

Position description

Head of Partnerships

Contract:	1 year, with possibility of extension. Four to five days a week.
Salary:	Circa \$160,000 to \$180,000 (at 1 FTE) plus superannuation, depending on experience
Location:	Remote-first work culture, with an office in East Melbourne and in-person team retreats around three times a year
Travel:	Domestic roughly once a month; international once or twice a year
The role:	You'll lead Watershed's partnerships with philanthropy, building the long-term funding behind our work on climate, energy, AI and democracy.

About Watershed Foundation

Watershed Foundation is a nonprofit organisation focused on the Australia that comes next. We identify policy gaps and advocacy opportunities, especially where climate, energy, AI and democracy intersect, and work with philanthropy and partners to act on them.

Our senior team brings two decades of experience across climate campaigning, philanthropy, government and organisational strategy, and works with research institutions, NGOs, philanthropy, government and media.

The opportunity

Australia faces a run of decisions over the next decade that will shape the country for a generation: how fast we decarbonise, whether we capture the economic upside of the energy transition, how we govern AI and the infrastructure behind it, and whether our democratic institutions can keep pace. Many of these issues are new, moving quickly, and underserved by existing philanthropy.

Philanthropists want to act on these issues, and our mission depends on more, and better-directed, capital flowing to the organisations working on them: Watershed's own programs, and the wider ecosystem of thinktanks, NGOs, industry groups and others we collaborate with.

You'll lead that work, building long-term partnerships with philanthropists, families and foundations that sustain our programs and the field around them. Those partnerships work best when they're collaborative. You'll share what we see across the field, work alongside funders' own advisors and staff to find where our work and their goals line up, and develop shared strategies with Watershed's Co-Directors and program leads.

What you'll do

Working with the Co-Directors and program leads, you'll drive our goal of **\$6–8m in new philanthropic commitments** for Watershed and our partners, including multi-year grants. You'll do that by:

- **Building partnerships with philanthropy:** develop trusted relationships with high-net-worth individuals, families, foundations and intermediaries in Australia and internationally, working collaboratively with their advisors and staff to find where our work and their strategies align.
- **Shaping the partnerships strategy:** set priorities, target funders and engagement approaches across Watershed's portfolio.
- **Supporting the directors:** prepare strategy, briefings and proposals for key funder relationships, and lead stewardship and follow-through.
- **Exploring emerging issues:** help identify new issues facing Australia and build the case for philanthropic action, taking promising ideas from early exploration to funded work.
- **Convening:** bring funders and partners together through briefings, roundtables and co-funding structures.
- **Building the systems:** establish the pipeline, stewardship and reporting that turn first conversations into multi-year relationships.

About you

You're a senior philanthropy executive, adviser or strategist. You'll bring:

- **Standing in philanthropy:** strong networks in Australian philanthropy, ideally with exposure to international funders and intermediaries. Substantial experience in philanthropic partnerships, major gifts or philanthropic advisory.
- **Strategic depth:** you think and write like a strategist. Funders seek out your read on an issue, and you can turn complex problems into clear strategy and persuasive proposals.
- **Curiosity and range:** you're energised by new and unfamiliar issues, get across them quickly, and are comfortable with the ambiguity of early-stage and campaigning work.
- **A collaborative instinct:** you build alliances and share credit, including with funders' own advisors and staff. Coalitions get stronger when you're in them.
- **Commitment to our mission:** knowledge of climate, energy, AI or democracy helps. We don't expect expertise across all of them.

What we offer

- **\$160,000 to \$180,000** (at 1 FTE) plus superannuation, depending on experience.
- **Flexible location:** the role is remote-first and we currently have staff in Melbourne (where we have an office), Sydney, Canberra, Adelaide, Perth and Bangalow. We run in-person team retreats in Victoria two to three times a year.
- **Work travel:** we anticipate this role will involve regular domestic travel, around once a month, and may involve international travel once or twice a year.
- **A mature culture:** we hire excellent people, trust them to own their work, and keep our processes lean so the focus stays on doing it well.

How to apply

Send a short cover letter (two pages at most) and a link to your LinkedIn profile. You don't need to send a CV; your LinkedIn is enough, though you're welcome to include one.

Please apply as soon as possible. We review applications on a rolling basis, and may begin interviews and select a candidate before the listing closes.

Watershed is an equal opportunity employer. We value diverse perspectives and life experiences and welcome applications from all people. If there are any accommodations that would make the role or hiring process work better for you, we warmly welcome requests or suggestions.