



ISSUED: APRIL 14, 2025

CLOSING: MAY 9, 2025

Position summary:

An Exciting Opportunity to Lead in a Growing Global Region:

Ready to make your mark on the international tourism stage? This is a unique opportunity to lead tourism efforts for one of North America's most unique and untapped travel regions. The Great Lakes region is rich in natural beauty, vibrant cities, world-class freshwater cruising, and cultural diversity—and it's poised for tremendous growth in global visitation. As the Tourism Director, you'll have the opportunity to shape the future of this incredible destination and connect travelers from around the world to the heart of North America.

About the Role:

The Conference of Great Lakes St. Lawrence Governors & Premiers seeks a dynamic Tourism Director to lead two international tourism marketing programs: **Great Lakes USA (GLUSA)** and **Cruise the Great Lakes (CTGL)**. This role will drive strategic initiatives, oversee international marketing, manage key partnerships, and promote the Great Lakes region as a premier global tourism and cruising destination.

Key responsibilities:

- Develop and implement strategic plans for GLUSA and CTGL.
- Oversee marketing campaigns, partnerships, and brand development.
- Manage budgets, memberships, and daily operations.
- Represent the programs at trade shows and industry events.
- Collaborate with boards, members, and external vendors.

Qualifications:

- 5+ years of experience in tourism, marketing, or related fields.
- Proven leadership in strategy, operations, and stakeholder engagement.
- Experience with international tourism marketing preferred.
- Familiarity with the Great Lakes region and its tourism ecosystem.
- Strong skills in budget management and vendor oversight.

To learn more:

- greatlakesusa.org
- cruisethegreatlakes.com

Job title: Tourism Director

Salary: \$100,000-120,000 (us)
Location: Remote
Travel: 10-25%

Position purpose:

The Conference of Great Lakes St. Lawrence Governors & Premiers (GSGP) unites the chief executives from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Ontario, Pennsylvania, Québec and Wisconsin. The Governors and Premiers work as equal partners to grow the region’s \$8 trillion economy and protect the world’s largest system of surface fresh water. GSGP manages two membership organizations aimed at increasing tourism to the Great Lakes St. Lawrence region—Great Lakes USA (GLUSA) and Cruise the Great Lakes (CTGL).

The Tourism Director oversees international marketing and sales of the Great Lakes region for the member States and destination/attraction partners with the goal of increasing economic impact through tourism. CTGL is a bi-national partnership that aims to increase economic development in the Great Lakes region through education and promotion of Great Lakes cruising. GLUSA is a US partnership that aims to increase economic development in the region through promotion of international tourism.

Each program is overseen by a board of representatives from participating member States and Provinces. Each program also has a fee-based partnership program open to interested organizations (e.g., convention and visitors’ bureaus, chambers of commerce, cities, cruise ship operators, ports, and others).

The Tourism Director will be responsible for developing and implementing strategic initiatives, fostering relationships with key stakeholders, and ensuring the long-term sustainability and growth of the organizations. The Tourism Director will oversee operations, membership engagement, advocacy efforts, marketing strategies, and fiscal management to position GLUSA and CTGL as leaders in the tourism industry.

<https://www.greatlakesusa.org/>
<https://greatlakesusa.co.uk/>
<https://www.greatlakes.de/>
www.cruisethegreatlakes.com

Reports to: GSGP Executive Director; GLUSA and CTGL Boards of Directors
Supervises: Public relations contract; international marketing contracts
FY26 Budget: Great Lakes USA: \$400,000; Cruise the Great Lakes: \$200,000—
July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026

Responsibilities:

1) Develop, implement, and oversee the strategic plan for GLUSA and CTGL.

Priority: A % time: 60%

- a. Under the direction of the Board of Directors for both GLUSA and CTGL, develop and execute a strategic plan that aligns with their missions, visions, and goals.
- b. Create workplans, objectives and key results, and project plans to ensure the successful implementation of the plan.
- c. Provide strategic insights and leadership to the Board of Directors and organization members.
- d. Coordinate the contracting and management of external partners to manage marketing, public relations, and otherwise promote the region.
- e. Provide guidance and leadership to a diverse stakeholder group; facilitate consensus-building to achieve organizational goals.
- f. Oversee the development and execution of marketing campaigns, collateral, and other marketing materials to promote the region as a premier destination.
- g. Lead efforts to enhance the visibility of the organization and its members through branding, digital marketing, and media relations.
- h. Participate in trade shows, meetings, and conferences as needed or directed by the Board.
- i. Collect, review, and disseminate market trend information and research/data relevant to international travel in key GLUSA & CTGL markets.
- j. Coordinate and execute GLUSA & CTGL's presence at major travel trade shows as budget allows.

2) Fiscal & operational management

Priority: A % time: 30

- a. In coordination with GSGP staff, develop and manage the annual budget, ensuring financial sustainability.
- b. Serve as primary contact for GLUSA and CTGL.
- c. Conduct regular check-ins with external partners to ensure efficient and effective use of budget and resources.
- d. Work with Chairs and Board members to develop budgets and membership engagement plans that best utilize membership fees and advance strategic plans.
- e. Develop and implement strategies to recruit, retain, and engage members and partners in the organization.
- f. Oversee day-to-day communications with members, GSGP staff, and external stakeholders to ensure projects remain on track and within budget.
- g. Coordinate the development and management of sub-committees as needed to achieve organizational goals.

- h. Develop, maintain, and steward foundational documents and guidance for both organizations.
- i. Facilitate, develop agendas, and coordinate logistics for regular meetings of the Board, members, and partners.
- j. Annually review member benefits, ensuring they continue providing value and relevance.
- k. Oversee use and implementation of GLUSA and CTGL brands.

3) Other duties as assigned.

Priority: A % time: 10

- a. Advocate for GLUSA and CTGL as needed.
- b. Create collaborative programs, partnerships, and sponsorships with stakeholders as opportunities arise.
- c. Develop new ideas to expand programming and value to members and partners.
- d. Support the work of GSGP as needed; participate in meetings and events as requested.

Knowledge, Skills, Experience

- Demonstrated experience leading an organization or major initiative, including strategic visioning, goal setting, metric tracking and reporting, and budget management.
 - *Preferred: Experience managing a membership organization.*
- Minimum 5+ years of marketing and communications, operational and stakeholder management experience with an emphasis on tourism and/or hospitality.
 - *Preferred: International tourism marketing experience with expertise working with a regional or multi-state/province consortium.*
- Demonstrated experience with vendor and agency management.
- Demonstrated effectiveness of programs that increase awareness and move consumers/customers through the full marketing funnel.
 - *Preferred: Understanding of international framework with airlines, tour operators, receptive operators, and media.*
 - *Preferred: Experience managing international in-country events such as sales missions and travel agent training.*
- Familiarity with the Great Lakes region product, including State/Provincial member destinations.
- Experience and ability to work within the Great Lakes community in the travel and tourism field and have the necessary network of contacts to initiate and implement this program.

- Working knowledge of Microsoft Office products, including PowerPoint, Teams, Excel, and Word. Experience working with virtual meeting software is also required.

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCESS:

Please submit a cover letter, resume, and any supporting materials of no more than 10 pages including supporting exhibits. Materials exceeding this limit will not be considered. **All materials must be submitted by email to gsgp@gsgp.org with the subject line TOURISM DIRECTOR by May 9, 2025.**

Proposals will be evaluated based upon:

- Demonstrated ability to perform all required services;
- Relevant experience; and,
- Demonstrated results.

GSGP will conduct virtual interviews with finalists during the week of May 19 and notify the successful candidate during the week of May 26. Work will begin on July 1.

No phone or email inquiries during the application or selection process.