Opportunity: Portfolio Funding Director

Maliasili is a dynamic and innovative organization that is taking a different approach to drive conservation impact in Africa. We find the best local African conservation organizations and make them better by strengthening their organizational performance, leadership, and resourcing so that they can achieve greater impact. Our partner portfolio includes outstanding local and national organizations working at the forefront of wildlife conservation, land restoration, and coastal fisheries. Our partners’ are pioneering conservation approaches grounded in community and indigenous land rights, generating economic opportunities from nature-based businesses, and restoring ecosystems across many of Africa’s most important landscapes.

Since its founding over a decade ago, Maliasili has built a portfolio of roughly 30 partners working across over 35 million hectares of critical landscapes and ecosystems in seven countries. We have helped our partners generate or leverage more than $15 million in funding for their work; developed a growing set of tools to help improve their organizational performance, and supported many of our partners to significantly grow their impacts in the field. Our goals are to build a portfolio of Africa’s best local conservation organizations, help them collaborate and learn from each other, and scale up their community-based conservation work on the ground and their leadership capacity within the conservation field.

Maliasili’s 2025 strategic plan describes an ambitious growth trajectory focused on tripling our portfolio of partners, expanding our geographic reach, and catalyzing a new generation of African conservation leadership. A key plank of our strategy is to step up Maliasili’s role in mobilizing resources to support our growing portfolio, while influencing a shift in conservation funding towards greater and better investment in local organizations.

Job Description: Portfolio Funding Director

The Portfolio Funding Director will play a pivotal role in delivering on the goals of Maliasili’s 2025 strategic plan and in contributing to the overall leadership and impact of the organization. The Portfolio Funding Director will lead Maliasili’s efforts to mobilize more funding for its portfolio and to build partnerships that result in improved overall funding practices that support local African organizations’ growth and impact. Maliasili’s intent in this area of work, and the overarching aim of this position, is to influence a transformation of conservation funding in Africa and beyond towards significantly greater investment in outstanding local conservation organizations. The Portfolio Funding Director will lead this evolving and ambitious body of work.

Reporting to the CEO and working closely with Maliasili’s portfolio, financial management, and communications teams, the core responsibilities of the position will be:
Leading Maliasili’s efforts to mobilize funding for its growing portfolio, supporting portfolio partners’ growth and impact goals, with a goal of $40 million generated in total for partners by 2025. This will include, specifically, developing new pooled funds aligned with Maliasili’s portfolio and drawing on the lessons from piloting the Maasai Landscape Conservation Fund, which was launched in 2020.

Leading Maliasili’s efforts to advocate for improved funding practices in support of local conservation organizations in Africa. This will include building the necessary partnerships and collaborations with donors and INGOS to achieve improvements in African conservation funding at a systemic level.

Working closely with Maliasili’s communications team to make the case for greater investment in local organizations through research, events, outreach and other communications and advocacy efforts.

Participating in Maliasili’s Senior Management Team, with key responsibilities for helping to shape the growth, strategy, planning, and culture of the organization.

This position requires outstanding leadership, communications and process management skills, and a creative and entrepreneurial outlook. Maliasili is looking for individuals with the following attributes:

- Outstanding skills in developing relationships and facilitating partnerships with diverse individuals and organizations.
- Experience with non-profit grant management or grant-making, including grantmaker funding systems and practices. Experience with development of funding vehicles that pool philanthropic capital is a plus.
- Aptitude for designing and facilitating collaborative processes that harness the energy and skills of different organizations towards achieving large-scale change.
- Experience working with (potentially as a funder) or for grassroots African civil society organizations. Experience in the conservation and natural resources sector is a plus.
- Passion and vision for supporting and strengthening outstanding African conservation organizations, and improving their access to capital to support their growth and impact.
- Strong written and oral communications skills.
- A creative, problem-solving mindset, ability to work independently as part of a remote, diverse, and growing team; and sense of humor.
- Minimum of 10 years of experience in civil society organizations and/or grantmaking.

Maliasili offers a competitive package of compensation and benefits and is committed to promoting diversity and equity in compensation irrespective of geography or nationality, as described in our 2025 Strategic Plan. Maliasili also offers a flexible and dynamic work environment and an organizational culture defined by our commitment to our partners, constant learning and improvement of our work, excellence in teamwork and execution, and ambitions to maximize our impact while having fun doing it.

Applications with a CV and cover letter explaining your interest in and capabilities for the role may be sent to recruitment@maliasili.org with the Subject: Portfolio Funding Director by March 20th. Applications from nationals of African countries are strongly encouraged.

This is a remote, work-from-home position, but Maliasili has office space in Nairobi, Kenya.