

Capital Projects Program Manager

Cascadia Sustainable Aviation Institute

Location: Onsite – Paine Field, Snohomish County, WA (Seattle Metropolitan Area)

Position Summary

The Capital Projects Program Manager will lead the full development and construction of the Cascadia Sustainable Aviation Institute's Phase II purpose-built research and testing facility at Paine Field. Reporting to the Operations Director, the Program Manager will take total command of the construction process — from predesign and site preparation through design, construction, and commissioning — serving as Cascadia's primary representative to municipalities, design firms, construction firms, and regulatory bodies throughout the build.

This role requires both technical construction expertise and the ability to operate with full authority and accountability in a start-up environment with limited precedent. The Program Manager will be expected to bring clarity and rigor to a complex, multi-stakeholder capital project while keeping the facility on budget, on schedule, and aligned with the Institute's long-term research and testing mission.

Key Responsibilities

Predesign & Site Planning

The Program Manager will lead early-stage planning to ensure the Phase II facility is built on a sound technical, financial, and regulatory foundation.

- Lead predesign activities, including feasibility studies, space programming, and alignment of facility requirements with CSAI's research and testing roadmap (e.g., fuel repository, QA/QC lab, low-volume testing, generic annex testing, and future combustion simulation capability).
- Support and lead site preparation activities at Paine Field, including due diligence, surveys, environmental review, and site readiness work.
- Develop and manage the overall capital budget, project schedule, and risk register for the Phase II facility.
- Develop a permitting and entitlements strategy in coordination with Snohomish County and other relevant jurisdictions.

Design Management

The Program Manager will direct the design process to ensure the facility meets the Institute's technical and operational requirements.

- Select and manage architecture and engineering firms through a competitive process.
- Review and approve design development and construction documents, ensuring alignment with programmatic, safety, and budget requirements.
- Coordinate with CSAI's research and technical staff to translate scientific and testing requirements into buildable design specifications.
- Manage design changes and value engineering processes to keep the project on budget and schedule.

Construction Management

The Program Manager will have total command of the construction process, ensuring the facility is delivered safely, on time, and on budget.

- Select and manage general contractors, trades, and specialty equipment vendors through a competitive bid process that is compliant with funder requirements.
- Oversee day-to-day construction administration, including quality control, safety compliance, and schedule management.
- Manage change orders, contingency budgets, and cost forecasting throughout construction.
- Lead facility commissioning, equipment installation, and transition to operations.

Stakeholder & Regulatory Liaison

The Program Manager will serve as Cascadia's primary representative throughout the construction process, building strong relationships with municipal, regulatory, and community stakeholders.

- Serve as the primary point of contact with Snohomish County, Paine Field/Snohomish County Airport, and other permitting and regulatory bodies.
- Represent Cascadia in relationships with design firms, construction firms, and specialty vendors.
- Coordinate with Washington State University and other Institute partners as facility needs intersect with their operations.
- Engage community and tribal stakeholders as appropriate throughout the construction process.
- Support the Development Director to execute the capital campaign including providing materials for funding requests and updates during construction, conducting tours and ensuring physical donor acknowledgments are integrated into the construction design.

Reporting & Governance

The Program Manager will provide clear, consistent reporting to ensure visibility and accountability throughout the project.

- Provide regular progress reports, budget updates, and risk assessments to the Operations Director, Executive Director, and Board as needed.
- Maintain project documentation, milestone tracking, and lessons-learned records to inform future capital projects.

Qualifications

Essential

- 8+ years of experience leading capital construction projects from predesign through occupancy, ideally including laboratory, R&D, or specialized testing facilities.
- Demonstrated experience selecting and managing architects, engineers, general contractors, and specialty subcontractors.
- Strong track record managing municipal permitting, entitlements, and regulatory approval processes.
- Experience managing multi-million dollar capital budgets and complex project schedules.
- Excellent negotiation, contract management, and vendor management skills.
- Entrepreneurial mindset with the ability to operate with full ownership and accountability in a start-up environment with limited precedent.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to represent Cascadia credibly to municipalities, partners, and contractors.

Desirable

- Experience constructing laboratory, R&D, or fuel/energy testing facilities.
- Familiarity with aviation, aerospace, or airport-adjacent facility development (e.g., Paine Field or similar airport environments).
- Professional certification such as PE, PMP, or similar.
- Experience working with public agencies, universities, or research institutions as project partners.

Compensation and Benefits

- Competitive salary commensurate with experience with a target range of \$116,000 - \$176,000 annually. This role will be hired as either a Manager 2 or Manager 3 level, depending on the successful candidate's background and experience.
- Comprehensive health and retirement benefits.
- A flexible, hybrid work environment built on trust and autonomy.

About the Institute, a 501(C)(3)

The Cascadia Sustainable Aviation Institute is a first-of-its-kind nonprofit startup created to accelerate the research, development, and adoption of sustainable aviation fuel. Located at Paine Field in Snohomish County, Washington - the heart of aerospace expertise in the Pacific Northwest - and anchored by a partnership with Washington State University, the Center will house the world's first SAF sample repository, support finishing and fuel improvement, and enable large-scale testing to advance aviation decarbonization.

To apply for this role: Please submit a CV and cover letter to info@cascadiasafinsitute.org with the job title in the subject line by Sept 18, 2026.