ALL ABOARD OHIO

Hiring Our First Full-Time Executive Director

The ask

All Aboard Ohio (AAO) is seeking partners for a **two-year, $250,000 campaign** to hire our first full-time executive director in early 2027, covering the role's salary and benefits. Partners can join at one of three levels, shown below. We have built a statewide movement on volunteer power, and a paid leader is what turns it into a permanent organization that can win.

What we've built

In a few years, AAO went from dormant to one of the most active state rail advocacy groups in the country. Groups in about 15 states have asked to adopt our model, so AAO's success reaches well beyond Ohio.

- **Members:** from about 200 to more than 8,000, organized into eight chapters across Ohio
- **Ohio Rail Summit:** our first statewide summit drew nearly 200 people and six TV stations
- **Statehouse:** testified in 2025 and helped move SB 449, bipartisan legislation to bring Ohio back into the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission (MIPRC)
- **Coalition:** helped establish a statewide coalition of cities, MPOs, and businesses convened by MORPC and NOACA, and supported RailNation Toledo with Rep. Marcy Kaptur
- **Reach:** 10.2 million social media impressions and 41 earned media stories in the past year
- **Fundraising:** rebuilt our recurring giving program and the technology behind it, so the executive director can grow recurring revenue from day one

Why now

We have hit the ceiling of what volunteers can carry. Our board still runs much of AAO's day-to-day work. A full-time executive director takes ownership of fundraising, advocacy follow-through, and chapter growth, so the board can step back into governance and oversight (see page 2).

The timing is right in Ohio. After AAO testimony and education, the Ohio House included every one of our legislative priorities in its version of the last state budget, but the Senate and final budget did not. The next budget will be written in spring and summer 2027, and having an executive director in place before then will put AAO in the strongest advocacy position.

Role of the Executive Director

Area	What the executive director owns
Development	Individual donors, corporate sponsors, and foundation partners
Government Relations	Advocacy priorities, including relationships with lawmakers and the Ohio Rail Development Commission
Member Engagement	Membership development and chapter growth
Operations	Communications, events, research, and volunteers

What your support funds

The executive director's primary responsibility is building recurring revenue from Ohio companies, institutions, and members, with the goal of the role paying for itself within 24 months (page 2 shows how).

Lead Partner	**Founding Partner**	**Partner**
$100,000 ($50,000/yr) · 1 partner	$50,000 ($25,000/yr) · 2 partners	$25,000 ($12,500/yr) · 2 partners

Commitments by December 31 let us hire by March 1, ahead of the 2027 state budget. Gifts can be paid annually or quarterly, and we will send a pledge agreement and payment schedule once you commit.

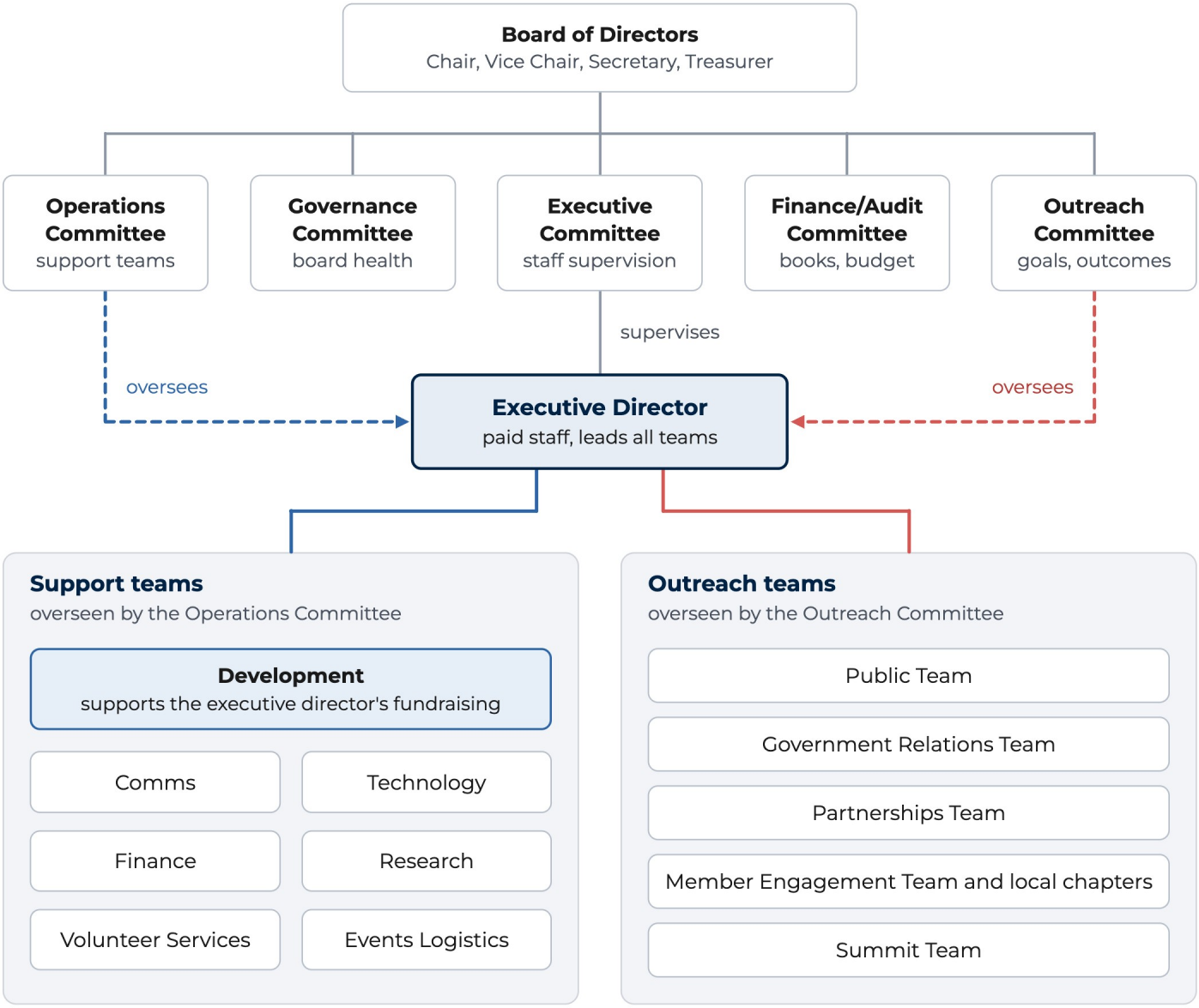
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How AAO Is Organized

The executive director leads AAO's support and outreach teams, staffed by paid or volunteer members, and reports to the board's Executive Committee. Board committees set goals and oversee the work, rather than execute it.



The executive director leads both groups of teams. The Operations Committee (blue) and the Outreach Committee (red) oversee that work.

Path to self-sufficiency

Gifts from partners will provide seed funding for the first two years of a paid executive director. During that time, the executive director and AAO's leadership will grow revenue from members, businesses, and foundations in Ohio and throughout the Midwest committed to improving passenger rail.

Years 1–2: Seed funding

Partner gifts cover the executive director's salary and benefits while Ohio revenue ramps up.

Years 1–2: Build Ohio revenue

Recurring gifts and sustaining members through our revamped giving program, plus sponsorships from Ohio employers and institutions.

Year 3 on: Self-sustaining

The executive director role is funded by sources within Ohio and the Midwest: members, companies, and regional foundations.