather than following a traditional Monday-Friday workweek.

A Thoughtful Transition

The ideal start date is mid-January 2027, although the timing is flexible for the right candidate. The selected candidate will initially serve as Co-Director, working alongside the current Executive Director and founder through May 14, 2027. This intentional transition period provides the opportunity to learn the organization's programs, operations, partnerships, fundraising, financial systems, and culture before assuming full leadership on May 15, 2027.

If you are excited by the opportunity to lead a growing organization, build meaningful community relationships, and inspire the next generation through STEAM education, we would love to hear from you. This is a rare opportunity to step into an established, thriving nonprofit with a strong foundation while enjoying the flexibility, autonomy, and support to shape its future.

How to Apply

Please complete our online application and submit a current resume:

- Application: <https://forms.gle/nB6D1uV37q84rRkt9>
- Application deadline: November 18, 2026
- Selected applicants will be contacted regarding next steps.