

CHILDREN AT RISK (C@R) is seeking a seasoned, entrepreneurial, relationship-driven Director of Major Gifts to serve as the organization's primary frontline fundraiser. This role is responsible for identifying, cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major and individual gifts, event and program sponsorships, and unrestricted giving in support of C@R's programs. The Director will build relationships directly with individuals and corporations, and will partner closely with the Chief Development Officer, the Director of Institutional Giving & Partnerships, and the Event Coordinator to grow unrestricted revenue.

- Candidates must have a demonstrated track record of direct major gift solicitation, relationship management, and navigating a donor pipeline.
- This is a Houston-based hybrid position requiring office time, remote work, and travel across Harris County and the state.
- This position will report to the Chief Development Officer.

What We're Looking For:

We need an experienced frontline fundraiser who can hit the ground running. The ideal candidate is:

- **A Proven Practitioner:** You have personally cultivated, solicited, and closed major gifts and can point to specific gifts and relationships you secured.
- **Innovative & Entrepreneurial:** You treat your portfolio like a business you are growing. You find new prospects, try new ways to engage donors, and create new giving opportunities.
- **A Self-Starter:** You fill your own calendar with donor meetings and do not wait for leads to be handed to you.
- **A Relationship Builder:** People trust you. You build genuine, long-term relationships with individuals and corporate partners, and those relationships turn into lasting support for C@R.
- **Energized by Being Out in the Community:** You would rather be at a lunch, a community event, or a donor's office than at your desk. You are comfortable working a room and make the ask with confidence.

General Responsibilities and Essential Functions:

- **Major & Individual Gift Cultivation:** Build and manage a portfolio of major and individual gift prospects and donors; lead cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship through the full gift cycle.
- **Corporate Partnerships & Event Sponsorships:** Identify, cultivate, and solicit corporate partners and event sponsors; own the relationship and the ask, partnering with the Event Coordinator on sponsor benefit fulfillment.
- **Cross-Team Coordination:** Refer foundation, government, and other institutional funding opportunities surfaced through individual and corporate relationships to the Director of Institutional Giving & Partnerships, who holds ownership of that portfolio.
- **Donor Stewardship & Recognition:** Ensure major donors and sponsors receive timely, high-quality stewardship and recognition, coordinating with the Director of Institutional Giving & Partnerships on any shared funders.
- **AI-Enabled Fundraising Efficiency:** Use C@R-approved AI tools to speed up prospect research, meeting/briefing prep, and first drafts of donor correspondence; review all AI-assisted content for accuracy before it is sent or used.

Key Responsibilities Include:

Major & Individual Gifts

- Identify, qualify, cultivate, solicit, and steward a portfolio of major and individual gift prospects.
- Set annual fundraising goals and KPIs for major and individual giving and track performance against them.
- Develop individualized cultivation and solicitation strategies for top prospects and donors.
- Proactively generate new prospects through networking, civic and community involvement, and board and volunteer connections, maintaining an active schedule of face-to-face donor meetings.
- Partner with the Chief Development Officer on the organization's most significant gift relationships.

Corporate Partnerships & Sponsorships

- Build and manage a pipeline of corporate partners and event sponsors.
- Lead solicitation of sponsorships for signature events and programs, securing commitments and negotiating sponsor benefits.
- Partner with Chief Development Officer to recruit chairs for signature events.
- Partner with the Event Coordinator to ensure sponsor benefits are fulfilled and tracked.

Stewardship & Donor Relations

- Develop and execute stewardship plans for major donors and sponsors.
- Ensure donor recognition commitments are honored and tracked in the donor database.
- Serve as a visible ambassador for C@R in Houston's philanthropic, business, and civic communities, regularly representing C@R at donor, community, and networking events.

AI-Enabled Efficiency

- Use approved AI tools to support prospect research, donor briefing preparation, and first drafts of solicitation and stewardship correspondence.
- Review and edit all AI-assisted content for accuracy, tone, and donor-specific detail before it is sent or used.

Qualifications:

- **Education and Experience:** Bachelor's degree in nonprofit management, business, communications, or a related field (equivalent professional experience considered); at least 5 years of experience in major gift fundraising with a demonstrated record of direct solicitation and closed gifts.
- **Relationship & Sales Skills:** Proven ability to build trust and long-term relationships with high-capacity individuals, foundations, and corporate partners; confident making direct financial asks and closing gifts.
- **Technical Skills:** Proficiency with donor management software; strong grasp of moves-management and portfolio strategy. C@R is completing a migration from DonorPerfect to Bloomerang by the end of 2026, so prior experience with Bloomerang, DonorPerfect, or a comparable CRM is all welcome. Comfortable piloting AI tools to support prospect research and correspondence drafting, with all AI-assisted content reviewed for accuracy before use.

- **Communication and Organizational Abilities:** Excellent interpersonal and written communication skills; strong organizational skills to manage a multi-touch prospect pipeline.
- **Collaborative and Adaptive:** Team player able to coordinate closely with the CDO, the Director of Institutional Giving & Partnerships, and the Event Coordinator; thrives in a fast-paced, entrepreneurial environment with shifting priorities.
- **Ethics and Professionalism:** Upholds high ethical standards, demonstrates empathy and good judgment, and exercises discretion with donor information; passion for the organization's mission and community impact.
- **Travel:** Frequent travel across Harris County, periodic travel across Texas, and some evening and weekend events.

About CHILDREN AT RISK

CHILDREN AT RISK is an active research and advocacy group dedicated to improving the quality of life of children through research, public policy analysis, community education, and collaboration. Our focus is on the whole child with significant work to champion solutions that tackle poverty, education and health disparities, and child exploitation. We are the leading source of accurate information on children's issues and an advocate and catalyst for change concerning the needs of all children. The position offers competitive compensation and benefits package.

How to Apply

Interested candidates should submit a cover letter, resume, writing sample, and a list of three references via e-mail to Aimee Clark, Chief Development Officer, jobs@childrenatrisk.org. In your cover letter, please describe a major gift you personally cultivated and closed, and how you built that relationship. Please include the words "Director of Major Gifts" in the subject line. The application deadline is rolling with applications being reviewed upon receipt.

CHILDREN AT RISK is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran status, religion, ancestry, color, race, ethnicity or creed.

CHILDREN AT RISK receives a high volume of resumes and reviews every candidate closely. As such, candidates will only be contacted if they are selected for an interview.