

employment opportunity

# Executive Director

at



**Location: Rochester, New York**

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# Children's Institute is hiring an Executive Director

**Peter Gray Executive Search is CI's exclusively retained partner for this executive search**

## about Children's Institute

**Children's Institute (CI)**, a nonprofit organization affiliated with the University of Rochester, is a leader in child-focused community initiatives, dedicated to improving the well-being of children through evidence-based practices, research, evaluation, advocacy, and policy.

**Mission:** Joining together to raise every child's complete wellbeing.

**Vision:** Supportive communities where every family can raise children who thrive as they live, learn, and play.

CI offers programs and services that support children of all ages, facilitating early learning, school readiness, healthy development, and youth leadership by improving quality in home, school, and other community environments.



*CI's foundational program, [Primary Project](#), is play-based and child-centered, and supports a child's healthy connections with school.*

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CI has developed national, award-winning [programs](#) that have helped children and their families for over 65 years, since its founding in 1957. CI programs and services provide capacity building, consultation, data, coaching, and professional learning for educators, community partners, and families to create affirming and culturally responsive learning environments centered on equity-based [social and emotional health](#) and restorative instructional practices.

With programs and services that are grounded in ongoing research, CI builds bridges between theory, practice, and continuous improvement. CI transforms ideas into proven solutions and turns obstacles into opportunities for success for children and families.

CI assists with the implementation of evidence-based prevention and early intervention programs; provides a range of trainings, assessments, and services to support those who work with children; and conducts research and evaluation to continuously improve efforts that support children's positive growth and development.

To learn more about CI, visit its [website](#), including its [executive summary document](#), [strategic plan overview video](#), and [blog](#).



*The CI team consults with and provides professional development to child-serving professionals.*

## Children's Institute core values

- **Children and Families First:** We honor and value children, youth, and families as experts in their own lives, and promote success in all areas of wellbeing.
- **Racial and Social Justice:** We work collectively to be anti-racist and to promote social justice by removing barriers to equity and ensuring inclusion of all people.
- **Transformation with an Engaged Presence:** We practice cultural humility, always learning, reflecting, and applying new understandings to strengthen the systems and communities that health, learning, and growth depend upon.
- **Partnerships Are Essential:** We team with community and university partners, shoulder to shoulder, to develop and deliver measurably effective solutions to serve children, families, and providers.
- **Interdependence of Research and Practice:** We believe that taking action informed from lived experience, research and practice achieves outcomes that children, youth, families, and communities desire similarly.
- **Ethical and Responsible Use of Resources:** We are good caretakers of resources and relationships that benefit children, including the ethical use of data.



*Much of CI's work is parent/guardian-centered and recognizes that they are experts in their child's development.*



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## Children's Institute DEIB (diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging) statement

*Children's Institute stands and speaks for racial justice and public health equity - together Children's Institute is committed to work towards the elimination of systemic and institutional racism, individual racism, and implicit bias. We don't stand silent. Silence isn't neutral. We stand and speak for racial justice and public health equity – together. Families with children in communities of color demand allies who support, understand, recognize, and transform personal discomfort into decisive action that promotes lasting change around these inequities.*

*Children's Institute envisions communities where children, youth and families thrive as they live, learn, and play. Recognizing the diversity of the communities we serve, we are committed to identifying and addressing racism and other inequities to ensure every person's identity is honored and respected. Our commitment began in our workplace with self-reflection, listening and learning. We are integrating that learning into our work and how we engage with the families and systems we serve to ensure our effectiveness.*

Please see additional CI information and resources on [racism and social justice](#).

CI also endorses the **University of Rochester's** [Commitment to 'Ever Better,'](#) as stated by the university's Office of Equity and Inclusion:

*The University of Rochester Office of Equity and Inclusion is dedicated to cultivating an equitable, respectful, and welcoming culture at the University of Rochester. We strive to weave diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the University's mission to learn, discover, heal, and create.*

*We celebrate our connections to the Rochester community and affirm that in a pluralistic culture, the definition of community includes individuals who represent every race, creed, color, ability, sexual identity, and gender.*



*CI's youth leadership development is strength-based, mentoring our team as much as we mentor them.*

## about the position

Children's Institute's next Executive Director will be an experienced, visionary, and adaptive leader with strong expertise and commitment to whole child health, educational equity, and social justice.

They will draw on their expertise from evidence-based research and evaluation practices to inform programs and policies supporting children, youth, and families.

The Executive Director will provide visionary leadership to inspire, lead, and manage, and bring people together (from internal teams to external community partners) in building systems of support for children, youth, and families.

The Executive Director reports to the Board and oversees governance and operations. CI has 45-50 (FTE) employees, an annual budget of \$6-\$7 million, and a network of diverse stakeholders across local, state, and national levels.

A demonstrated ability to fundraise for CI's mission to achieve outsized impact and organizational growth is essential.



CI's [Rochester Area Parent Program \(RAPP\)](#) is a faithful implementation of the evidenced-based Chicago Parent Program.

**Responsibilities include:**

- **Strategic Vision and Leadership:** Collaborate with the Board and staff to refine and implement the strategic plan, ensuring alignment with CI's mission. Enhance CI's reputation as a national leader in evidence-based practices. Lead organizational transformation and develop a clear partnership strategy, leveraging CI assets and partner assets, including [COMET](#).
- **Governance:** Oversee Board operations and administration.
- **Communications and Partnerships:** Serve as a key spokesperson for CI. Enhance organizational visibility and maintain positive relationships with stakeholders, including University of Rochester/UR Medical Center administration and the local and regional community. Manage partnership with [ROC the Future Alliance](#).
- **Finance and Operations:** Develop and manage the annual budget. Oversee day-to-day operations and ensure financial stability. Promote continuous improvement efforts for organizational operations.
- **Staff Leadership:** Lead, mentor, and develop CI staff. Oversee staff policies and compensation. Foster an inclusive and equitable work environment.
- **Fundraising:** Effectively lead CI's fundraising efforts, making significant gains in securing grants and donations to support CI programs. Encourage and leverage Board engagement in advocacy and fundraising.
- **Advocacy:** Oversee the development and successful achievement of policy goals in support of children, youth, and families. Develop constructive relationships with elected officials and policymakers across all levels of government.
- **Research and Standards:** Champion CI's research priorities for whole child development and well-being. Support research and program evaluation work, through building sustainable resources to maintain quality evidence production with the highest standards of integrity.



*A program lead for RAPP (CI's Rochester Area Parent Program) presents at a CI staff meeting.*



**Qualifications sought:**

- At least 10 years of experience in senior leadership of comparable mission-driven organization(s) and/or university department(s) in the field of whole child development, psychology, or education.
- Demonstrated success in mentoring and developing staff, and in fostering a culture of trust, accountability, and empowerment.
- Alignment with CI's mission and values, and commitment to upholding them in all aspects of the work.
- Demonstrated experience in securing significant external funding from a range of sources, to provide sustainable capacity-building and infrastructure for various programs and initiatives.
- Successful track record of advocacy with legislators and policymakers across multiple levels of government - from local to federal - to advance organizational priorities.
- Relevant master's degree required; doctorate preferred.

**Key skills and abilities:**

- Strong understanding of communities, systems, whole child development, and education, with an ability to bring visionary leadership and strategic thinking to the field.
- Excellent communication, collaboration, and relationship-building skills.
- Ability to make well-informed decisions that support both short-term and long-term organizational goals.
- Exceptional financial management, budgeting, revenue-generating, and cost-cutting skills.
- Proficiency in applying research to practice.
- Ability to engage diverse stakeholders, build strong partnerships, and unite people around common goals for collective impact and other forms of community capacity building.
- Ability to promote a culture of respect, fairness, and equal opportunity for all individuals, both within the organization and within the communities it serves.



*Professional development is key to a variety of CI's programs and services.*



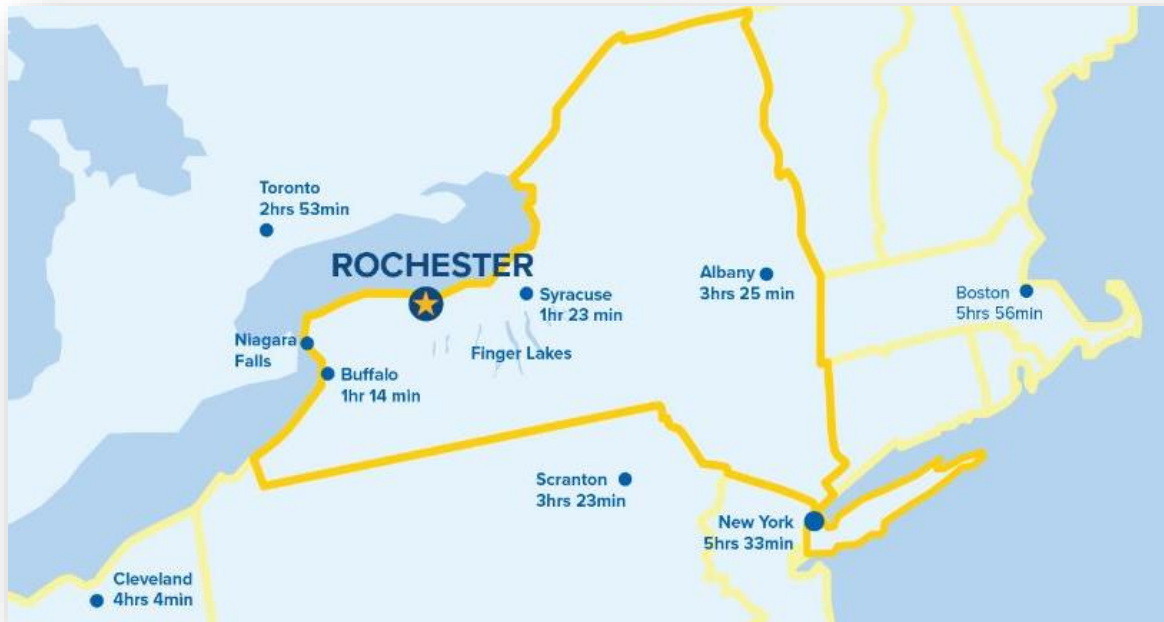
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## job location: Rochester, New York

CI is [located](#) in downtown Rochester, New York.

This is an onsite position whose responsibilities cannot be fulfilled remotely. While there is reasonable flexibility for occasional work from home as needed, the Executive Director is expected to reside in the Rochester metro area, and to work in-person at CI's office most workdays.

This is a national search, and CI is ready to offer financial assistance for relocation.



## about Rochester, New York

As the third largest city in New York, with a metro population of about 1 million people, Rochester is big enough to offer an array of cultural, recreational and leisure activities, and intimate enough to navigate easily and live affordably. With a cost of living significantly below the national average and proximity to the state's beautiful Finger Lakes region, Rochester is a great place to live.



In fact, Rochester was [ranked #9](#) on U.S. News & World Reports' list of the Best Places to Live for Quality of Life in the U.S. in 2023-2024.

Other noteworthy Rochester rankings include:

- [#1 affordable housing market in the US](#) (Median home cost: \$130,900)
- [#19 most innovative cities](#)
- [#1 Northeastern city to live in post-Covid](#)

Rochester has a significant place in the history of America's civil rights movements. It was the home of abolitionist leader [Frederick Douglass](#) and women's rights leader [Susan B. Anthony](#), who were friends for decades. Rochester honors their legacies with the Frederick Douglass-Susan B. Anthony Memorial Bridge (or the "Freddie Sue," as locals call it).

With a four-seasons climate, Rochester offers a year-round array of [things to do](#) and community cultural [events](#).

Rochester's racial and ethnic [demographics](#): 36% non-Hispanic White, 36% Black, 19% Hispanic, 3% Asian, 6% other.

For more information about life in Rochester, please visit these sites, which are the main sources for this page:

- [Visit Rochester](#)
- [Living in Rochester](#) (University of Rochester)
- [Best Places to Live: Rochester, New York](#) (US News & World Report)

## salary and benefits

CI's Executive Director position has a starting salary range of **\$97,000 - \$147,000 or commensurate with experience.**

A future University of Rochester faculty affiliation or appointment may be considered for an appropriately qualified Executive Director.

CI employees are typically employees of the University of Rochester. As such, they enjoy the same excellent, comprehensive [employee benefits](#) package as other University of Rochester employees, including health insurance, retirement plan, professional development opportunities, and paid time off.



[Get Ready to GROW](#) is a CI program that provides quick, fun, comprehensive development checks to make sure children are poised for success.

## interested?

Please [apply confidentially: bit.ly/ci-apply](#)

**Timeframe:** We are actively reviewing applications and conducting interviews on a rolling basis. This search was initiated on **December 5, 2024**, and the position remains open until filled. To ensure your candidacy receives full consideration, we encourage you to apply promptly and submit a complete application. Our aim is to conduct the interview process in early 2025 and have the new Executive Director in place by **April 2025**.

**Note:** As of December 5, 2024, this position is pending to be posted on the University of Rochester's website. That job posting will be shorter, will have slightly different language, and will have the job title of *Senior Director, Children's Institute* (due to the University of Rochester's academic titling guidelines). **It is the same position.** All applicants will be considered equally in the same process, regardless of what job posting they apply through.



*CI's family leaders (parents/guardians) provide insight and expertise to guide the work CI does with families.*

Children's Institute has exclusively retained [Peter Gray Executive Search](#) to conduct the search for its new Executive Director. Peter Gray Executive Search is a social impact executive search firm.

Children's Institute and Peter Gray Executive Search are equal opportunity employers, committed to attracting candidates representing a diverse range of backgrounds. CI provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status.

We welcome qualified candidates with diverse experiences to help us best serve our community. Experience comes in many forms and your interest and passion can go a long way. We know that a diverse team makes for the best collaborative work and creative thinking. We are dedicated to adding new perspectives and experiences to the team and encourage everyone who is interested in the work to apply.



## about peter gray executive search



**Peter Gray** (he/him) is a recovering Wall Street recruiter who now recruits social impact leaders and fights bias in hiring.

As founder and CEO of [Peter Gray Executive Search](#), he guides nonprofit organizations and social impact employers through [leadership succession](#) and other [strategic hiring](#). He also [trains](#) employers on diversifying hiring outcomes, and [coaches](#) individuals on overcoming bias in job search and career advancement.

Peter began his career in executive search at Korn Ferry in New York City. He gives back as a volunteer adviser, fundraiser, and board member for nonprofit and civic organizations. He [chairs](#) the Boys & Girls Clubs of Dane County's [Move 'n' Groove for Boys & Girls Clubs](#) campaign, which has raised over \$10 million for youth development.

Peter holds a BA from Harvard University, and an MBA from Columbia Business School.

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