

Job Title – Center Director, Shambhala Meditation Center of Chicago

Job Description

The Center Director provides major leadership to the Center, supervising personnel and program operations. The Director reports to the Governing Council and is supervised by the Chair of the Governing Council. The Director works in collaboration with the Governing Council of the Center, and with community members who serve as volunteers or work on committees. The Director applies knowledge of contemplative practice and Shambhala Buddhism throughout all of her/his tasks. The Center Director leads committees and groups; communicates as the Center's lead spokesperson to members, new people, to the wider Chicago community, to other centers, and to the Center of the Mandala through verbal, written and computer media; inspires collaboration and confidence in others; and manages projects and program planning.

The role of Director joins heaven and earth and helps the community to flourish. This requires a good relation of trust and loyalty with the Sakyong, the Kalapa Court and their representatives, as well as a clear understanding of the Shambhala vision. In addition, the Director is in touch with the community and willing to relate to the fundamental practical realities of maintaining and growing a healthy center.

Organizational Culture

The Director is responsible for creating and maintaining the container in which the Shambhala Buddhist teachings occur. A brilliant and gentle container can help people understand the teachings that are presented. In fact, such a container is itself a manifestation of the dharma and can be seen as a teaching. Ways of caring for the container include:

Setting the tone for the environment of the Center, working to ensure that the environment is warm and welcoming, that it manifests kindness, sharpness and brilliance: the atmosphere of the Great Eastern Sun;

Encouraging a culture of practice, ensuring sufficient opportunities for practice;

Attending to one's own state of mind; setting an example in the way one works, using every opportunity to raise windhorse and remembering to maintain a sense of humor, while paying close attention to details;

Attending to form and decorum—examples include mindfulness of speech, beginning and ending meetings with a bow, entering and leaving rooms, and mode of dress;

Looking after community well-being, ensuring harmony and cohesion.

Duties and Responsibilities

Oversees operations:

- Responsible for effective functioning of programs, in collaboration with Program, Practice, and Study.
- Ensures maintenance of the environment as an appropriate container for contemplative practice, including physical facilities and social ambiance.
- Coordinates schedule of center events under the broad guidance of the Governing Council and in collaboration with Program, Practice, and Study, and other sectors.
- Supervises, hires (and if necessary terminates) paid staff.
- Provides guidance and feedback so that administrative and volunteer workers complete their tasks properly and effectively.
- Nurtures, mentors, and empowers volunteers and staff.
- Supports the Governing Council functions.
- Works in close collaboration with the Governing Council in developing and implementing the strategic goals and priorities of the Center
- In collaboration with the Financial Sector and the Governing Council, develops an annual budget, and reports quarterly regarding progress against that budget.
- Provides administrative support to the operational sectors of the council

Maintains effective systems and processes for communication:

- Ensures visibility to membership and to the public of programs and events at the center.
- Establishes and maintains systems for magnetizing and encouraging volunteers to staff practice, study and community events, and to serve on committees.
- Represents the Shambhala Center to the general public, Chicago organizations and entities, visiting teachers, prospective members and newer students; serves as a liaison with Halifax, and with other organizations where Shambhala is represented.
- Communicates through example: encourages leadership development through offering opportunities to participate and through regular practice with the community.

Skills/Abilities

Collaborates – Works effectively with others to achieve a common goal and to solve problems in a manner that is beneficial to all.

Leads – Magnetizes others to support goals and ideas.

Has Patience – Keeps focus on achieving common goal and feelings in check.

Delegates – Assigns authority to others for the purpose of completing more tasks while still maintaining accountability for the outcomes.

Organizes – Manages time and projects well.

Conveys Confidence – Helps others to know that they can accomplish their tasks and goals.

Possesses Computer Capability – Able to use software and hardware well for effective communication and job-related tasks.

Communicates Well – Speaks with clarity and inspiration. Conveys information clearly and persuasively in the written form

Accepts Responsibility – Consistently owns the outcomes related to one's own actions.

Possess and Cultivates Cultural Competency – Creates an open, welcoming atmosphere; reaches to include diversity within the center and in outreach beyond the center walls.

Follows Through – Starts and finishes projects and keeps commitments.

Maintains Equanimity and Flexibility – Is understanding of situations and events. Does not react in a reflexive manner.

Seeks and Offers Feedback – Seeks feedback about one's own actions in a manner that is conducive to growth, dialogue, and learning. Offers feedback to others in ways that are constructive and helpful.

Deals Constructively with Conflict – Models dealing with conflict in a straight forward, productive, and compassionate manner.

Has a Sense of Humor!

Work Context

This position requires contact with many individuals.

This position is characterized in part by attending meetings and communicating the outcomes of those meetings.

People may look to the holder of this position as a reference for information and a problem-solver.

The Director motivates others and facilitates the setting and completion of goals.

Managing feelings is essential for successful completion of some tasks.

Shambhala is a community; the Center Director is a very visible position within that community.

Knowledge/Background

The Center Director is a reasonably accomplished, energetic and articulate practitioner of Shambhala Buddhism. Experience with advanced programs such as Vajrayana Seminary is an asset, as is qualification as an authorized Meditation Instructor. Attendance at Mandala Council meetings and Governance Academies will be expected. Administrative experience, especially related to financial accountability, management of volunteers, strategic planning and project management, is preferred.