



President
Upper Valley Land Trust
Hanover, NH

THE SEARCH

The Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT), one of the largest regional land trusts in the country and a leading practitioner of community-centered conservation, seeks an inspiring, strategic, and collaborative leader to serve as its next President.

For more than four decades, UVLT has been a trusted leader in protecting the lands, waters, and natural resources that define the Upper Valley region. Based in Hanover, New Hampshire, UVLT serves 45 towns across the Upper Connecticut River Valley of New Hampshire and Vermont, providing conservation leadership, tools, and expertise to permanently protect the working farms, forested ridges, wildlife habitat, water resources, trails, and scenic landscapes that define the region. Since its founding, UVLT has protected more than 58,000 acres across more than 500 parcels of land, working alongside landowners, communities, volunteers, and conservation partners to create a vibrant, resilient, and sustainable future for the Upper Valley. The organization's current conservation plan and approach to land conservation incorporates climate-informed resource analysis developed with the support of the Open Space Institute, ensuring that its work is informed by the changing ecological landscape and positioned to protect the region's most important natural resources for generations to come. Today, UVLT owns and cares for 40 conservation areas, protects more than 200 miles of trails, and maintains nine primitive paddler campsites.

The next President will join UVLT at an important moment. This leader will inherit a remarkable conservation legacy and a deeply trusted institution and, at the same time, will have the opportunity to (re)envision what land conservation can accomplish for the Upper Valley in the decades ahead. The President will articulate and drive UVLT's vision, set strategic direction, ensure strong execution and operational excellence, and secure the resources necessary to sustain and grow UVLT's impact. This leader will be accountable for organizational results and will ensure that UVLT operates in accordance with the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices, maintaining the highest levels of ethical conduct, fiduciary responsibility, and excellence in land conservation and stewardship.

The successful candidate will be energized by UVLT's mission and inspired by the opportunity to bring people together to shape a shared vision for the future. Through listening, convening, and supporting

diverse voices across the region, UVLT works collaboratively with communities to develop a vision that is truly their own—and to build the relationships, trust, belief, and tools needed to bring that vision to life. This is a rare opportunity to make a lasting difference in one of New England’s most beautiful and beloved landscapes while helping foster a more connected, engaged, and resilient community. Upper Valley Land Trust has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this search. All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in strict confidence to the firm as indicated at the end of this document.

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

Since its founding in 1985, UVLT has played a leading role in protecting and stewarding the extraordinary landscapes of the Upper Connecticut River Valley for future generations. UVLT is rooted in a shared recognition among Upper Valley residents that the region’s farms, forests, waterways, wildlife habitat, and rural landscapes are essential to the vitality and character of its communities.

From the outset, UVLT embraced a collaborative, community-centered approach to conservation. Its early work focused on helping willing landowners permanently protect important properties through conservation easements and has continued to expand its impact through increasingly innovative conservation projects. The Farrell Farm project, for example, brought together farmland conservation, land acquisition, affordable housing, public financing, and community advocacy, demonstrating UVLT’s willingness to listen to and respond to community needs and goals—even when doing so required the organization to learn, adapt, and venture into unfamiliar territory. The project was the first in the state of Vermont to co-locate an affordable housing development within a conserved farm property, making the experience new for all parties involved. By embracing the opportunity to learn alongside its partners and find a creative path forward, UVLT demonstrated its ability to address complex land-use challenges through collaboration, openness, and innovative partnerships. Over time, the organization has evolved from a grassroots initiative into a sophisticated regional land trust with a broad portfolio of conservation, stewardship, recreation, and community engagement programs. In 2015, UVLT launched the Fund for Conservation Action, raising \$9 million in committed capital to finance, directly or through bridge financing, high-priority land conservation projects, including fee acquisitions. Today, UVLT is a highly respected regional leader in land conservation, with a reputation that extends across the region and nationally.

UVLT has a sound financial profile. It holds approximately \$28.5 million in total assets, a total endowment of approximately \$13.6 million, and permanently protected, UVLT-owned lands valued at roughly \$10.5 million. In fiscal year 2025, UVLT delivered a balanced operating budget of \$1.4 million, with gifts from individuals and local family foundations accounting for more than half of operating support.

The next President will be supported by a staff leadership team comprising the Vice Presidents of Conservation, Stewardship, and Operations. Together, the Vice Presidents oversee a team of 15 staff.

As UVLT enters its next chapter, the organization offers its next President a rare opportunity to inherit and advance a remarkable legacy. The organization's regional relationships are deep, and its conservation work has produced a lasting impact across the Upper Valley. At the same time, UVLT stands at an exciting inflection point, with the opportunity to strengthen its capacity, expand its impact, and thoughtfully consider what land conservation can accomplish in the region over the next generation. The successful leader will believe that protecting land is ultimately about strengthening communities, sustaining healthy ecosystems, and creating a better future for generations to come.

ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT

The President serves as the chief executive officer of the Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT) and is responsible for the organization's overall leadership, management, and performance, translating the organization's mission and long-term aspirations into clear priorities, effective execution, and measurable results. Working closely with the Board of Trustees, the President will shape organizational priorities, strengthen the systems and structures that support UVLT's work, and ensure that the organization remains financially and operationally strong. The President will cultivate an environment in which staff, trustees, volunteers, landowners, donors, and community partners can contribute meaningfully to UVLT's success, while fostering a culture of trust, accountability, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

The President will also serve as a highly visible representative of UVLT, building relationships and advancing the organization's interests across the Upper Valley and within the broader conservation community. Ultimately, the President will be responsible for ensuring that UVLT is well-positioned to fulfill its commitments today while adapting thoughtfully to the opportunities and challenges of tomorrow.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE PRESIDENT

Shape UVLT's future through organizational leadership and planning

The President will provide visionary leadership in setting UVLT's priorities and advancing its conservation mission in alignment with community priorities. They will lead the implementation and ongoing refinement of UVLT's strategic plan and programmatic priorities. The President will foster an organizational culture of cooperation, open communication, passion for UVLT's mission, and commitment to community-based land conservation. By bringing together and expanding collaborative relationships with municipalities, agencies, conservation organizations, and other regional partners around a common vision of community resilience, civic engagement, and a strong safety net for people and nature, the President will identify emerging opportunities and position UVLT to respond to a changing conservation landscape while remaining grounded in its community-centered values.

Lead strategic oversight of land transactions and stewardship

The President will provide sound strategic leadership across UVLT's land conservation and stewardship activities, thoughtfully balancing mission alignment, community impact, opportunity cost, risk, and

organizational capacity. This includes guiding conservation decisions and approaches and articulating compelling conservation opportunities to potential funders. The President will oversee the long-term stewardship of UVLT's conservation easements and fee-owned lands, ensuring compliance with legal and ethical obligations and recognized land trust best practices, effective resolution of non-compliance and disputes, and appropriate resources for ongoing monitoring, stewardship, and defense. Through disciplined decision-making and strong partnerships, the President will safeguard UVLT's conservation commitments and ensure its land protection work remains durable, effective, and aligned with the organizational values and mission.

Strengthen philanthropic support and resource development

The President is responsible for strengthening and expanding UVLT's philanthropic support, building on the organization's strong relationships and reputation throughout the Upper Valley. This leader will cultivate and build relationships with major donors, individual donors, institutional funders, foundation partners, and other contributors, and will personally solicit major gifts, grants, and bequests. UVLT's President will be an exceptional communicator and active listener who can translate the organization's impact into a compelling case for investment.

With the recent hiring of a Chief Philanthropy Officer, the President will have a significant opportunity to drive step-change improvement in this area. The successful leader will work in close partnership with this leader and the Board to help establish clear fundraising priorities, strengthen donor stewardship, and engage trustees and other organizational ambassadors in resource development. Success will require both strategic vision and an authentic and personal approach to philanthropy, enabling UVLT to expand its circle of supporters while deepening the commitment of those who already believe in its mission.

Elevate UVLT's regional presence and influence

Through a genuine and visible presence across the Upper Valley, the President will broaden UVLT's community of supporters, strengthen relationships, and elevate awareness of the organization's contributions to the region. The President will serve as the primary ambassador and visible leader of UVLT, representing the organization with authority, credibility, and integrity. This leader will represent UVLT at public functions, deliver compelling presentations, and participate actively in regional and local forums to advance UVLT's strategic positioning and voice on land conservation and stewardship. The President will oversee integrated marketing, communications, and engagement strategies that deepen understanding of the organization's mission and ensure that UVLT's reputation, visibility, and relationships are commensurate with the significance of its mission.

Strengthen organizational capacity and effectiveness

As UVLT's programmatic opportunities and conservation portfolio expand, the President will ensure that organizational capacity and financial sustainability keep pace. This will include strengthening internal systems, ensuring appropriate staffing and resources, and maintaining effective internal controls that are regularly monitored, evaluated, and updated. The President will assess UVLT's organizational systems and

processes and identify opportunities to modernize and strengthen the organization's operations. The successful candidate will bring a track record of implementing nonprofit best practices and will introduce practical improvements to improve efficiency. The President will ensure that staff have the tools, resources, and capacity needed to deliver on UVLT's mission while positioning the organization to respond effectively to emerging opportunities.

Foster effective governance and board partnership to advance UVLT's mission

The President will serve as a trusted partner to the Board of Trustees, fostering a relationship grounded in mutual respect, transparency, and shared accountability. The President will maintain open, timely, and transparent communication with the Board, ensuring trustees have the information, context, and perspective needed to fulfill their governance responsibilities. Working closely with Board leadership, the President will promote alignment between governance and operations and ensure that organizational priorities, decisions, and resources remain closely connected to UVLT's strategic direction. The President will also support the recruitment, orientation, and ongoing development of a highly engaged and effective Board with the expertise and perspectives needed to advance UVLT's mission. The successful candidate will understand the distinct roles of the Board and staff and will engage Board members as ambassadors, advocates, and stewards of the organization.

DESIRED COMPETENCIES, VALUES, AND EXPERIENCE

Recognizing that no one candidate will have all of the desired qualifications, skills, and experiences, UVLT is seeking a leader who:

- Brings a deep commitment to the environment and understands the relationship between people and the land. Believes in the ecological imperative to protect and steward land and the urgent need to strengthen human community. Is committed to the virtuous cycle connecting the two.
- Has a leadership style that embraces neighborliness and empowers others. Results-oriented, pragmatic, creative. No job too small.
- Is an excellent communicator. Expresses a vision that draws people in. Is accessible, informative, and inspires action. Relates to others and is relatable. Builds relationships with empathy and integrity. Has genuine interest and respect for the skills, knowledge, perspective, needs, and realities of others.
- Has leadership experience in NGO strategy, governance, and fiduciary context, and familiarity with charitable land conservation and stewardship frameworks and best practices.
- Has demonstrated capabilities in basic organizational building blocks, including fundraising, financial management, personnel management, organizational leadership, and oversight.
- Intuitively measures impact in terms of bottom-line results and ROI rather than topline or absolute size. Is comfortable working with a lean budget and organization.
- Has roots or a long engagement in the Upper Valley or in another rural geography with similar characteristics (economically and politically mixed, experiencing suburbanization and/or

gentrification pressure, seeking to strike the right balance between appreciation of the environment and natural resources and economic realities).

- Has direct, personal experience with evolving community dynamics, civic issues, and service approaches. Has demonstrated sensitivity, discretion, and strategic awareness.

COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

Compensation will be competitive and commensurate with the successful candidate's background, experience, and expertise. UVLT also offers a comprehensive benefits package. The President is expected to reside locally or within close proximity to UVLT.

The Upper Valley is renowned for its extraordinary natural beauty: a landscape of rolling forested hills, working farms, rivers and streams, mountain vistas, and four distinct seasons. The Connecticut River bisects the region, and the surrounding hills and forests offer abundant opportunities for hiking, skiing, paddling, cycling, farming, and simply experiencing the outdoors. The region also benefits from vibrant communities, excellent schools, cultural and educational institutions, and a strong sense of civic engagement. For an individual drawn to conservation, community, and the outdoors, the opportunity to live in and lead an organization dedicated to protecting such a remarkable landscape offers an exceptional convergence of professional purpose and personal quality of life.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/upper-valley-land-trust/president>.

Nella Young, Karson Freeman, and Harley Bartles
Isaacson, Miller

The Upper Valley Land Trust is an equal opportunity employer.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by Upper Valley Land Trust. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by Upper Valley Land Trust would supersede any conflicting information in this document.