

Ernestine's Women's Shelter is seeking an accomplished Director of Development and Partnerships to join our senior leadership team and take Ernestine's from a +\$700K community fundraising base to a diversified, multi-million dollar revenue strategy. Reporting directly to the Executive Director, you will shape fundraising strategy, cultivate transformational donors and government relationships, and build sustainable revenue that directly changes the lives of survivors of gender-based violence. Every dollar raised directly helps survivors fleeing violence access emergency shelter, housing support, counselling, children's programming, legal advocacy and long-term safety. The Director of Development and Relations plays a critical leadership role in ensuring Ernestine's can continue expanding these life-saving services.

Our Story

Since 1983, Ernestine's has helped over 15,000 individuals and children rebuild with dignity and independence. Today, we serve over 700 survivors each year.

In the early 1980s, a group of fierce advocates came together to create a safe haven for people experiencing gender-based violence. Ernestine's Women's Shelter was one of the first shelters in Toronto to support women and their children together. What started as a grassroots response to gender-based violence has grown into a multi-service organization. Ernestine's provides life-changing and life-saving supports for survivors and their children who are experiencing, or at risk of, gender-based violence. Ernestine's offers wraparound support that works to break the cycle of violence, for good. These supports include housing, legal, financial, childcare, immigration services, mental health counselling, safety planning, system navigation, child-centered programming, and more. These are the building blocks of long-term safety and stability.

In 2025, our community donors generously supported Ernestine's with contributions totaling over \$722K that directly impacted the lives of survivors.

Our Vision

Transforming lives beyond violence.

Our Mission

Ernestine's provides advocacy, crisis intervention and shelter to adults and children experiencing violence, including Women and Two-Spirit, Trans, non-binary and gender diverse individuals.

Our values

- We understand gender-based violence broadly. It includes but is not limited to physical, emotional, psychological, financial and sexual violence. It also works at a systemic level that requires larger-scale social justice change.
- We center people who experience all forms of harm and exclusion including anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, Transphobia, ableism and other forms of exclusion.

Ernestine!^s

Women's Shelter

- As a settler organization, we make an ongoing commitment to Reconciliation.
- We recognize the impact of violence on children and acknowledge that the rights of children are separate and distinct from their parents.

Our Team

Ernestines' mission is executed by a team of highly committed individuals in three distinct program areas: Direct Service; Engagement & Development; Finance & Administration. The Direct Service Team consists of dedicated staff that provide programs and services in our 35 bed shelter as well as community outreach programs.

The Position

Ernestine's is seeking a strategic and active Director of Development and Partnership to lead Ernestine's comprehensive fundraising, donor engagement, and external relations strategy. As a member of the senior leadership team with 3-5 direct-reports, you will develop and execute innovative fundraising initiatives that diversify and grow revenue through individual giving, major gifts, foundations, corporations, government partnerships, grants, and in-kind contributions.

The Director will be responsible for identifying, cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding transformational philanthropic investments while building long-term relationships with major donors, corporate partners, foundations, and community stakeholders. You will lead the organization's major gifts program, proactively prospecting and securing new funding opportunities that advance Ernestine's mission and long-term sustainability.

Working closely with the Executive Director, Board of Directors, and external partners, you will cultivate and strengthen relationships with all levels of government, identifying public funding opportunities, supporting advocacy efforts, and representing Ernestine's interests with government ministries, elected officials, and sector partners.

You will provide strategic leadership for all grant development activities, including researching funding opportunities, preparing compelling proposals, ensuring timely reporting, and maintaining strong relationships with funders. In addition, you will oversee donor stewardship, fundraising campaigns and events including International Women's Day, Stand Up for Ernestine's and Summer Brew for Ernestine's, volunteer engagement, communications initiatives, and strategies that elevate Ernestine's profile, strengthen community partnerships, and deepen public investment in our mission.

The successful candidate is a visionary fundraising leader with a proven ability to build meaningful relationships, inspire philanthropy, and secure significant investments that enable Ernestine's Women's Shelter to expand its impact and support survivors fleeing violence.

Key Accountabilities

Leadership and Reporting

- Develop and manage annual department budgets and report on variances.
- Collaborate with management team to gather relevant information for reports to funders and donors.
- Contribute to organization's communication activities including appeals for support, annual reports, website, social media and other activities, when required.
- Develop the strategic direction for the department and the design of policies and procedures to support those directions, to align with Ernestine's long term strategic plan objectives.
- Develop annual fundraising plans, revenue forecasts, and prospect opportunities.
- In collaboration with the Executive Director, create and run an annual Board fundraising orientation, so that every Director understands what is expected of them in cultivating new relationships for Ernestine's, warm introductions and in attaining their personal giving goals.
- Serve as the staff lead to the Board's fundraising efforts. Equip Directors with prospect lists, briefing notes and talking points, to support their individual Board giving and outreach goals in partnership with the Board Chair, and report on Board fundraising activity at every regular meeting.

Fundraising and Revenue Growth

- Grow annual fundraising from a + \$700K base to \$1.5 million within three years, through a diversified mix of individual giving, major gifts, foundations, corporate partnerships and government funding.
- Lead a strategic stewardship plan that ensures timely and meaningful recognition, ensuring dedicated personalized relationship building with major and high-potential donors and supports long-term retention.
- Develop and implement a donor engagement calendar to ensure timely execution of stewardship tasks, including communications, reporting, recognition activities and engagement touchpoints
- Execute plans and strategies to acquire and retain corporate donors.
- Manage a portfolio of prospects, nurturing relationships and soliciting gifts through personalized cultivation plans from corporations, individuals, and foundations.
- Proactively identify and engage high-potential prospects across individual, foundation, and corporate audiences through research, networking, referrals, and relationship development.
- Build, manage, and grow a portfolio of donors, foundations, corporations, sponsors, and institutional funders.

Ernestine!^s

Women's Shelter

Donor Communications and Recognition

- Develop stewardship communication templates and guidelines, including custom acknowledgement letters and donor-specific reports, to ensure consistent, personalized donor communications.
- Work with the Donor Services Coordinator to maintain accurate donor records in Raiser's Edge (RE) for donor engagement, communication and recognition.
- Draft and oversee donor-targeted communications including personalized proposals, impact reports, and newsletters.
- Prepare compelling funding proposals, grant applications, donor presentations, briefing materials, and stewardship reports.
- Represent Ernestine's at meetings, conferences, events and in media.

Key Qualifications

- Minimum 8–10 years of progressively senior fundraising leadership experience, including demonstrated success securing significant philanthropic investments.
- Demonstrated success leading annual fundraising programs of +\$1 million dollars.
- Demonstrated ability to successfully solicit gifts by identifying prospects, managing a portfolio of individuals, designing and implementing cultivation strategies, building relationships, and ensuring follow-up activities and stewardship.
- Demonstrated success securing major gifts, sponsorships and philanthropic investments ranging from five- to six-figure commitments.
- Experience working directly with Board Directors and Executive leadership.
- University degree in business, communications, public policy, nonprofit management, marketing, or related discipline.
- A developed analysis of gender-based violence and broader social justice issues.
- Excellent communication skills, with the ability to provide information concisely and effectively to any audience or supporter.
- Comfort working with a communications team on digital campaigns (using platforms like LinkedIn, X, YouTube) to reach target audiences.
- Advanced level of proficiency in CRM tracking systems and donor platforms, including Raiser's Edge and its reporting applications.
- Direct experience implementing fundraising solicitation applications including: mass direct mail, email, and online fundraising technology.
- Ability to travel across the GTA occasionally.
- CFRE designation is an asset or equivalent fundraising training is considered an asset.

Ernestine!^s

Women's Shelter

What Your First Year Will Look Like:

- Proposing and securing approval for a three-year diversified fundraising and revenue growth strategy, with clear annual targets, priorities and measures of success;
- Building the systems, processes and team capacity needed to strengthen major gifts, donor stewardship, grants, corporate partnerships and Board engagement;
- Developing and strengthening key donor, corporate, foundation, government and community relationships on behalf of Ernestine's, with a focus on building a strong pipeline of transformational funding opportunities.

Job Details:

Job Type: Full-Time Permanent

Hours of Work: 35 hours per week

Salary Range: \$95,000 to \$110,000 annually

Work Arrangement: Fully Onsite, with possibility of hybrid after 6 – 12 months

You will benefit from:

Competitive compensation

Paid vacation and sick benefits

RRSP benefits

Employer fully paid Group Insurance benefits

Career growth and professional development opportunities

How to Apply

If this opportunity resonates with you, please send your resume and cover letter outlining how your experience aligns with the role to humanresources@ernestines.ca.

Don't meet every single requirement? Studies have shown that women and racialized individuals are less likely to apply to jobs unless they meet every single qualification. At Ernestine's we are dedicated to building a diverse and inclusive workplace. If this role aligns with your passions but your past experience doesn't align perfectly with every qualification in the job description, we encourage you to apply anyway. You may be just the right candidate for this or other roles.

If contacted, please advise if you require accommodation at any juncture of the recruitment and/or hiring process.

Application deadline: August 28th, 2026 by 5P