Director, Transformational Ecology Initiative

The Garrison Institute

The mission of the Garrison Institute is to apply the transformative power of contemplation to today’s pressing social and environmental concerns, helping build a more compassionate, resilient future. It is both a think tank and a convening center for thought leaders in the fields of environment, education, and trauma recovery. The Institute acts as a neutral hub for the growth of knowledge in multidisciplinary fields, gathering scientists, professionals, and contemplatives.

Background

The Garrison Institute’s Initiative on Transformational Ecology (ITE) examines how mental models and patterns of thought affect our relationship with the environment and how, by examining and shifting them, we might transform our relationship with the earth. ITE works with advocates, scientists, business leaders, and policy and communications experts to create new learning networks, nurture innovative thinking, and find scalable ways to shift mindsets, alter behavior, achieve systems-level change and transform human-caused ecological problems, including climate change.

The ITE’s Climate, Mind, and Behavior (CMB) project was launched in 2009. The project’s first step was to survey the economic, social science and climate change fields to identify research that explained the cognitive biases of the human mind, and how to shape environmental communication and policy so as to be more effective in reducing human caused climate impacts. This work also identified leaders from a range of fields, who joined the CMB steering committee to guide the development of the program, and to identify additional participants.

In 2009, the Institute also posited that there might be a “behavioral wedge” – a gigaton of GHG reduction that could come from simple changes to human behavior. Working jointly with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), we have defined and quantified the ways Americans can achieve a gigaton reduction through simple, voluntary, no-cost, low-cost or cost-saving behavioral shifts adopted on a large scale.

The Institute also began to build a web hub of knowledge, with links to relevant articles and research. In March 2010, the Institute held the first Climate, Mind, and Behavior Symposium, where 72 thought leaders and activists explored how to connect emerging behavioral and social science to climate change policy and on-the-ground solutions, as well as strategies to bring these policies more in line with the way that humans really think and behave. The symposium was a terrific success, increasing the call for ongoing work from the Institute in this area.

In April 2010, the CMB program began disseminating the highlights of its web hub via a monthly email blast to a growing community of academics, government officials, and entrepreneurs. This community, in turn, sends us additional links, articles and research,
contributing to the growing depth and relevance of the CMB hub. This has led to a call for the Institute to design and deliver behavior-based programs to large institutions and sectors of society, ranging from building owners to the military.

**Position Description**

The Garrison Institute is currently looking for a Director of the Transformational Ecology Initiative to build on this exciting momentum. The position includes the following responsibilities:

**Expand the knowledge base:**
- Track emerging neurological and behavioral sciences that relate to environmental decision-making
- Track any academic or applied work on the application of the neurological and behavioral sciences to environmental behaviors at the individual, communal, and at larger scales, in the US and in other societies
- Identify, assign or implement relevant research

**Communicate and connect:**
- Edit and archive acquired knowledge in useful formats, including on our website
- Communicate this knowledge in monthly e-blasts, newsletters, conferences etc.
- Connect the science with applications in general
- Serve as the hub of an emerging network of scientists, policy analysts, and sector leaders concerned with environmental sustainability

**Develop programs:**
- Develop new applied programs in current areas of work: building operations and management, energy efficiency program design and a developing program connecting behavior to City Climate Change initiatives
- Plan and develop annual Garrison Institute conferences on these subjects
- Commission or carry out original work in the field

**Manage the program:**
- Write funding proposals, build relationships with existing funders, and help to create new funding partners
- Manage partnerships and relationships with other institutions, university centers, and the like
- Supervise program support staff
- Report on the program’s status to the Garrison Institute’s CEO and Program Steering committees.

**Candidate Qualifications**

We are seeking candidates who believe deeply in the mission of the Garrison Institute, who thrive in an entrepreneurial and dynamic environment, and who demonstrate a record of achievement. We seek someone who is an energetic, engaged leader, convener, collaborator, and integrator. The successful candidate will be knowledgeable about both the emerging science of the nature of the mind, and well versed in the social sciences and in environmental issues, especially as they pertain to human impacts on climate change, and will be able create links among these fields with an eye to practical implementation and measurement of social change.
The ideal candidate will also have:

- An advanced degree in a field related to one or more of the key disciplines included in the Transformational Ecology Initiative, such as environmental design, policy, and planning; neuroscience, or behavioral science (sociology, anthropology, economics, psychology) applied to environment-related behavior;
- Evidence of thought leadership in their field as evidenced by publications, actions to advance theory or application, and/or professional distinction;
- Outstanding interpersonal and teamwork skills and interest in working with colleagues across disciplines;
- A commitment to producing consistently high quality, detailed work;
- The ability to learn quickly, work in a fast paced environment, and multi-task effectively;
- Strong communication and writing skills and facility with Internet communications;
- Excellent symposium planning, organizational, and time-management skills;
- Flexibility, good humor, and comfort with ambiguity
- A contemplative practice and belief in the transformational value contemplation holds for advancing environmental stewardship.

**Compensation**

The annual salary for this full-time position will be competitive and commensurate with experience. We also offer an energized and motivated team of colleagues, a collegial atmosphere, a comprehensive benefits plan, and the opportunity to have a direct impact on improving the environment.

This position will be based at the Garrison Institute, a beautifully renovated former monastery set amidst 90 acres overlooking the Hudson River. The Institute is located an hour north of New York City and is accessible by the Metro-North train line.

**To Apply**

Please send a letter of interest, curriculum vitae, a writing sample, and the names and contact information of three professional references to:

Director of Human Resources
recruitment@garrisoninstitute.org
Include in the subject line of email: ITE Director Search

All submissions will be received in confidence. Please, no phone calls.

The Garrison Institute is an equal opportunity employer.