

CAVE CANEM

Leadership Opportunity Individual Giving & Special Events Manager

About Cave Canem

[Cave Canem](#) is a nonprofit organization, committed to cultivating the artistic and professional growth of Black poets. Founded by artists for artists, Cave Canem fosters community across the diaspora to enrich the field by facilitating a nurturing space in which to learn, experiment, create, and present. Cave Canem develops audiences for Black voices that have worked and are working in the craft of poetry.

Over the years, Cave Canem has grown from a gathering of 26 to become an influential movement with a renowned faculty, a high-achieving global fellowship of 500 poets, and a workshop community of over 1,000. Core programs include community-based workshops; cross-cultural talks and readings by acclaimed poets and scholars; book prizes publishing new voices; and our flagship annual writing retreat for today's most promising poets of African descent.

The Role

The Individual Giving & Special Events Manager will play a pivotal role in supporting our mission to amplify and celebrate Black poets' contributions to and impact on literature. You will be responsible for creating and implementing individual giving fundraising strategies, donor cultivation, and managing various development initiatives and events to support the financial sustainability and continued growth of Cave Canem. The successful candidate will be a key figure in moving the institution towards one that is as financially strong as its reputation and impact on the literary and poetry fields.

The Individual Giving & Special Events Manager is responsible for raising the contributed income from individual donors to support a \$2M budget, currently at 5% with a goal to reach 10% by the end of the strategic plan (2027), stewarding current relationships, and cultivating new opportunities. Over the last three years, the organization has undergone a period of capacity building and growth, growing from a budget of \$780K to \$2.2M between 2021 and 2024; and we still project some incremental growth to support general operations and special initiatives. Building on the objectives of the recently released strategic plan, the Individual Giving & Special Events Manager will partner with the Executive Director to determine best strategies for effective solicitation and stewardship of current and prospective donors. As Cave Canem continues to shape the next stage of the fundraising team, this role will have a central role in supporting current and anticipated future efforts, including plans leading up to the organization's 30th Anniversary in 2027. The Individual Giving & Special Events Manager will develop a strategy and plan for building out the nascent individual fundraising program, including major gifts and special events. This position works closely with the Executive Director and has the support of a Development Assistant.

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For this role, we are looking for candidates who will speak boldly on behalf of the organization and its incredible national impact and reach to mobilize support through philanthropic partnerships and investments.

What You Will Do

1. *Fundraising Strategy*: In partnership with the Executive Director, develop and execute comprehensive individual giving fundraising strategies to meet annual revenue targets for donor engagement and ensure the sustainability and growth of Cave Canem. Work with the Executive Director to build and maintain a pipeline for new prospects from outside of the organization's existing portfolio.
2. *Donor Cultivation*: Identify, cultivate, and steward relationships with individual and major donors.
3. *Events Management*: Organize and oversee fundraising events in collaboration with the programs department, on donor appreciation events, and other literary-themed gatherings to engage the community and generate financial support.
4. *Donor Communications*: Develop persuasive fundraising materials, appeal letters, and communication campaigns to effectively convey Cave Canem's mission and impact.
5. *Donor Database Management*: Maintain accurate and up-to-date donor records, track donor interactions, and generate reports to monitor fundraising progress.
6. *Collaboration*: Thoughtfully and productively engage with team members cross departmentally to align fundraising efforts with the organization's strategic goals and programmatic initiatives. Work collaboratively with Development Assistant and fundraising consultants to maintain organizational success and meet annual fundraising goals.

Qualifications and Skills

- Proven experience in nonprofit individual donor fundraising, administration, or donor relations.
- Familiarity with the poetry community and a passion for promoting literature and literacy.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills with the ability to craft compelling fundraising materials.
- Strong organizational skills, attention to detail, and ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously.
- Proficiency in donor management software, database systems, and Microsoft Office suite.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively.
- Flexibility to work occasional evenings or weekends for events or donor meetings.

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Compensation | The salary is \$90,000. This is an exempt position and benefits include medical and dental insurance, 401K match, generous paid time off, and professional development opportunities.

Location | Brooklyn, NY office in DUMBO.

Hours | Hybrid/in-office and remote schedule. Office hours are Monday–Friday, 10 am to 6 pm.

Who You Will Report To | The Executive Director of Cave Canem, Lisa Willis.

How To Apply | Nominations and inquiries are welcome. To apply, please submit a resume by email to jobs@ccpoets.org with “Individual Giving & Special Events Manager” in the subject line.

Cave Canem Foundation, Inc. is committed to building a culturally diverse community and strongly encourages qualified female-identified candidates and candidates of color to apply.

Join us in our mission to inspire creativity, and enrich our community through the power of storytelling and the written word. As the Development Manager, your efforts will directly contribute to the growth and impact of Cave Canem.