

Position and Candidate Specification



Executive Director

PREPARED BY:

Dessy-Liza Epie
Destinee Johnson
Kristine M. Johnson
Laura E. Redden
Tatia Torrey

May 2024
Assignment: 53459-001

Pike Place Market has been a defining Seattle icon for more than a century. Considered by many “the soul of Seattle,” the Market is a historic communal public space spanning nine acres between downtown and the waterfront, where locals and tourists alike shop, visit, discover, and eat.

Founded in 1907, the Market is one of the oldest and largest continuously operating public markets in the United States and is brought to life by the hundreds of farmers, crafters, small businesses, and residents that call it “home”. As a vibrant hub of fresh produce, artisanal foods, independent businesses, and diverse culture, Pike Place Market embodies Seattle’s rich heritage, and it plays a crucial role in Seattle’s economy, community, and culture.

While the Market is grounded by its incredible collection of diverse businesses, activities, and services, it simply would not exist without the passion and support from the citizens of Seattle. From humble beginnings to nearly being lost in the name of “urban renewal” – Seattle’s citizens have brought their hearts to the “soul of Seattle”.

Who Operates Pike Place Market?

Pike Place Market is operated by the [Pike Place Market Preservation & Development Authority \(PDA\)](#). The Pike Place Market PDA is overseen by a [twelve-member council](#), comprised of volunteer community members, each serving four-year terms. The Executive Director is the only PDA employee who is hired by and serves at the pleasure of the PDA Council.

In 1971, Seattle citizens voted to create a Pike Place Market Historic District and the [Market Historical Commission](#) to preserve the Market’s physical and unique social character. As a result of the public vote, in 1973 the City of Seattle created by charter the Pike Place Market PDA, a not-for-profit organization, to own and manage the day-to-day operations of the Market.

The [Charter](#) requires the Pike Place Market PDA to preserve, rehabilitate, and protect the Market’s buildings; increase farm and food retailing opportunities, incubate and support small and marginal businesses; and provide services for low-income people. These efforts ensure the Market is safeguarded for future generations.

The Community

Pike Place Market is Seattle’s original and largest incubator of small, independent businesses.

In addition, the Market is a vibrant and thriving historic neighborhood that includes five social service programs, 220+ independently owned shops & restaurants, 160+ craftspeople, 70+ farmers, 60+ permitted buskers, 450+ residents in the Market’s affordable housing, and one foundation. Learn more about the Market community by tapping or clicking the buttons below.

KEY FACTS

- **Purpose:** The Market was originally opened to allow consumers to buy directly from producers, a principle that still guides it today.

- **History:** Pike Place Market is one of the oldest continuously operated public farmers markets in the United States.
- **Location:** Situated along the Puget Sound waterfront in Seattle, Washington, it's a central hub for both locals and tourists. In 1971, the Market was designated a historic district to preserve its social and cultural character. Most recent addition: [Pike Place Marketfront](#).
- **Offerings:** It houses hundreds of farmers, craftspeople, small businesses, and artisans. Offerings include fresh produce, seafood, meats, specialty foods, handmade crafts, and restaurants. The Market also includes social-oriented services including a health center, a senior center, a daycare, and affordable housing units.
- **2022-2023 Annual Report:** https://www.pikeplacemarket.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/2022-Annual-Report_PPM-PDA.pdf

The Council seeks an exceptional Executive Director (ED) to helm this historic public market. As the primary leader and public face of Pike Place Market, the ED and their team ensures its operational, financial, and strategic success. Reporting to the PDA Council, the ED will craft and execute a forward-looking vision that upholds the Market's rich legacy while evolving and integrating into Seattle's dynamic business and community landscape.

This role encompasses complete oversight of the organization's strategy and vision, operations, and financial health, ensuring that Pike Place Market not only thrives but also sets a benchmark for public markets globally. With financial acumen and a knack for sustainable revenue generation, the ED will secure Pike Place Market's future, leveraging opportunities for thoughtful expansion and modernization while carefully preserving the history and soul of the Market. This leader will be charged with building out and executing the [Master Plan](#) adopted in March 2024. This includes aligning the organization's priorities and resources to match the strategic vision.

Located in the heart of Seattle, the ED will maintain and build upon the Market's pivotal role in the city's social and economic spheres. As the face of Pike Place Market, the ED will champion its mission, drive its strategic objectives, and embody the spirit that makes the Market a unique and cherished destination. This visionary leader will manage complex stakeholder relationships, including those with small business owners, craftspeople, farmers, government agencies, local/regional/national nonprofit organizations, internal staff, and the general public to foster an inclusive, vibrant market culture. In particular, this person will advocate for the Market and build influence among public policy leaders, ensuring the organization has a 'seat at the table'. This leader will also spearhead initiatives to preserve the Market's identity, enhance visitor experience, support local businesses, ensure tenant success and wellbeing, and engage the local community. They will solidify the Market's status as a safe, welcoming hub for all. By leading with empathy, strategic insight and operational savvy, the ED will inspire a team of dedicated professionals and nurture an environment where tradition and innovation are equally considered and important.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Reports to Pike Place Market Preservation and Development Authority Council (PDA)

Direct reports Erica Bates, Director of Human Resources
Juan Medina, Director of Asset Management
Brady Morrison, Director of Operations
Sabina Proto, Director of Finance
Amy Wallsmith, Director of Marketing & Programs

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Lead and execute the Market's strategic planning, including the implementation of the Master Plan with a focus on community engagement, business success, and infrastructure improvement.
- Foster a vibrant Market community that supports small business owners, farmers, residents, and artisans, underlining the Market's culture and values.

- Navigate complex stakeholder relationships, including the local government, the Market's partner organizations, and the public community.
- Engage effectively with the Council, as individuals and as a group, ensuring smooth operations of the Market.
- Manage the Market's finances, including revenue generation from sources such as rents and parking among others. Spearhead grant applications and financial initiatives to support significant market projects and ongoing operational needs. Focus on fiscal responsibility to ensure sustainability.
- Contribute to the Market's safety, security, and positive atmosphere, ensuring it remains a cherished space for both locals and visitors.
- Possess executive presence, inspire confidence, and serve as an accessible public face of the organization.
- Be a dynamic, inspirational leader of the entire Market team. Attract, build, inspire, and retain a highly driven, diverse, and passionate staff. Create opportunities for existing employees to develop their skills and recruit new talent where appropriate.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Successfully execute the Master Plan ensuring alignment with Pike Place Market's mission and heritage and preserving the Market's position as a premiere destination. Drive growth by enhancing the Market's appeal, footprint, and visibility.
- Establish and maintain a robust financial model that ensures the Market's operations are sustainable and resilient, with diversified revenue streams. Achieve financial targets that support operational needs, infrastructural enhancements, and future expansion projects.
- Forge strong, transparent relationships with all Market stakeholders, including farmers, small business owners, vendors, the local community, government agencies and nonprofit partners. Promote an inclusive culture that values contribution and participation from all Market constituents, thereby enhancing the Market's communal spirit.
- Evaluate and enhance the structure of organizational reporting relationships to ensure optimal financial and operational performance.
- Oversee the successful management of daily operations, ensuring the Market remains a safe, vibrant, and welcoming space. Implement efficient processes and systems that support the Market's complex ecosystem, improve tenant profitability, and enhance the visitor experience.
- Lead initiatives that respect the Market's legacy while embracing changes that meet the evolving needs of the community and business environment.
- Deploy a leadership style that inspires, motivates, and develops a high-performing, cohesive team aligned with the Market's goals. Champion a workplace culture characterized by passion, commitment, and a collective drive to succeed.
- Initiate and lead projects that reinforce the Market's role as a cultural hub and economic engine, creating opportunities for small businesses and enriching the urban experience for all Seattle residents and visitors.
- Ensure that the Market is perceived and operates as a secure and dependable environment for tenants and visitors alike. Implement strategies and systems that safeguard the well-being of everyone within the Market's ecosystem, reinforcing its status as a trusted and cherished community space.

COMPENSATION

The current range for this position is estimated to be approximately \$216,000 to \$300,000. The total compensation package for this position will also include other elements, including reasonable and customary benefits and eligibility for discretionary annual performance increase, the amounts and metrics for which will be determined by the Council. Benefits include 100% company paid Medical, Dental, Vision, Life and Disability insurance. Employees are also eligible to enter the company pension plan after completing a full year with the PDA and can enter Washington State's deferred compensation plan upon employment.

This unique role oversees a bustling ecosystem that includes a diverse array of more than 500 artisans, entrepreneurs, farmers, and residents. As such it requires a highly relational and resilient leader with keen business and political acumen, a strategic outlook, experience navigating multifaceted operational environments, and a strong commitment to the Seattle community. The leader of Pike Place Market PDA will be energized by the responsibility of stewarding the Market and will be adept at authentically managing relationships with critical stakeholders including but not limited to the PDA Council, Market Historical Commission, [not just city, but also county, state and federal] government officials and community groups.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- **Organizational Leadership:** Demonstrated cross-functional leadership experience, preferably in a similar role involving community engagement, operational management, political advocacy, and strategic planning.
- **Strategic Vision:** Prior success developing and implementing a strategic vision for a multi-faceted organization, managing both short- and long-term priorities.
- **Stakeholder Management:** Proven ability to navigate and build relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders, including small business owners, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and community groups. Ideally this includes managing the relationship with a Board of Directors or similar body.
- **Financial Acumen:** Strong financial management skills and experience in managing a complex budget with multiple revenue streams.
- **Team Leadership:** Prior experience managing a diverse team, fostering a culture of collaboration, excellence, and high performance.

OTHER PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- An understanding of the operational challenges unique to a historic and lively marketplace.
- Excellent communication skills, capable of serving as the Market's primary spokesperson and advocate.
- Passion and excitement about being a visible presence in the Market, engaging directly with farmers, crafters, and businesses.
- Commitment to the Seattle community balanced with genuine care for small businesses and their ability to thrive.
- Resilience, adaptability, and the ability to work under pressure in a job that demands a high level of public interaction and problem-solving.

CRITICAL LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

Driving Results

- Enables higher performance for the organization by incrementally improving approaches based on calculated risks and fully considering the implications across the Market's ecosystem.
- Identifies process changes that will improve results for the Market, its vendors, and the community.
- Continuously benchmarks performance against best practices from other relevant organizations.

Acting Strategically

- Creates a 2-3-year roadmap or blueprint to implement the Master Plan while also thinking long-term.
- Identifies and prioritizes the most critical future factors to consider in making decisions for the Market.
- Makes plans to address changes or trends in the local Seattle landscape that affect the Market.
- Develops plans that consider the impact of the entire Market community.

Collaborating and Influencing

- Identifies all necessary stakeholders and connects with them to gain support and insight as the Master Plan is implemented.
- Takes advantage of opportunities to build strategic relationships with local Seattle government agencies, other social organizations, and the Market's partners to achieve goals.
- Engages in open dialogue and adapts own approach to different stakeholders in ways that mutually addresses interests or concerns.
- Anticipates emerging or potential conflicts among all stakeholders and takes steps to pre-empt them.