



Chief Operating Officer
Gulf of Maine Research Institute
Portland, Maine

THE SEARCH

The Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI) seeks a dynamic, innovative, and strategic leader to serve as the next Chief Operating Officer (COO). Reporting to the new President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the COO will advance GMRI's mission of developing and delivering collaborative solutions to global ocean challenges and lead the internal operations of GMRI. Working with the team of operations professionals, the new COO will strengthen systems and processes in support of the organization's growth as GMRI enters its next era of impact.

The Gulf of Maine Research Institute is an independent, objective nonprofit organization dedicated to the resilience of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the communities that depend on it. GMRI leverages the Gulf of Maine to test and develop solutions to ocean challenges around the world. The organization collaborates with stakeholders to support healthy ocean ecosystems, a thriving blue economy, sustainable seafood, and climate-resilient coastal communities. GMRI has grown rapidly over the past two decades, emerging as one of the region's most respected institutions due to its strategic approach, program impact, and the exceptional caliber and commitment of its staff, senior management team, and board of directors. The organization has a proven track record of recruiting and empowering its thoughtful, entrepreneurial, and tenacious staff of approximately 90 experts and is committed to being a world-class employer of choice.

In June 2023, GMRI appointed a new President to succeed its founder and leader of 28 years. A bold and visionary leader, Glenn Prickett assumed the role of President and CEO in September 2023 and has continued to implement the Bridge Strategic Plan while laying the groundwork to develop a well-defined strategic plan with the new COO, the GMRI staff, board, and stakeholders across the region. The COO will partner closely with the new President to realize the short- and long-term success of the new strategic plan in keeping with the GMRI's principles. This individual will function as the senior advisor and strategic partner to the President.

The COO leads strategic and tactical planning, priority setting, and decision-making across the organization and oversees a team of 16 professionals across functional areas of Finance and Administration (including IT and Facilities), Sponsored Projects Office, Human Resources, and Real Estate. The COO will have a demonstrated commitment to excellence in financial management, HR and administrative processes, IT systems, and facilities and real estate management.

Successful candidates will have an outstanding record of effective organizational development and decision-making within fast-growing organizations and a passionate concern for GMRI's mission. They will ensure that GMRI's operations are effectively managed on a day-to-day basis while developing and building the systems, processes, and professionals needed to support the organization during a critical time of growth and evolution. GMRI is especially committed to recruiting individuals who embrace the values and practice of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in their leadership.

The Gulf of Maine Research Institute 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 GULF OF MAINE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The Gulf of Maine Research Institute develops and delivers collaborative solutions to global ocean challenges. This independent, objective nonprofit organization is dedicated to the resilience of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the communities that depend on it. GMRI leverages the Gulf of Maine to test and develop solutions to ocean challenges around the world. The organization collaborates with stakeholders to support healthy ocean ecosystems, a thriving blue economy, sustainable seafood, and climate-resilient coastal communities.

GMRI's evidence-based, transparent, and nonpartisan perspective allows them to convene diverse and often competing stakeholders to solve complex problems. Their unique, interdisciplinary approach combines five key capacities:

- **Science:** Research that deepens scientific understanding of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and economy;
- **Education:** Hands-on science learning experiences for students and educators as an investment in the next generation of climate- and data-literate ecosystem stewards;
- **Community:** Support for the communities that depend on the Gulf of Maine, including fishermen, aquaculturists, and seafood supply chain businesses;
- **Climate Center:** Local, state, national, and global climate actions to help coastal communities thrive in a warmer world; and,
- **Gulf of Maine Ventures:** Creating, scaling, and investing in high-impact companies that advance GMRI's nonprofit mission. This is a for-profit entity of GMRI.

Scientists at GMRI were the first to publish research revealing rapid warming in the Gulf of Maine. As of 2021— the hottest year on record for the Gulf of Maine — this body of water has warmed faster than approximately 98 percent of the world's ocean. As they help coastal communities in their own region mitigate and adapt to the impacts of rapid warming, GMRI leverages the Gulf of Maine as a testbed to develop solutions that are relevant around the world.

In recent years, GMRI has deepened its role as a primary owner of waterfront property in Portland, Maine, taking on the responsibility to protect and preserve working waterfront access and demonstrating a model of low-carbon, climate-resilient solutions for this key infrastructure. Acquired by GMRI in 2021, Union Wharf is Portland's oldest continuously used wharf on Commercial Street. The Institute's plans for Union Wharf include expanding its capacity to support innovative fishermen and fish processors, the aquaculture industry, and other marine economy innovators.

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Glenn Prickett joined the Gulf of Maine Research Institute as President and CEO in September 2023. He has served in a variety of environmental leadership roles over the course of his 35-year career, working across NGOs, government agencies, volunteer organizations, and the private sector. Most recently, he served as the President and CEO of the World Environment Center, a global organization that advances sustainable development through corporate business practices across Europe, Latin America, and North America. Before that, Prickett served in senior executive and management roles at The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Conservation International, and the U.S. Agency for International Development. Prickett also previously served as board co-chair at the Keystone Policy Center and strategic planning chair at the Woodwell Climate Research Center. Throughout his career, Prickett has focused on climate change, leading projects related to greenhouse gas mitigation in various sectors like energy, forestry, and agriculture. He has also been involved in corporate partnerships for climate resilience and adaptation. Prickett's prior marine-related work includes projects focused on fisheries policy, coastal flood insurance, and natural infrastructure.

GMRI is governed by a 21-member Board of Directors as well as two advisory committees; a Science Advisory Committee, and an Education Advisory Committee, who support the complex, multidisciplinary, and entrepreneurial nature of the Institute.

PORTLAND, MAINE

A growing city of over 65,000 with a metropolitan area of over 500,000, Portland, Maine sits on the beautiful and scenic Casco Bay on a peninsula in southern Maine. Home to bold coasts, high peaks, rural farmlands, and thousands of lakes and rivers, Maine contains a diverse set of cultures and traditions including indigenous peoples and lifelong residents, as well as new immigrants who have just arrived and are excited to call Maine home. Portland has long been a city of immigrants and recently welcomed new residents from across the globe who have added to the City's diversity.

The area that is now Portland was Wabanaki territory until colonists established a fishing post in 1632. Today, the city offers historic 19th-century architecture juxtaposed with a blossoming entertainment and dining industry. With fairs and music festivals, endless opportunities for the outdoor enthusiast, locally sourced farm-to-table dining options, and all of the arts, cultural, and recreational offerings of a big city with a small-town feel, Portland is truly an up-and-coming destination on the East Coast. The city is also

home to the University of Southern Maine, Maine College of Art & Design, The Roux Institute of Northeastern University, and the University of New England, Portland campus (colleges of Dental Medicine, Pharmacy, Health Professions, and Osteopathic Medicine).

ROLE OF THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

The Chief Operating Officer leads the internal operations of GMRI and works with a team of seasoned professionals to strengthen systems and processes to support the organization's continued programmatic and educational growth. The COO reports to and works closely with the Chief Executive Officer to set and implement GMRI's strategic objectives and to advance its mission, and serves as a member of the senior management team. The COO oversees the following departments and functions: Finance and Administration (including IT and Facilities); Sponsored Projects Office; Human Resources; and Real Estate (an emerging function previously led by the CEO). The COO will supervise four direct reports: the Chief Financial Officer, the Human Resources Director, the Sponsored Projects Office Director, and an executive assistant; and lead a team of 16 professionals across these departments and functions responsible for serving the needs of all employees across GMRI.

- **Finance & Administration**, led by Chief Financial Officer Charissa Kerr, is responsible for managing the organization's consolidated finances—accounting & reporting, cash management, grant reporting & compliance, all GMRI information technology systems, real estate assets (Wrights Wharf, on which the GMRI building sits, and Union Wharf, a commercial working waterfront), and safety of our land & maritime operations.
- **Human Resources**, led by Director Amy Fecteau, designs and implements GMRI's systems for compensation, benefits, performance management, recruiting and retention, HR compliance, and supervisory training. Human Resources is supporting the CEO to launch an organization-wide initiative for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice—a top organizational priority that will become the responsibility of the COO.
- **Sponsored Projects**, led by Director Lisa Janicki, supports the development of large and complex programs funded by government and foundation grants. The Sponsored Projects Office (SPO) helps to prepare budgets, negotiate funding agreements, and track financial performance. SPO works with the CFO to analyze, negotiate, and implement federal indirect cost rates.

In addition to these operations functions that report to the COO, GMRI has programmatic and functional teams that report to the CEO. The heads of all GMRI's internal departments comprise the organization's Management Team, which the COO coordinates. The COO serves an internal, organization-wide leadership role, including responsibility for strategic planning; Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) initiatives; staff advisory groups; all staff meetings; and coordination of select external, strategic partnerships on behalf of the CEO.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

In particular, the Chief Operating Officer will be charged with addressing the following opportunities and challenges:

Lead continuous improvements of GMRI's internal infrastructure, systems, and processes to achieve organizational goals.

GMRI has grown from a small organization of around 15 to now employing approximately 90 individuals. The COO will need to be effective at prioritizing and managing enterprise-wide change while scaling the organization's internal infrastructure. As GMRI continues to grow and diversify, the systems and processes to support the organization need to keep up with its growth and succeed in taking GMRI to the next level. The COO will innovate, establish, and strengthen operational systems across a complex organization to increase efficiency, agility, and overall user-friendliness, and improve scientific data integrity and management. Human resources management and technology solutions for key business processes, such as employee onboarding, payroll processing, performance management, and optimizing hybrid work environments will be key areas of optimization for the COO. To ensure GMRI is setting its employees up for success, in partnership with Human Resources, the COO will develop a consistent and formalized onboarding process, succession plans, and cross-training for crucial roles.

Provide leadership and oversight for GMRI's strategic planning process.

The COO must have demonstrated experience in the development and management of both long-range and year-to-year strategic planning while balancing the delivery of outcomes against the realities of budgets and resources. The COO will facilitate GMRI's strategic planning process and oversee its implementation. A key measurement of success will be the COO's ability to collaboratively develop a living strategic plan and, most importantly, follow through in the execution and support of each department in achieving their respective goals. The COO should bring a penchant for highly collaborative work and the ability to break down silos to enhance such collaborations. The COO will demonstrate evidence of superb listening and communication skills, a passion for developing staff, and an understanding of the role of shared governance in decision-making processes.

Support GMRI's infrastructure and facilities and empower a high-performing staff.

The COO will lead a deeply committed staff managing a complex operation. In overseeing Finance and Administration, the Sponsored Projects Office, Human Resources, and Real Estate, the COO will be responsible for managing the capacity and support of these teams while looking to increase fiscal resources to support new and existing programs identified in the strategic planning process. With an increase in staff size and evolving space needs, the COO will be instrumental in space planning and facilities revisions. The COO will also effectively manage the real estate of GMRI, including Union Wharf and Wrights Wharf, supporting the needs of the tenants and the best ways to utilize the space in line with

GMRI's mission. In addition, the COO will continue to maintain key external partnerships with collaborating institutions such as the University of Maine and the Roux Institute at Northeastern University.

Effectively lead GMRI through superb organizational management and culture development.

The COO will be a mission-driven leader who brings exceptional emotional intelligence and capacity for managing and leading people. They will be vital in ensuring GMRI's culture is representative of the organization in its current and future iterations through change management and growth mindset initiatives. They will be able to engage with staff on both an individual level and in large groups—as well as new employees and long-tenured staff.

As first amongst equals, the COO will be responsible for coordinating GMRI's Management Team, which comprises the heads of all GMRI's internal departments. Additionally, the COO will lead the Culture Club, which brings team members from across GMRI together to discuss organizational efforts at enhancing culture. Presently, Human Resources is supporting the CEO to launch an organization-wide initiative for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice—a top organizational priority that will become the responsibility of the COO. GMRI's goal is to ensure these values are representative of the internal culture of GMRI, as well as embedded in the work GMRI is doing externally.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

While few candidates will possess all the qualifications and characteristics the search committee is seeking, the ideal candidate for the Chief Operating Office role will bring many of the following professional qualities and experiences:

Executing for Results

- Effective partner to the CEO and management team.
- The ability to set clear and challenging goals while committing the organization to exceptional performance; tenacious and accountable in driving results.
- Comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty; the ability to adapt nimbly and lead others through complex situations.
- Experienced in establishing systems to optimize the organization's ability to make and implement decisions efficiently and build a culture that values effectiveness.
- Creative and capable negotiator of inter-institutional MOUs and other agreements.
- Experience and ability in developing successful, entrepreneurial, for-profit ventures to extend non-profit mission impact and revenue streams.

Setting Strategy

- Executive-level experience in strategic planning, decision-making, leadership, facilitation, and operational management, preferably in a multicultural organization.

- The inclination to seek and analyze data from a variety of sources to support transparent decisions and to align others with the organization's overall strategy.
- The ability to effectively balance the desire/need for broad change with an understanding of how much change the organization is capable of handling, to create realistic goals and implementation plans that are achievable and successful.

Leading Teams

- The ability to attract and recruit top talent, motivate the team, delegate effectively, celebrate diversity within the team, and manage performance;
- A leader who is self-reflective and aware of their own limitations; leads by example and drives the organization's performance with an attitude of continuous improvement and mutual respect by being open to feedback and self-improvement.

Relationships and Influence

- Connects and builds strong relationships, demonstrating strong emotional intelligence, inclusivity, and an ability to communicate clearly.
- Exhibits self-awareness, humility, and an understanding of others that enhances interpersonal communication and management abilities.
- Strong internal focus on equity and transparency across the organization.
- A good listener with a deep interest in and respect for diverse internal and external stakeholders.

Education and Work Experience

- Master's degree in business or public administration or equivalent "on-the-job" training in business administration, finance, and operations management.
- Minimum of 10 years of experience in a senior operational leadership position at an organization of equal or larger size than GMRI.

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 for the search: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/gulf-maine-research-institute/chief-operating-officer>.

Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

Rebecca Kennedy, Partner (she/her)

Karen McPhedran, Managing Associate (she/her)

Stephen Kalogeras, Associate (he/him)

Cortnee Bollard, Senior Search Coordinator (they/them)

Research shows that people belonging to structurally marginalized groups often only apply to jobs if they meet 100% of the qualifications. As no one ever meets 100% of the qualifications, we encourage you to apply if you feel that most of the above qualifications reflect your experience and expertise.

Gulf of Maine Research Institute has a long-standing policy and commitment to providing equal access and equal employment opportunities in all terms, conditions, processes, and benefits of employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status. GMRI's employment decisions are made without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status.

Applicants and employees are encouraged to voluntarily self-identify their race/ethnicity, gender, disability status, and veteran status to assist GMRI in fulfilling various data reporting requirements of the federal government. This self-identification is completely voluntary, will be kept confidential and separate from your application data, and used only to meet federal reporting requirements. Providing or declining to provide this information will not result in adverse action of any kind.