

LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Wilkinson Public Library

Telluride, Colorado





THE LIBRARY SERVICE AREA AND COMMUNITY

The Wilkinson Public Library (San Miguel County Public Library District #1) is located in spectacular southwestern Colorado, known for its stunning scenic beauty and a rich, colorful history. The Library District comprises the east end of San Miguel County. From the dramatic San Juan Mountains and Telluride's world-class skiing in the east to the mesas, farms, and high-desert ranches to the west, San Miguel County (pop. 8,082, 1289 sq. mi.) is geographically and socio-economically diverse, a state and national treasure. Public lands account for about 64% of all land within the county. The San Miguel River flows from the mountains east of Telluride and gives the county its name.

Sheltered in an iconic box canyon, Telluride (elev. 8,750 ft.), the county seat and home of the library building, started as a mining town and reinvented itself as a world-class ski destination. The town boasts a legendary summer festival schedule, including the Film, Bluegrass, Blues & Brews, and Jazz Festivals, among many others. Its close neighbor, Mountain Village, is a seven-mile drive or a free 13-minute gondola ride away. The mountain hamlet of Ophir is ten miles to the south. Heading down valley to the west, one finds the communities of Sawpit and Placerville.

Even though the county is remote and its winters long, the area boasts of exceptional schools and high-quality government services. The Telluride School District is highly regarded. Outdoor activities are unparalleled and include hiking, trail running, mountain biking, rock climbing, and Nordic and alpine skiing. The community is small yet dedicated, supporting more than 40 nonprofit organizations.

State highways 145 and 141 are the major routes through the county. The Montrose Regional Airport (68 miles from Telluride and Norwood) offers daily commercial flights throughout the year, which increase during ski season, and the Telluride Regional Airport offers limited commercial service. The San Miguel Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART) connects neighboring communities via bus and shuttle

WILKINSON PUBLIC LIBRARY AND THE DIRECTOR

The San Miguel County Public Library District #1 (District) operates as the Wilkinson Public Library (WPL), named for cofounders Larry and Betty Wilkinson, who in 1972 established the Telluride Community Library. Two years later, voters approved the formation of the District. In 1975, the date the District marks as its founding, the

library moved from a Quonset hut into Telluride's old territorial jail. As the library grew in popularity and increased usage, voters in 1997 approved a \$8.9 million bond issue to build and open the current WPL building, which opened on August 11, 2000. The 20,000-square-foot building in downtown Telluride is WPL's only branch, and a well-known and loved community hub.

The District is governed by a five-member board of trustees, each appointed by the San Miguel County Commissioners to five-year terms. Board members select from among themselves a president and a secretary, who serve one-year terms in those roles. Currently, the District has a strong financial position. The 2025 budget anticipates \$4.48 million in general fund expenditures, supporting 23.35 FTE, and capital expenditures of \$1.76 million. Projected year-end (2025) fund balances are \$1.2 million in the general fund and \$1.8 million in the capital fund.

It is hard to overstate the outsized civic, social, and cultural importance the library carries in this community. Open seven days a week for a total of 62 hours, the library is an inviting physical space where people from all walks of life are welcome. It is a grounding place, where everyone can be together and make a

connection, which helps combat the isolation of the box canyon. In addition to being the community's living room and a safe haven, the WPL is an essential partner to area governments, community nonprofit organizations, and festivals, serving families, youth, and adults with an enormous catalog of creative and robust programming.

WPL offers meeting and study rooms, the Program Room, the Telluride Room (historical collection), dedicated areas for children, young adults, and teens, soundproof booths, a large, eclectic assortment of unusual items to lend, and an outdoor terrace to rival any other in the area. The Colorado State Library ranks the WPL first in the state for per capita library visits and circulation, and third in the state for per capita program attendance. The library also offers government-type services (passports, notary, and fingerprinting) and has made a concerted effort to hire bilingual staff to provide services for the region's Spanish-speaking population.

This career opportunity is available with the scheduled retirement (late-March, 2025) of the library director, who has served as director for nearly 11 years. The library director reports to the board of trustees and oversees a management team, comprised of the managers of the library's four key divisions: business office, operations, youth services, and public services.

Issues facing the library include developing innovative ways to provide outreach, materials, and services relevant to the community. The future of the library includes exploring capital improvement, a new branch, addressing housing issues for library staff, modernization generally, and the possibility of establishing a library foundation.

For more information about the Wilkinson Public Library, please see

"Library Facts" in this document, or visit <https://telluridelibrary.org>.

QUALIFICATIONS

A four-year degree in a relevant field of study; at least five years of progressively responsible experience in library administration; knowledge of library best practices, trends, issues, and industry software and databases; or any equivalent combination of education and experience are all required.



LIBRARY FACTS

Population (County):	8,082
Size (County):	1,289 sq. mi.
Elevation (Telluride):	8,750 ft.
2025 Budget:	GF \$4.48M, Capital \$1.76M
2025 Reserves (projected year-end):	GF \$1.2M, Capital \$1.8M
FTE:	23.35
Size (Building)	20,000 sq. ft.
Circulation (41% electronic):	170,000
Visits	180,000/year
Programs (Adult)	800 with 12,000 attendees
Programs (Youth)	500 with 12,000 attendees
Cardholders:	12,000
Meeting Room Reservations:	6,000/year
Government Service Appointments	1,500/year

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN

Absent unforeseen circumstances, the recruitment will follow the schedule below. Be mindful of the filing deadline and final interview dates, which are unlikely to change.

SCHEDULE

Filing Deadline:	February 9, 2025	Recommendation of Candidates:	February 26, 2025
Preliminary Interviews:	February 17-18, 2025	Finalist Interview Process:	March 6-7, 2025

A master's degree in library science or library information science from an American Library Association-accredited school or program, or in a related field is also required. Desired qualifications include advanced training in management, public or business administration, and human resources. The ability to speak Spanish is also desirable. All applicants should be aware of the high cost of living in the area and remote location and are encouraged to complete their due diligence prior to submitting an application. Please see <https://telluridelibrary.org/employment/> for the full job description.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

Wilkinson's next library director is a naturally curious, emotionally intelligent, and experienced leader, who recognizes the Wilkinson Public Library as a deeply cherished community institution. The preferred candidate is knowledgeable and proficient in all aspects of professional librarianship and has total commitment to customer service at the highest level. The director will maintain the prevailing ethos of civic-mindedness and service among the staff.

More than any other quality, the next director will value the contributions of library staff and support their continued growth and professional development. The successful candidate will inherit a committed, competent, and caring

team of various experience levels, viewed as the WPL's greatest asset. The next director communicates expectations clearly and leads a culture of fairness, trust, and accountability. The ideal candidate delegates effectively, avoids micromanagement, and promotes work-life balance.

Also, the next director must understand and foster all the ways the library is itself a community, and its many connections and interconnections throughout the larger community. To this end, the ideal candidate has expert-level inward- and outward-facing communication and presentation skills, and the ability to relate to persons from every walk of life.

The preferred candidate is passionate, innovative, and visionary, someone who understands all the possibilities, purposes, and functions of the modern library. This includes

developing and managing the annual budget and major capital planning and funding. Skill and experience monitoring legislative changes impacting the library is desirable. The ideal candidate is thick-skinned and politically astute but apolitical, with the skill to work with the board appropriately, and to navigate a complex, sometimes intense political landscape.

The next director will maintain the library as a destination and a psychologically safe space, and is someone who supports intellectual freedom, the right to read, and DEI initiatives.

Finally, the next library director appreciates the region and all its communities not only as a premiere world-class ski destination and a Colorado state treasure, but also as the community of small towns it still is, and as their home. The successful candidate is coming to make a career.

TOTAL COMPENSATION

The hiring range for this position is \$117,709 to \$147,136 and appointment will be made depending upon the qualifications and experience of the selected candidate. In addition, the following benefits are provided: medical, dental, and vision insurances (cafeteria plan); group life, accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D), and group long-term disability insurances; and a health reimbursement account (HRA) and health care and dependent care flexible spending accounts. Retirement benefits are through the well-regarded Colorado Public Employees' Retirement Association (PERA) in lieu of social security, with an optional PERAPlus 401(k) available. This position enjoys paid vacation, sick leave, personal days, and holiday pay, as well as paid family and medical leave, and bereavement leave. Additional benefits include support for professional development opportunities, an employee assistance program, and tuition and wellness reimbursements. Relocation assistance and contributions toward housing may be subject to negotiation, as needed.

APPLY

To be considered for this excellent professional opportunity, please email only your cover letter and resume to apply@columbialtd.com, naming your files Last.First.CL and Last.First.Resume. Receipt of your submittal will be acknowledged within two business days. All applicants will be updated on their status following the Recommendation of Candidates.

If you have any questions regarding the recruitment process, or this opportunity, please feel free to call Andrew Gorgey directly at (970) 987-1238. For more information, visit the Columbia Ltd website: <https://columbialtd.com>.