

The Ontario Craft Wineries (OCW) is the voice for over 115 VQA wineries across Ontario; membership in the OCW is voluntary, open to all VQA producers of wine in the Province. Our mission is to champion and advocate for the growth and success of Ontario VQA wine producers.

Our 13-member Board of Directors is responsible for the development and oversight of the strategic direction and responsible management of the Ontario Craft Wineries through its own work and that of its committees.

The primary objective of the OCW is to advance a strong domestic wine industry through the core functions of government relations, advocacy, communications and administration. The OCW has a leadership role in establishing policy and future direction for the wine industry in Ontario. It acts as a liaison and co-coordinating body between the industry and government, the LCBO, grape growers, Wine Marketing Association of Ontario (WMAO) and many other stakeholders.

This is a unique opportunity for a proven leader in Government relations and advocacy to play a key role in an organization responsible for advancing the interests of the VQA wine industry in Ontario.

## **YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

As the ideal candidate and our new President, you are an influential leader who has exceptional abilities in government relations and advocacy. Your leadership legacy includes a track record of building and managing complex relationships with government and other stakeholders while advancing organizational interests. As the new President you will be accountable to our Board for:

- Translating the strategic direction of the Board, goals and objectives of the OCW into operational plans in accordance with the business plan and engaging and building strong relations with government and other stakeholders while inspiring the team to carry out the mandate;
- Developing the core functions of the OCW with an emphasis on government relations and effective advocacy of key priorities on behalf of our members;
- Ensuring that the WMAO objectives are aligned with the OCW objectives and that the WMAO organization is responsive to the needs of the OCW;
- Growing opportunities for VQA wine sales by building strong relations with key stakeholders and advocating for legislative and regulatory changes required as the beverage alcohol retail landscape changes;
- Ensure that the OCW maintains and grows the revenue to sustain the organization and profitably manage and grow the OCW Conference;
- Leadership, guidance and management to the staff, including human and financial resources management in accordance with best business and financial practices and standards.

## **PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

The ideal candidate will have a strong affinity for the Ontario wine industry and for its mandate of advancing the interests of the wine industry in Ontario. The ideal candidate will bring to this position expertise in the core functions of government relations, advocacy, communications and administration.

- **Leadership:** Demonstrated ability as an inspirational and strategic leader with prior management experience ideally within a trade association, an advocacy group or an organization focused on government relations.
- **Strategic Orientation & Tactical Capacity:** Demonstrated strategic planning and analytical skills, a “big picture” person, yet someone who is sufficiently hands-on, is a doer and who is prepared to roll

up their sleeves. Is well-organized, systematic, persistent and tenacious with a demonstrated ability to implement strategic objectives.

- **Government Relations:** Strong government relations credentials, which includes contacts, experience and success working within the Ontario political environment, including the LCBO.
- **Relationship Management and Collaboration:** Exemplary abilities and political acuity to build, influence and manage complex relationships with a variety of government and private stakeholders in order to advance the business of the OCW.
- **Consensus Building:** Proven ability to “herd cats”, to distill a diversity of opinions into a concise and workable policy framework and who is able to achieve the art of the impossible.
- **Board and Stakeholder Relations:** Relevant experience working closely with a Board of Directors and other stakeholders, as well as the ability to earn the respect of these various stakeholders
- **Data Driven Analysis:** Superior analytical skills. An ability to identify appropriate data sources and metrics. And an ability to analyze and synthesize data to support policy positions and build compelling shared objectives.
- **Results Orientation:** A strong bias for action and a demonstrated ability to deliver results and common-sense focused solutions to complex business problems.
- **Communication and Interpersonal Skills:** Superior communications skills, able to sell ideas and concepts effectively, strong influencing skills and skills in persuasion, as well as effective listening, written, and presentation skills. A leader, as well as a team player who possesses superior interpersonal skills and is able to relate effectively to people at all levels within and outside the organization and who is accessible to them;
- **Education:** Undergraduate degree with a related focus in business administration or public policy; alternatively, we will consider candidates with equivalent work experience.

#### WHY JOIN

- **Location and Commuting** – This position location is Vineland, Ontario. Frequent travel will be required throughout the Niagara region, the greater Toronto area and on occasion other wine regions across Ontario.
- **Work-Life Balance and Hybrid Policy:** While this is a demanding role where the successful candidate will need to be available after hours on a semi-regular basis, we balance this expectation by offering a hybrid policy where candidates can split their time between in-office and remote work as appropriate.
- **Compensation:** Ontario Craft Wineries offers a competitive compensation package based on the experience that candidates bring to this role.

#### HOW TO APPLY

To explore this opportunity, please apply via email with your resume and covering letter **by May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026** or sooner to [careers@waterhousesearch.net](mailto:careers@waterhousesearch.net) quoting project **OCW-PRES**.

Should you wish to speak to our Executive Recruiter or to receive an information package, please contact Amy Oliveira at 416-214-9299 x4, [amy@waterhousesearch.net](mailto:amy@waterhousesearch.net) or Jon Stungevicius at 416-214-9299 x1, [jon@waterhousesearch.net](mailto:jon@waterhousesearch.net).

*We appreciate all applications, however, only those candidates invited for an interview will be acknowledged. Personal information contained in your resume is collected under the authority of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and will be used strictly for employment assessment purposes. The Ontario Craft Wineries is an equal opportunity employer committed to diversity in the workplace.*