

Pan-Mass Challenge

Executive Director Search Statement



The PMC's mission is to raise funds for cancer research and treatment.

100% of every rider-raised dollar is given to Dana-Farber.

The Pan-Mass Challenge is an equal opportunity employer and affirms the right of every qualified applicant to receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, national origin, sexual orientation, genetic information, disability, age, ancestry, military service, protected veteran status, or other groups as protected by law.

While the mission of the Pan-Mass Challenge (PMC) may be simple, its impact is anything but. While it remains a stand-alone organization, the PMC funds fuel the researchers, clinicians, patients, and families of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute (DFCI), driving breakthroughs that change and save lives. In 2025 alone, the event raised \$78 million for cancer research and patient care. Yet the true power of the PMC extends far beyond its extraordinary fundraising. It transforms communities. It inspires hope. It proves what is possible when thousands of people unite around a shared purpose. More than a cycling event, the PMC is the largest single-athletic fundraising event in the nation. Its impact reverberates across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and beyond as riders test their limits, teams rally around one another, and the funds raised fuel critical discoveries in cancer research and treatment.

After a few 'demo' rides from Newton to Provincetown 47 years ago, Billy Starr founded the PMC after the passing of his 49-year-old mother, Betty, as well as the earlier passing in the mid-70s of an uncle and cousin. The inaugural ride brought together 36 riders and 10 volunteers who got lost, had a great time, and raised \$10,200 to fight cancer. From those humble beginnings, the PMC has grown into a movement with nearly 7,000 riders, more than 3,500 volunteers, and over \$1.125 billion raised and given to Dana-Farber Cancer Institute (DFCI). The PMC is DFCI's single largest contributor, representing 67 percent of the Jimmy Fund's annual revenue.

The culture of the PMC is the heartbeat of its enduring success. One '80s PMC T-shirt captures it best: "Pain is temporary, Pride is Forever." Once touched by this event, people become deeply invested—returning year after year to ride 25 or 177 miles, manage a rest stop, repair flats, or make PB&J sandwiches. Every contribution matters. A dedicated year-round staff of 16, along with six summer interns, works hand-in-hand with the 18-person "head staff"—professional volunteers with an average tenure of 20 years—and more than 3,500 event-day volunteers to deliver a seamless, high-touch experience. Over the years, in addition to PMC weekend, PMC has added "Spokes in the Wheel" events, including the Winter Cycle (indoor spin), Unpaved (gravel rides), and Kids Rides. The PMC weekend event operates 14 routes that span 370 miles through 47 towns, requiring meticulous logistics, uncompromising safety, and a spirit of joy and exuberance that sets it apart. Together, Billy Starr, the board, advisory board, staff, and countless volunteers have built not just an event, but a brand and community that deeply engages everyone it touches. As Billy himself proudly says, "This is a bike event with soul."

The PMC employs 16 staff, with a budget of approximately \$94 million (fundraising \$79 million and operations \$15 million). The financial model is intentionally structured to uphold the PMC's core commitment that **100% of every rider-raised dollar is given to Dana-Farber Cancer Institute** for research and patient care. Operational expenses are supported through a combination of significant in-kind donations of goods and services, corporate sponsorships, rider registration and fees, and investment income from conservatively managed financial reserves.

The Pan-Mass Challenge (PMC) seeks an accomplished and values-driven (servant) leader with the vision, energy, and collaborative spirit to partner closely with the board, the founder, staff, and a dedicated corps of volunteers. The individual will build on the PMC's remarkable mission and unparalleled track record of impact. As the PMC approaches its 50th anniversary and continues its trajectory of sustained growth, the Executive Director (ED) will join a high-functioning organization defined by a distinctive and powerful culture and will help guide its continued growth, evolution and long-term success.

Anchored by an unwavering commitment to the PMC's singular mission—raising funds to support cancer research and care at the PMC's beneficiary, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute—the ED will steward the organization thoughtfully into its next chapter. This leader will forge a productive partnership with Founder and Chairman Billy Starr, who will continue to serve as the PMC's senior ambassador and steward of its culture, values, and legacy. The ED will honor and nurture the unique spirit of the PMC, listen deeply and welcome active dialogue and debate, and help ensure a smooth leadership transition that positions the organization to thrive for decades to come.

In close partnership with the board of directors and founder Billy Starr, as well as senior management, the ED is responsible for setting strategic priorities and translating vision into action to ensure the organization's continued growth and impact. As the organization's chief operational leader, the ED will oversee the professional staff and volunteer "head staff," while ensuring the long-term financial, operational, and cultural sustainability of the PMC. Externally, the ED, along with the founder and members of the team, will represent the organization with distinction—attending key events, serving as a spokesperson, and stewarding the PMC's brand and reputation through every interaction.

The ED will be energized by the opportunity to lead the PMC and will understand that this role is, in many ways, "more than a job." As a highly visible internal and external leader, the ED will immerse themselves in PMC events and programming, serve as a compelling and credible ambassador, and foster strong community connections and shared commitment to the PMC's mission and goals. The ED will communicate with conviction and authenticity, balancing the gravity of cancer research and treatment with the passion, joy, and purpose that define the PMC experience.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Reports to	Board of Directors	
Direct reports	Chief Financial Officer	Director, Operations
	Vice President, Marketing and Strategic Relationships	Director, Volunteer Operations and Kids Rides
	Vice President, Technology and Digital Experience	Director, Stewardship and Liaison to DFCI
Other key relationships	Billy Starr, Founder and Chairman	Dana Farber Cancer Institute Leaders
	Advisory Board	Volunteers
	Head Staff	Riders
		Sponsors – cash and in-kind

IDEAL EXPERIENCE AND COMPETENCIES

The ED is the senior operational and organizational leader of the PMC. The ED works in close partnership with the founder and chairman to drive excellence and growth across the PMC. The ED is responsible for translating the PMC mission and vision into strategy, execution, and results. This role scales and optimizes operations, technology, marketing, and fundraising. The ED manages staff, identifies and solves problems, ensures financial integrity, and cultivates external relationships, while preserving the PMC's 100 percent pass-through, culture, credibility, and community.

The ED of the PMC will be a leader of exceptional emotional intelligence, integrity, and strategic acumen. This individual will bring strong executive experience to steward the organization, its culture, operations, and brand with care and conviction. With deep respect for all that has been built and accomplished and a passion for the cause, the ED will possess the sophistication to navigate a founder-led organization with intentionality, clarity, and respect for the great past, paired with the courage and foresight to set and execute changes to increase the impact of the PMC over the next decade.

As such, the search committee seeks an individual with the following competencies and experience:

Strategic Executive Leadership

- Lead a complex, mission-driven organization where the many stakeholders feel a great deal of passion and loyalty.
- Move fluidly between vision, strategy, tactics, and execution, always keeping the mission at the center of every decision.
- Steward the financial and physical assets wisely, ensuring that decisions consistently advance the long-term health of the organization.
- Inculcate a practice of continuous improvement. Leverage data, personal feedback, and team input to find opportunities for growth and improvement, while engaging broadly, listening actively, and communicating clearly through periods of change.
- Partner effectively with a board of directors and the founder, cultivating a relationship grounded in trust, transparency, and shared purpose.

Inspiring Community and Team Builder

- Develop collaborative, authentic, trusting relationships with all members of the PMC community. Bring the humility and curiosity of a learner and listener, and respect the institutional knowledge that has shaped this organization.
- Nurture an environment and culture where staff and volunteers feel supported, empowered, and encouraged to do exceptional work. Strengthen the sense of unity and shared purpose that defines the PMC, recognizing the inherent value of every contribution.
- Ensure that the team has the tools, systems, and resources required to drive excellence. Invest in professional growth and uphold strong systems and accountability.

Compelling, Effective Communications

- Communicate with clarity, authenticity, and empathy, engaging effectively with a wide range of constituencies.
- Serve as a tireless and compelling advocate, spokesperson, and ambassador for the PMC, embracing participation in events, dinners, press opportunities, and community convenings.

- Enthusiastically embrace the opportunity to raise funds and in-kind donations to sustain operations, increase funds raised for cancer research, and advance PMC's ambitions.
- Bring a mission-first mindset, appreciating that fundraising, brand-building, growth, and innovation are always in service of the researchers, clinicians, patients, and families who rely on the services and care of the PMC's beneficiary, Dana Farber.

Additionally, the ED will:

- Understand (or have the capacity to understand) the PMC in a visceral way: the intensity of the fundraising model, the relentless pursuit of excellence, the emotional weight of the cancer journey, and the passion of the community.
- Bring the energy, resilience, and stamina required to meet the demands, joy, and profound purpose of the role.

THE SEARCH PROCESS

Pan-Mass Challenge has retained the global executive search and leadership advisory firm Spencer Stuart to support the search for the next Executive Director. If you wish to submit an application or nominate a candidate for this position, please send an email with supporting materials to PMCED@SpencerStuart.com. All applications and nominations will be held in confidence.

We thank all candidates for their interest, yet only those who are selected for an interview will be contacted.

Equal Opportunity Employer

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