

VIEWCREST ADVISORS

Executive Director

Position Description for

Private Foundation

2019

THE OPPORTUNITY

Inspired by a mission to “support dynamic, collaborative grantee partnerships that enable particularly vulnerable youth who are homeless, incarcerated or living in severe conditions of civil strife to realize their potential and become self-sustaining, productive citizens of the world,” the Executive Director will be a catalyst for groundbreaking education, direct service, structural support or advocacy programs that have the capacity to replicate or change systems. As grantees succeed in creating hope for the most at-risk youth, the Executive Director will be further rooting – for future generations of Executive Directors and Trustees – the Foundation’s strategic, capacity-building and fund development approach.

This is an exciting opportunity for a collaborative leader who is: committed to the Foundation’s mission; a strong relationship-builder; equally accomplished -- and disciplined -- in strategy formulation, project management and administration; a self-starter.

THE ORGANIZATION

Governed by a deeply committed and engaged Founder/Chairman (“Founder”) and independent Trustees, the aspiration is that the Foundation become a respected center of excellence, knowledge and ideation. Currently entering its next phase and second decade of impact, the Foundation annually deploys roughly \$3.5M through a disciplined Grantee Portfolio Management Model, with intentions to grow its grantmaking level.

In the United States, the Foundation focuses on traditionally under-funded program areas such as youth who are homeless, especially unaccompanied youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or an organization, and youth who are involved in, or at risk for involvement with, the criminal justice system. Outside of the United States, the Foundation’s focus is directed toward particularly vulnerable youth, such as youth who are exposed to conflict, in refugee or IDP camps, or who may, in a variety of ways, be experiencing conditions of exceptionally high risk. Through its current, deep partnerships with 10-20 high impact grantees, the Foundation’s funding split is roughly two thirds in the United States and the remainder abroad.

With three-year, renewable grant cycles, the Foundation has partnered with certain grantees for more than a decade. While deepening these relationships, the Foundation is also strategically searching for new, aligned grantee partners as it expands its philanthropic investments.

THE POSITION: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director (E.D.) will be a critical partner to the Founder and Trustees, supporting both their engagement with grantees and grantmaking decisions. At a high level, the E.D. will oversee the Foundation’s work in three major areas:

- Grantee Development and Monitoring (*estimated time: 70%*)
- Developing the Foundation as a resource and center of excellence (*estimated time: 10-15%*)
- Administration and Finance (*estimated time: 15-20%*)

Reports to: Founder

Direct reports: Off-site Administrative Assistant

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- Other key relationships:** Foundation Trustees (two in addition to the Founder)
External philanthropic advisors
External legal and administrative support
Current and future grantees
- Location:** Residence within 30 minutes of this mid-sized community in the Upper Midwest
- Travel:** 20-30% of the time and will include both domestic and international travel

Grantee Development and Monitoring (estimated time: 70%)

Strategy:

- Work closely with the Founder, and periodically with the Trustees, to execute the foundation’s mission and vision; spur strategic dialogue and the development of creative approaches that further the Foundation’s mission and deepen grantee relationships. Of note:
 - Generative meetings with the Founder occur every two weeks for up to three hours.
 - Meetings with Trustees occur regularly by phone, with in-person meetings two to three times per year, allowing for strategic, in-depth dialogue with grantee candidates or existing grantees.
- Support the administration of Founder and Trustee meetings:
 - Develop reports, materials and agenda.
 - Present rigorously vetted and scoped grant proposals.
 - Facilitate Founder/Trustee decision-making.
- Continuously evaluate external trends that could affect the Foundation and its objectives; anticipate future program strategy needs.
- Invest in and maintain positive relationships with all constituents including the Founder, Trustees, grantee partners and external support organizations.

Grant Evaluation:

- For all prospective grants, deploy a measurement framework, partnering with grantees to develop clear outcomes and success indicators.
- Assess and report grantee progress through quarterly check-ins and deeper semi-annual and annual reviews.
- Analyze and provide feedback on site visits.
- Over time, develop portfolio-level outcome measures by focus area.

Grantee Support and Capacity-Building:

- Consult with grantees on strategic planning; act as a constructive, value-add resource.
- Identify ways to enhance grantees’ project management and ability to execute on approved grants.
- Act as a resource to increase grantees’ fundraising reach and success.
- Provide meaningful guidance to grantees in their board development efforts.

Grantee Searches:

- Oversee the alignment of the Foundation’s grant-related platforms, policies and approaches; develop, propose, implement and monitor appropriate changes.
- Direct new grantee candidate identification in collaboration with a selected search advisor.
- Conduct site visits for prospective grantees, as appropriate.

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- Evaluate grant proposals in alignment with the Foundation's platforms, policies and procedures.
- Make recommendations for grants and grant amounts to the Founder and Trustees.
- Prepare, schedule and staff meetings for the Founder/Trustees to meet prospective grantees.

Developing the Foundation as a resource and center of excellence (estimated time: 10-15%)

Sector Involvement:

- Stay current with trends in issue areas and the public/private entities addressing them.
- Participate in conferences and seminars related to the Foundation's focus areas.
- Build deep alliances that broaden programmatic impact and attract funding to grantees.
- Distill and organize insights about the Foundation's on-going learning; actively share with peer funders and partners. Over time, host information and ideation exchange for grantees, non-grantees and focus area leaders.

External Relations:

- In coordination with the Founder, serve as primary spokesperson for the Foundation, ensuring that the organization is represented to diverse constituencies and partners.
- Maintain positive, long-lasting relationships with external advisors and nonprofit partners.
- Manage all internal and external communication needs; evolve as the Foundation's work expands.

Policy/Advocacy:

- Refine the Foundation's advocacy strategy, in concert with the Founder and Trustees.
- Identify and evaluate opportunities for the Foundation and/or its grantees to become involved in advocacy efforts.
- As appropriate, become a policy/advocacy spokesperson as programmatic expertise is developed.

Administration and Finance (15-20%)

Grants Administration:

- Collaborate with external legal support to ensure/facilitate effective administration and compliance.
- Maintain appropriate grant records, including funding history, agreements and reports.
- Build and support effective tracking and reporting.

Financial and Operational Oversight:

- Work with external legal support to ensure grants are paid in accordance with grant agreements.
- Collaborate with external support organizations to ensure compliance and appropriate preparation of financial and tax reporting.
- Lead the preparation of the Foundation's operating budget; manage expenses accordingly. **(Note: the Executive Director won't assume responsibility for managing investments.)**
- Continuously evaluate the structure, skills, best practices and processes that support the Foundation's work with grantees; recommend modifications to most effectively meet agreed goals.

Office Administration

- Oversee an offsite administrative assistant; effectively coordinate office work plans and the Foundation's master calendar and activities.
- Ensure smooth operations of the Foundation's office location, technology and administrative supports.

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QUALIFICATIONS:

Experience: The Executive Director will have a demonstrated commitment to making a difference in the lives of the most at-risk youth. With significant project management experience, s/he must also bring proven success:

- Understanding the challenges of designing and/or delivering nonprofit programs, gained from work within a direct service, philanthropic or nonprofit consulting organization.
- Identifying or developing models that have replicated or changed a system or policy.
- Producing high quality, thoughtfully organized and detailed proposals, recommendation, reports, and workplans.
- Operating independently.

Leadership competencies:

- **Strategy:** Superior analytical and strategy formulation skills; accounts for long-term implications in planning; and can view work holistically.
- **Implementation/Execution:** Practically translates ideas into action and tracks progress against measurable, ambitious goals.
- **Effective written and verbal communications:** Is able to synthesize and present complex information.
- **Initiative:** Is a resourceful “self-starter.” Proactively takes the lead in: addressing critical issues; problem-solving; and driving issues to closure.
- **Analyzes complex information:** Gathers, evaluates and synthesizes a wide range of inputs; and effectively deals with complex, ambiguous and partial information.
- **Planning and organization:** Prioritizes and organizes people, time and other resources; balances short- and long-term goals, monitors progress and adjusts where necessary.
- **Collaboration:** Relates well at all levels; brings together people with diverse perspectives to create “win-win” solutions; and builds trust.
- **Engagement with others:** Inspires others to pursue challenging goals that leverage their unique motivations, skills and interests; connects them to broader goals or strategies.
- **Ease with technology (MS Office suite, etc.) and budgets.**

Personal characteristics:

- Mental agility and inquisitive; can conceptualize as well as iterate complex solutions.
- Disciplined professionally and administratively; is thorough, organized and detail-oriented.
- Strong work ethic; is comfortable working within a single-person office.
- Other characteristic that lead to success working in deep, generative partnerships: emotional intelligence; consultative style; diplomacy and tact; patience and perseverance; humility; discretion; and confidence.
- Impeccable integrity, judgment, ethics and values.

Please share nominations or submit a resume and cover letter, in MS Word format, to Kathleen Yazbak, President/Founder and Nora Nichols, Associate at Viewcrest Advisors: apply@viewcrestadvisors.com

The Foundation is committed to diversity in the workplace.

Viewcrest Advisors is committed to social justice and access to opportunity; we actively cultivate relationships with leaders who have varied life experiences as well as the skills needed to lead strong, innovative organizations.