POSITION PROFILE

Executive Director of Educational Initiatives

for a private foundation

LOCATION
Flexible, with a preference for the New York City region.

REPORTS TO
Foundation's Board

ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

The Foundation's Higher Education Initiative invests in institutional leaders, faculty, and curricular initiatives that ensure the values of liberal democracy and intellectual freedom remain essential parts of American higher education.

The Foundation believes that colleges and universities require strong institutional leadership, excellent faculty, and rigorous curricula that introduce students to the central ideas, texts, questions, and traditions that shape a flourishing society. By investing in these core elements, the Foundation aims to preserve and expand the intellectual conditions for liberal democracy, free expression, rigorous inquiry, and high-quality undergraduate teaching.

The Foundation is making a long-term commitment to this work, with the **potential to deploy more than $50 million annually (and as much as $100 million in some years)**. The Foundation approaches philanthropy entrepreneurially: not simply supporting existing work, but catalyzing initiatives and partnerships that would not otherwise take shape.

THE OPPORTUNITY

This is a rare opportunity to help define how a growing foundation shapes American higher education. The Executive Director will build and execute the Foundation's higher education strategy in collaboration with the Board—designing new programs, forging partnerships, and deploying significant capital. The Foundation is looking for an exceptional action-oriented leader to build and develop programs.

This is a small, high-trust team that operates with urgency and informality. Reporting to the Foundation's Board, the Executive Director will have substantial latitude to shape strategy, identify opportunities, recommend investments, and define long-term priorities. Over time, this person will build a team and a portfolio. The role also includes exploring opportunities in K-12 education.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The ideal candidate is a highly entrepreneurial, high-capacity professional who thrives in building new initiatives from the ground up.

Strategy and Thought Leadership

- Refine and deploy the Foundation's higher education strategy, translating the Board's priorities into a clear, investable plan.
- Monitor trends and engage with higher education networks related to intellectual rigor, faculty hiring, and graduate education, and translate insights into recommendations for the Foundation's leadership.

Building and Execution

- Design, launch, and scale new initiatives, partnerships, and programs from concept through execution.
- Translate ideas into actionable plans and personally drive implementation with grantees in a hands-on and supportive manner.
- Operate effectively in a lean environment, taking ownership across both strategy and execution.
- Lay the groundwork for a high-impact portfolio that can grow and evolve over time.

Programs, Partnerships and Field Engagement

- Build and manage partnerships and programs with academic institutions.
- Collaborate with institutional leaders and faculty to support hiring, graduate and postdoctoral student training, course design, syllabi, and co-curricular programming.
- Identify and select graduate students, postdocs, and faculty for research and teaching support through grants, fellowships, and other mechanisms.
- Fund and oversee projects that develop inter-institutional networks of faculty, academic leaders, and administrators.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Successful candidates may come from management consulting, philanthropy, higher education, public policy, think tanks, government, mission-driven entrepreneurship, or other settings where they have consistently performed at the highest level and built programs, organizations, or movements from concept to impact.

TRAVEL AND COMPENSATION

Travel: The role will require frequent travel to engage with grantees, academic institutions, and partners across the U.S., as well as regular trips to New York for those based in another city.

Compensation: Competitive compensation commensurate with a senior leadership role at a major private foundation.

INTERESTED IN THIS ROLE?

We welcome expressions of interest and nominations. Please share your background through our brief, confidential online form.

Submit your interest here