



Archaeological Research & Education Center

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT: Executive Director

Location: San Marcos, Texas

Posting Date: November 1, 2025 (Open until filled.)

Status: Full-time, salaried, exempt

Salary: \$100,000 – \$130,000, commensurate with experience

Schedule: Monday–Thursday, 8:00 AM–5:00 PM (36-hour work week); hybrid flexibility, typically at least three days in-office per week

Benefits: Medical, dental, and vision insurance plans available; retirement contribution; paid time off

Travel: 50-65 days per year for fundraising visits, conferences, and site visits (expenses covered)

Reports to: Shumla Board of Directors



About Shumla

Shumla's mission is to preserve the oldest "books" in North America — the endangered ancient murals of the Lower Pecos Canyonlands, TX. (shumla.org) From our headquarters in San Marcos, Texas, and our field campus in Comstock, Texas, at the heart of the canyonlands, Shumla fulfills its mission through archaeological field documentation, high-tech, scientific research, landowner and agency partner stewardship, and education to audiences of all ages.

Shumla is a mature, stable, and growing organization with nine passionate and expert staff members, thirteen deeply engaged Board Directors, and a strong base of donors and partners. Our work is recognized internationally for its scientific integrity, cultural sensitivity, and community impact. Shumla is well-positioned for the next phase of growth and impact. As we enter a new era of leadership, we seek an Executive Director to guide Shumla's next chapter of growth and sustainability — someone inspired by the past and eager to help shape the future of this remarkable organization and the ancient knowledge it protects.

Position Summary

The Executive Director (ED) is the chief executive officer and public face of Shumla Archaeological Research & Education Center. Reporting to the Board of Directors, this individual provides strategic leadership, ensures organizational stability, and champions Shumla's mission across the state of Texas and beyond to the world.

The ideal candidate is a confident, experienced nonprofit leader and skilled fundraiser who is passionate about cultural heritage. They bring both heart and discipline to the role, connecting deeply with Shumla's mission while maintaining clear focus on financial health, organizational growth, and long-term sustainability. They bring broad perspective and experience, as well as creativity and enthusiasm.

As Shumla's chief executive, the ED will drive fundraising and donor relations, cultivate and sustain strategic partnerships, and foster a supportive and inclusive workplace culture. This role requires a charismatic communicator and proven manager of people and budgets who can inspire confidence among staff, donors, and partners.

Primary Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership & Vision

- Provide overall leadership and vision for Shumla in alignment with the organization's mission and 2026–2030 Strategic Plan.
- Work collaboratively with the Board, staff, and partners to guide long-term priorities and growth strategies, aligning resources with mission impact.
- Foster an organizational culture grounded in collaboration, inclusivity, and shared purpose.

Fundraising & Development

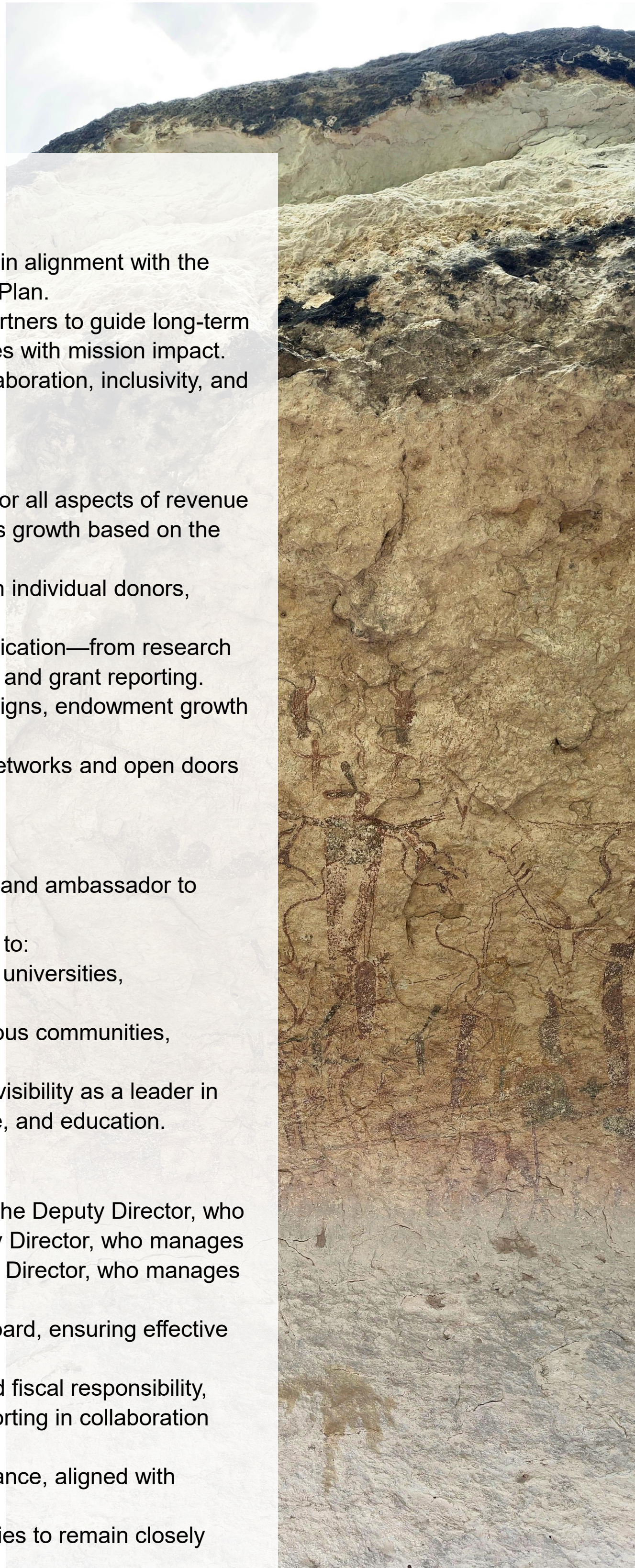
- Serve as Shumla's chief fundraiser, responsible for all aspects of revenue generation for a \$1+ Million annual budget and its growth based on the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan.
- Cultivate and steward authentic relationships with individual donors, foundations, corporations, and public agencies.
- Carry out all aspects of grant and donor communication—from research and relationship management to proposal writing and grant reporting.
- Design and implement annual fundraising campaigns, endowment growth strategies, and special initiatives.
- Partner with the Board of Directors to leverage networks and open doors to new funding opportunities.

External Relations & Partnerships

- Represent Shumla as the primary spokesperson and ambassador to donors, partners, media, and the broader public.
- Lead and work closely with the Leadership Team to:
 - Build and sustain strategic partnerships with universities, foundations, grantors and stakeholders.
 - Support Shumla's relationships with indigenous communities, landowners, and cultural organizations.
 - Elevate Shumla's national and international visibility as a leader in rock art preservation, archaeological science, and education.

Organizational Stewardship

- Supervise and empower the Leadership Team—the Deputy Director, who manages day-to-day operations, the Archaeology Director, who manages all archaeological programming, and the Science Director, who manages all scientific and educational programming.
- Cultivate strong working relationships with the Board, ensuring effective governance and strategic alignment.
- Oversee all aspects of financial management and fiscal responsibility, including annual budgeting, forecasting, and reporting in collaboration with the Deputy Director and Fractional CFO.
- Maintain a culture of transparency, trust, and balance, aligned with Shumla's values.
- Participate in Shumla's programs and field activities to remain closely connected to the organization's work.



Qualifications

- Proven success in leading a nonprofit organization or major program, with responsibility for staff, budget, and board relations. (Minimum 7 years in leadership, 5 in non-profit leadership.)
- Demonstrated excellence in fundraising — especially in securing and managing gifts and grants at the \$1+ Million annual level.
- Exceptional communication and relationship-building skills with the ability to inspire donors, partners, and community stakeholders.
- Strong financial acumen and experience with budgeting and organizational management.
- Strategic thinker who can balance vision with execution.
- Advanced degree preferred (or equivalent professional experience).
- Deep appreciation for archaeology, anthropology, cultural heritage, rock art, Texas history or related fields.
- Proven track record of cultivating a collaborative, high-performing team culture.

Personal Attributes

Shumla seeks a leader who:

- Is inspired by Shumla's mission.
- Approaches leadership with grounded humility, strength, and compassion.
- Brings enthusiasm and creativity to fundraising and partnership development.
- Values collaboration, inclusivity, and integrity.
- Is eager to work closely with staff, board, and supporters to build Shumla's long-term future.
- A hands-on leader ready to work, to lead by example, and to cherish this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to steward a truly exceptional organization.

Call for Applications

To apply, please send the following to search@shumla.org.

- Cover Letter – describing your interest in and alignment with Shumla's mission and this position.
- Resume or CV – highlighting relevant leadership and fundraising experience.



Shumla is an equal opportunity employer and considers all qualified applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, veteran status, or disability.

About the Rock Art of the Lower Pecos Canyonlands

The story of Shumla truly began over 5,000 years ago when the ancient inhabitants of the Lower Pecos Canyonlands began to paint their sophisticated myths and stories on limestone canyon walls. Over more than four millennia, these ancestral painters created one of the oldest and most significant cultural archives in North America.

Founded in 1998, as a 501(c)(3) non-profit to preserve, study and share this visual library of ancient knowledge, Shumla has become a global leader in rock art research, preservation and education. By preserving the oldest known “books” in North America, Shumla ensures these paintings remain as living cultural heritage with enduring relevance. The Lower Pecos Canyonlands Archeological District was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2021 in recognition of this superlative record of human occupation and belief.

Shumla is not a museum and doesn’t create exhibits or seek collections. Shumla doesn’t own or seek to own the rock art sites we document and research. Rather, Shumla is creating a digital archive of image and informational data about each rock art site, currently consisting of nearly 60 TB of original data. We anticipate curating our digital-born data (our “collections”) according to current established standards and best practices to make the data available to scholars and educators who will reveal the stories encoded in the rock art of the Lower Pecos Canyonlands.



Fate Bell Mural at Seminole canyon State Park, Comstock, TX