



**CEO, Vida Water**



### **The Opportunity**

Vida Water, a new Public Benefit Corporation wholly owned by the nonprofit Texas Water Trade (TWT), was formed to close the clean water gap for Texans across the state. Vida Water will provide a subscription-based drinking water treatment service to supply safe tap water to low-income households at a price below what they pay today for bottled water. It also will seek to recruit customers who could afford other treatment systems but will choose Vida Water for its social purpose and excellent customer service.

The inaugural CEO of Vida Water will be: a strategic and hands-on leader; committed to equity and social justice; and equipped with the experience to design, launch, and manage a start-up business utilizing decentralized water treatment technologies. The CEO will have an understanding of the regional and cultural landscape in Texas with deep cultural competencies working with populations who have been historically denied clean water. The CEO will need the energy and emotional intelligence to communicate with and foster relationships across a wide variety of stakeholders including customers, philanthropic funders, partner organizations, government agencies, regulatory bodies and, eventually, equity investors. This role can be based anywhere in Texas and will report to the Vida Water Board of Directors.

### **Candidate Profile and Key Qualifications**

The ideal candidate will exemplify the following competencies and characteristics:

- Substantial experience as an integral member to the launch of a new initiative, business, or start-up
- Experience starting or capability to start a business across different markets
- Ability to straddle execution and strategy
- Nimble, resourceful, and responsive to the needs of internal stakeholders, as well as external stakeholders such as potential customers, funders, partner organizations, government agencies, regulatory bodies, and investors
- Supervisory experience and dynamic team management skills
- Energy, maturity, confidence, and expertise to serve as a unifying force as Vida Water develops, and to position Vida Water at both strategic and tactical levels
- Passion for water and, preferably, a knowledge of decentralized water treatment systems
- Ability to maneuver within government and regulatory landscapes
- Dedication to a diverse, inclusive, and collegial workplace

### **Core Responsibilities in Year One**

Responsibilities of the CEO in Year One include but are not limited to:

- Work closely with the Vida Water Board of Directors to assess the feasibility of market growth, labor, and pricing models developed by TWT for Vida Water
- Develop a detailed business plan for the company, incorporating the findings of a willingness-to-pay survey now underway, identifying entry and secondary markets, labor force needs, strategies for customer recruitment and retention and service pricing to set Vida Water on a course for sustainable growth through earned revenue within a five-year period
- Develop the strategy and implementation plan to build Vida Water's future utility workforce
- Convene community organizations in primary entry markets to understand clean water poverty in their communities and build trust around Vida Water's business model
- Work closely with advisors at University of Texas – El Paso to select the commercial Point Of Use (POU) water treatment systems that Vida Water will select for its inventory. With these advisors, develop protocol for monitoring the function of installed systems
- Communicate regularly with key stakeholders, including potential customers, funders, partner organizations, government agencies, and regulatory bodies
- Develop projected staffing plans and budgets for Year 2 and beyond, including back office supports (marketing, operations and administration) and field offices (technicians responsible for installation and maintenance)
- Coordinate administrative, accounting, legal, and support functions with TWT's office

## **Compensation, Benefits, and Staff Vaccination Policy**

The first-year salary for this position is \$150,000 plus an annual bonus and long-term incentive compensation. Vida Water will offer a comprehensive benefits package, including 90% employer-paid medical coverage, paid leave (annual vacation, get well days, bereavement days, and holidays), and employer contribution to a retirement plan.

To help maintain the health and safety of the TWT and Vida Water community, all staff are required to be up-to-date with vaccinations against COVID-19, unless an employee qualifies for an exemption for religious, personal, or medical reasons. As part of an offer of employment, the final candidate is required to be vaccinated as a condition of employment, unless an exemption applies.

## **About Vida Water**

Vida Water was formed by TWT, a nonprofit focused on creating market-based solutions for Texas' water challenges. TWT's vision is durable and long-lasting water supplies in Texas that ensure future economic growth, ecological resilience, and abundant drinking water for present and future generations, no matter their income or zip code.

Under the inaugural CEO, Vida Water is envisioned to launch as a consumer-facing brand providing POU treatment services direct to customers. Over the course of its early development, Vida Water is envisioned to enter the regulated utility market as the state's first decentralized water utility. In doing so, Vida Water is designed to meet Texans' water quality needs and to provide sustainable water supplies to communities in locations unlikely to ever be absorbed into existing community water systems.

Vida Water is envisioned to launch its service in 2023, most likely in El Paso County, with early growth focused on communities along the border, including the entire Rio Grande Valley. Recognizing that many other Texas households and schools lack reliable, safe drinking water, Vida Water will not be limited to these border regions. The inaugural CEO of Vida Water will shape the company's plan for market entry and growth in the state, with an eye to providing direct-to-consumer solutions for customers on public water systems with persistent water quality challenges, private groundwater wells and those reliant on hauled water.

## **About TWT**

TWT recently celebrated its third anniversary. Formed in late 2018 with the catalytic support of the Harte Charitable Foundation, TWT's first Texas Flows Fund grants to Galveston Bay Foundation and The Nature Conservancy helped bring dedicated freshwater to some of Texas' most productive coastal ecosystems. In West Texas, TWT is collaborating with Audubon Texas to mitigate an environmental catastrophe—free-flowing orphaned oil and gas wells—and to imagine how oilfield water could be leveraged to restore long-degraded desert habitat. In Central Texas, TWT is working with water utilities, National Wildlife Federation and the Texas PACE Authority to enable the state's tremendous population growth to create water supplies by tapping into water reuse. Vida Water is the product of ongoing work between TWT and The University of Texas at El Paso to close the state's clean water gap. In Fall 2021, TWT received a startup grant from Lyda Hill to launch Vida Water. Read more about TWT at <https://texaswatertrade.org/>.

## **To Apply**

TWT has engaged Schall & Russo Planning Works, LLC to assist with this search. Interested candidates should email (noting "Vida Water CEO" in the subject line) a thoughtful cover letter and resume, in confidence, to: Steven Schall, Schall & Russo Planning Works, [sschall@schallrusso.com](mailto:sschall@schallrusso.com)

*TWT and Vida Water are equal opportunity employers and applicants will be considered for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, veteran or disability status. The organizations are actively committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace.*