For 30 years, Blindness: Learning In New Dimensions (BLIND, Inc.) has provided small group instruction in the alternative techniques of blindness. Our programs are based on a positive attitude toward blindness and a belief in the normality and competency of blind people. We know that with proper training and opportunity, blind people can live full, happy, and successful lives. We work hard to create an environment that promotes active learning and collegiality where students can empower themselves and pursue their dreams. We are one of three training centers rooted in the philosophy of the National Federation of the Blind.

In December of 2023, the decision was made by the board of directors to temporarily pause services at BLIND Inc and re-envision the future of the organization. We are seeking a motivated candidate who thrives on building programs from the ground up. The board of directors has an outline of the vision of this organization but it will be the responsibility of the Executive Director to create the foundation of this new training center along with defining it’s key differentiators.

In the past the Executive Director would manage an annual budget near $2 million and around 15 full-time and part time employees, along with volunteers. We are looking for someone who is driven by a challenge and excited to create a supportive and resourceful staff around them. This individual should be excited by the opportunity to motivate people and able to define and tell the story of BLIND Inc to a wide range of audiences, from donors to perspective students and everything in between. Initially the Executive Director will be tasked to identify and build a small, agile team to provide targeted training both locally in Minnesota, by traveling to the client’s destination, or via remote learning platforms.

**Primary Duties and Responsibilities:**

### Program Creation:

1. Work with the board of directors to create a new strategic plan and mission statement for the organization
2. Identify key differentiators for the program
3. Identify the most impactful starting services while remaining budget conscious
4. Create a position list of needed staff to execute the vision
5. Determine whether the program will begin offering remote and traveling services, or if local training resources are desired
	1. If local services are preferred, identify the location in Minnesota where the organization will conduct business

### Human Resources:

1. Collaborate with HR to Identify priority hires and recruit foundational staff
2. Motivate and create a collaborative team environment
3. Oversee a leadership team that sets clear expectations and creates accountability through KPI metrics
4. Work with HR expertise to ensure that sound practices are followed and compliance is achieved and maintained
5. Develop an effective and inspiring management team, with delegation of responsibilities, effective feedback systems, and succession planning
6. Work with HR to create and maintain an effective staff training and development system which attracts, retains, and motivates a diverse complement of quality people

### Program administration and development:

1. Identify service priorities and execute the strategic plan to begin offering the highest quality training services to clients
2. Cultivate a strong transparent working relationship with the Board of Directors
3. Supervise recruitment of students from Minnesota, other states, and internationally.
4. Serve as one of the primary liaisons with rehabilitation counselors, state agencies and other referral sources.
5. Develop and enforce organizational policies.
6. Collaborate with leadership to manage student review, staffing, and progress report processes.

Work with staff to negotiate, approve, and implement contracts with state agencies.

1. Maintain working knowledge of laws and regulations governing nonprofits.
2. Ensure the annual report for Blind Inc is completed on time
3. Supervise program development, including course curricula.
4. Maintain student confidentiality within the law.

Fund Raising:

1. Fundraising Strategy and Execution: Develop and implement a comprehensive fundraising strategy, leveraging diverse sources such as individual donors, foundations, corporations, and government agencies
2. Resource and Donor Management: Identify and manage external fundraising resources, build strong donor relationships, and ensure effective communication and engagement
3. Grant Writing and Event Coordination: Oversee grant proposals, compliance, and reporting. Work with internal and external resources to coordinate fundraising events to maximize donor engagement and donations
4. Financial Oversight and Budget Management: Collaborate with the finance team to develop and manage the fundraising budget, ensuring alignment with overall financial goals
5. Board and Partnership Engagement: Work with the Board of Directors and establish partnerships with local and national organizations to support fundraising initiatives and strategic planning
6. Marketing and Performance Reporting: Oversee marketing and communication strategies to enhance visibility, and monitor fundraising effectiveness, providing regular progress reports to stakeholders

### Communications:

1. Hire or consult with the best marketing resources for the organization, to ensure Blind Inc’s programs, activities, and goals are publicized through applicable media
2. Serve as one of the key advocates on staff to represent the programs and point of view of BLIND, Inc. to state agencies, organizations, government bodies, donors and the general public
3. Keep the board fully informed on the condition of the organization and all important factors influencing it
4. Establish a collaborative working relationship with the leadership of Blind Inc’s sister training centers in Colorado and Louisiana
5. Build and maintain relationships with BLIND, Inc. alumni and support networks

### Budget and Finance:

1. Identify appropriate financial expertise resources that fit the organization, either as an internal staff leader or a consultant
2. Work alongside Finance expertise to develop and manage an annual budget that meets the needs of the organization
3. Collaborate with Financial resources to develop and maintain sound fiscal practices, ensuring fiscal controls are in place
4. Set financial revenue / expense priorities and policies accurately to ensure the organization is operating in a manner that supports the needs of the program and staff

### Minimum Qualifications:

1. Possession of a four-year college degree or equivalent experience in providing vocational rehabilitation services, organizational leadership or startup development
2. Management, supervisory, or leadership experience
3. Seven years of professional experience in any field
4. Ability to work effectively and collaborate with diverse groups of people.
5. Excellence in organizational management skills with the ability to coach and motivate staff, develop and manage a high-performing team, and set and achieve strategic objectives
6. Outstanding oral and written presentation and communication skills, with the ability to be an outgoing spokesperson, relationship builder, and fundraiser
7. Proven track record of building programs from the ground up resulting in successful organizations
8. Reputation of achieving goals on time and on budget
9. Willing to travel for relationship development, recruiting, and professional development

### Preferred Qualifications:

1. Experience working with blind people and ability to be an effective role model for them
2. Nonprofit, startup, or other Leadership experience in rapidly growing organizations
3. Expert fund raiser with great networking ability
4. Demonstrated proficiency in the use of nonvisual techniques.

### Position Benefits:

1. Medical benefits
2. Competitive compensation
3. Employer-contributed retirement program
4. Paid holiday leave totaling 19 days annually on average
5. Accrued additional paid leave based on hours worked

All employees of BLIND, Inc. are required to undergo staff training in order to ensure that they are fully competent and understand the experiences of students in training and build a solid foundation in the beliefs of blind people. This training requires use of learning shades and travel with the long white cane.

Interested applicants should submit a resume and a 1-page writing sample describing what makes the candidate unique for this position to careers@blindinc.org. Please be sure to include all materials as incomplete applications will not be considered.

Contact careers@blindinc.org with any questions regarding this position.

Blindness: Learning In New Dimensions (BLIND) Inc. is an equal opportunity employer.  Accordingly, all terms and conditions of employment will be carried out without regard to race, creed, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, marital status, age, or disability.  For more detailed information about our commitment to equal opportunity in employment, or if you need accommodations during the hiring process, please email a request to careers@blindinc.org.