



Shark Conservation Fund

Executive Director
Position Prospectus



About The Shark Conservation Fund



The Shark Conservation Fund (SCF) is a leading global philanthropic initiative dedicated to restoring ocean health through the conservation of sharks and rays. Established in 2016, SCF is a collaboration of committed donors working together to halt the precipitous decline of shark and ray populations and protect the marine ecosystems they help sustain. As the only strategic regrator exclusively focused on shark and ray conservation, SCF brings a powerful, unified voice to the forefront of global ocean protection efforts.

SCF focuses its investments on three core priorities: reforming fisheries management to reduce mortality of species threatened by trade; preventing the extinction of non-traded, threatened shark and ray species; and identifying and protecting important shark and ray habitats through the creation and expansion of marine protected areas. SCF's strategy is grounded in science-based policy, international collaboration, and a deep commitment to high-impact conservation. The organization supports a diverse portfolio of initiatives in over 80 locations across Africa, Asia, Oceania, Europe, and the Americas.

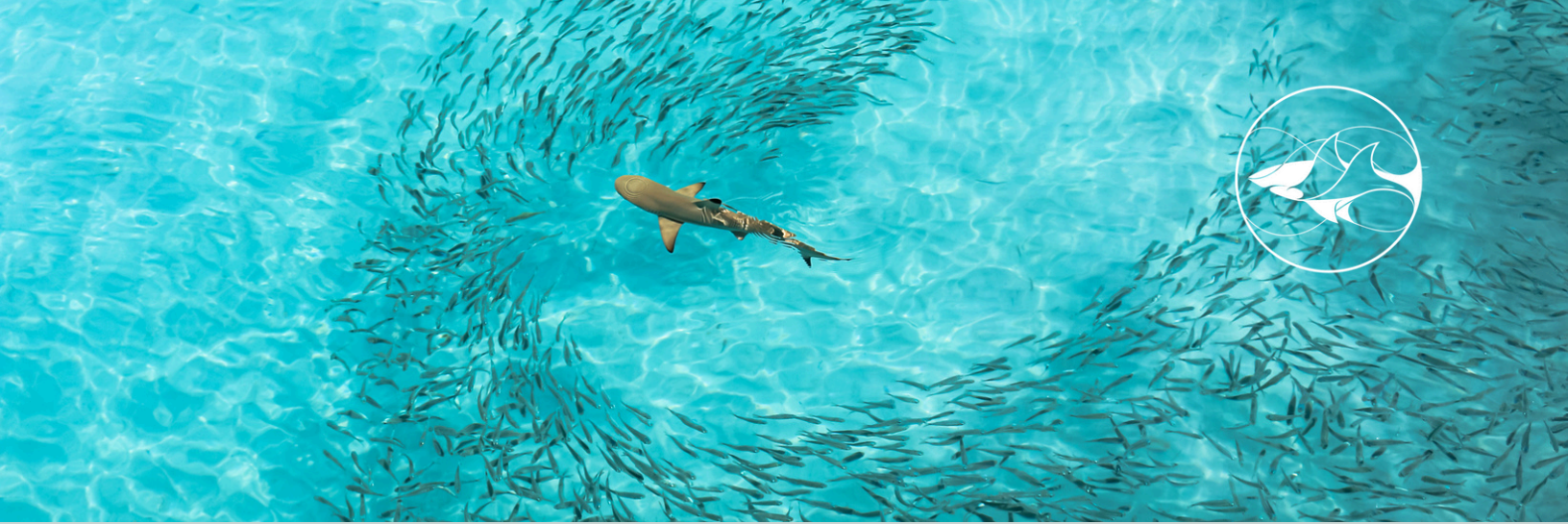




As a fiscally sponsored project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, SCF benefits from robust operational infrastructure and financial stewardship while maintaining its strategic independence. SCF is governed by a Board of Advisors comprised of some of the most prominent funders in ocean philanthropy and marine conservation. These advisors serve not only as stewards of SCF's mission but as active collaborators in shaping its strategic direction.

SCF's work has led to measurable global impact. In 2024 alone, SCF-supported initiatives contributed to major policy reforms affecting 79 shark and ray species, helped establish over 30,000 km² of new marine protected areas, and supported groundbreaking research published in premier scientific journals. Through campaigns such as "Sharks for the Future," SCF is scaling its efforts to meet the urgency of the global biodiversity and climate crises, strengthening habitat protections, halting illegal trade, and supporting community-driven conservation. By working in close partnership with NGOs, governments, and Indigenous communities, SCF is creating a future where sharks, rays, and the ocean ecosystems they anchor can thrive.

[Learn more about The Shark Conservation's Impact.](#)



About the Opportunity

The Shark Conservation Fund (SCF) is seeking a visionary Executive Director to lead a dynamic, high-impact global organization at a critical moment for shark and ray conservation. With a track record of securing major policy wins, protecting vast marine habitats, and funding science-based strategies across more than 80 regions, SCF stands at the forefront of marine conservation philanthropy. The next Executive Director will have the opportunity to shape the future of ocean health by expanding SCF's influence, growing its funding base, and scaling its impact during a period of organizational evolution and momentum.

This is a rare opportunity to step into a global leadership role with a lean, mission-driven team and a flexible funding model that allows for strategic creativity. SCF is not constrained by traditional NGO structures; it operates as a catalytic regrantor, channeling resources into the most effective local, national, and international efforts. With the support of a committed Board of Advisors composed of leading ocean philanthropists, the incoming Executive Director will have the autonomy to design strategy, set conservation priorities, and cultivate partnerships with NGOs, governments, and funding institutions. The role is both strategic and hands-on, ideal for a charismatic leader who enjoys working across multiple levels, from engaging donors and building coalitions to supporting a tight-knit internal team.

SCF is also seeking within this position to have a leader with deep visibility and credibility within the global shark and ray conservation field. This is someone who not only stays ahead of emerging threats, trends, and scientific developments but is also looked to as a funder thought partner and strategic influencer. The next Executive Director will be expected to serve as an ambassador for SCF among peer funders, helping to shape the broader philanthropic agenda, build trust with grantees, and guide the field toward greater collective impact.

The next Executive Director will inherit a talented staff and a programmatic foundation that has delivered measurable results, such as protections for over 225,000 square kilometers of ocean habitat, national shark retention bans in key fishing countries, and publication of groundbreaking research in top-tier journals. In the first year, priorities will include reigniting a paused \$20 million capital campaign, attracting new funders beyond SCF's core base, developing operational plans for key strategy goals, a communications strategy to better tell SCF's story, and deepening collaboration with other marine conservation donors. among funders and grantees. As the fund approaches the midpoint of its five-year strategic plan, the Executive Director will also help define the next phase of SCF's growth and operational development.

This role requires a skilled strategist and communicator who can inspire funders, lead with integrity, and bring clarity to complex conservation goals. Candidates should have a strong grounding in marine or environmental conservation (shark-specific knowledge is a plus), experience working in global contexts, and the emotional intelligence to navigate a high-powered advisory board with varied perspectives. A successful candidate must be equally adept at "managing up": building trust, alignment, and strategic clarity with the Board of Advisors and core funders, and also managing down: mentoring staff, fostering collaboration, and sustaining a healthy internal culture.

A track record of leadership in international conservation, whether through philanthropy, policy, or advocacy, is strongly preferred.

For a seasoned leader seeking purpose-driven work and global visibility, this role offers an unmatched platform. SCF's grantees include many of the world's most respected conservation organizations, and its funders are shaping the future of marine protection. The Executive Director will not only influence ocean policy and conservation outcomes at scale but also help reimagine what strategic philanthropy can accomplish for biodiversity and planetary health.



Key Responsibilities



Strategic Direction:

- Develop, monitor, and revise, as necessary, the Shark Conservation Fund's Investment Strategy.
- Develop and maintain metrics to measure progress against the Investment Strategy.
- Manage the Shark Conservation Fund's Expert Advisory Panel to harness their knowledge and connections to refine the Investment Strategy as and when required.
- Manage a curated portfolio of projects that demonstrably deliver the objectives and metrics of the Shark Conservation Fund.

Fundraising:

- Represent the Shark Conservation Fund at major events and act as its public face and spokesperson for the organization and its mission.
- Build the profile and reputation of the Shark Conservation Fund throughout the public, private, and corporate sectors.
- Manage Shark Conservation Fund members and financial supporters to maintain their commitment to and engagement with the collaborative.
- Develop and implement a fundraising strategy including identifying and cultivating prospects.
- Plan and execute virtual or in-person fundraising events.
- Plan and conduct fundraising meetings and trips.
- Oversee writing and submitting proposals and reports to funders.

Managing Operations:

- Develop and monitor budgets to ensure fiscal health.
- Oversee, manage, and mentor staff and contractors.
- Liaise with the Board of Advisors and Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors to ensure operations meet expectations and requirements.
- Plan and conduct all Board of Advisor calls and meetings.

Grantmaking:

- Identify projects that will deliver impact under the Investment Strategy objectives.
- Oversee staff's work with applicants to develop high quality concepts and proposals.
- Oversee staff's grants monitoring to ensure grants are meeting their deliverables and stated goals.
- Report to the Board of Advisors on the progress of grantees in achieving their deliverables and impact against Investment Strategy metrics.



Qualifications

- Strong leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills.
- Demonstrated strategic thinking, planning, and financial management skills.
- Demonstrated fundraising ability.
- Ability to work effectively with a Board of Advisors and experience in managing and supervising staff.
- Knowledge of environmental conservation policy and advocacy.
- Knowledge of shark conservation is helpful but not required.
- Bachelor's degree, or equivalent experience, required.
- Minimum of 15 years of experience managing not-for-profit organizations or programs.



Meet Advisory Board



J. Charles Fox
Executive Director
Oceans 5



Yuta Masuda
Director of Science
Allen Family
Philanthropies



Ann Colley
Director of Public Relations and
Charitable Giving
Moore Capital Management



Trevor Bacon
Marine Program Officer
Moore Charitable Foundation



Barney Long
Senior Director of Species Conservation
Re:wild



Andi Pearl
Executive Director
The Volgenau Foundation



Emily Small
Director, Program Delivery
Bloomberg Ocean Fund



Amanda Nickson
Senior Director of Conservation
Paul M. Angell Family Foundation

Meet the Team



Megan O'Toole
Program Director
Shark Conservation Fund

Megan is responsible for strategy development for all SCF program areas. Megan brings over 10 years of experience managing global programs aimed at securing strong, effective policy changes to better conserve wildlife and habitats.

Prior to joining SCF, Megan served as the Director of International Policy at IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare) as well as the role of Sr. Associate with the Global Shark Conservation program at the Pew Charitable Trusts.

She has considerable experience working at the international level to support governments seeking better global management for threatened marine species via the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), among others. Megan has also worked extensively at the national level, recognizing that conservation for the world's sharks is not a one-size-fits-all solution, partnering with governments, scientists, NGOs and IGOs to identify best practices and policies that aim to reduce shark mortality and build capacity depending on the needs of the region, country or species.

Megan holds a master's degree in coastal environmental management from Duke University and a bachelor's degree in biology from Florida Southern College.



Valerie Zundel
Program Associate
Shark Conservation Fund

Valerie Zundel is SCF's Program Associate. Previously, she worked for Friends of the Earth as an Oceans Campaigner, focusing on issues like reducing bycatch, combatting vessel-related pollution, and advocating against offshore drilling. As a native Spanish-speaker, she also helped translate campaign materials.

Before that, she was employed by the Shark Research and Conservation (SRC) team at the University of Miami as a Science Outreach and Social Media Manager while obtaining her professional master's degree in Marine Conservation. There, she gave educational talks to school children about the importance of sharks and shark conservation, communicated shark science on social media, and assisted with shark research.

Valerie has a bachelor's degree in Philosophy from the University of Florida and is deeply invested in animal rights. She is also passionate about free diving, especially shark diving.



Brenna Goldner
Grants and Operations Manager
Shark Conservation Fund

Brenna Goldner serves as the Grants and Operations Manager at the Shark Conservation Fund, where she combines her extensive experience in grants administration with her passion for ocean conservation. With a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies from Temple University, Brenna has a strong background in grants administration and operations coordination, honed through roles in the philanthropic, for-profit, and nonprofit sectors.

Previously, Brenna served as the Grants Manager at Talbert & Bright, Inc., where she managed federal and state grants for aviation engineering projects. At the Lisa and Douglas Goldman Fund, Brenna honed her skills in grants management and project coordination, overseeing grant-related processes and contributing to significant database and website enhancements. Her most recent position as the Accounting & Grants Manager at MomsRising involved managing comprehensive grants administration for 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) entities and assisting with fundraising efforts.

Outside of her professional endeavors, Brenna is passionate about sailing and actively volunteers at a local dog rescue, reflecting her deep appreciation for the ocean and commitment to animal welfare. Her diverse experiences and personal interests drive her dedication to advancing marine conservation and making a meaningful impact through her work at the Shark Conservation Fund.



Location

Location: This is a remote, full-time, exempt position based in the United States.

Compensation

The compensation range is from \$200,000 to \$220,000 per year, commensurate with experience and accomplishment. The salary range is one component of the total compensation package for employees. Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors offers a competitive compensation and benefits package including health coverage, retirement benefits, paid sick leave, vacation and holidays and access to professional development resources.

To Apply

The Shark Conservation Fund retained the services of ThinkingAhead Executive Search's Nonprofit Division to serve as our recruitment partner. If you are qualified and interested, [please apply here.](#)

Questions can be directed to:

Kay Linder

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Heather Campbell

Partner, ThinkingAhead Executive Search
hcampbell@thinkingahead.com

The Shark Conservation Fund and its fiscal sponsor, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors celebrates the uniqueness of our staff, our partners, and the communities we serve. We are committed to inclusion with the goal of cultivating a culture of belonging and acceptance. We strive to embed this value in our philanthropic work to advance a more just, equitable and sustainable world. RPA is an equal opportunity employer.

