



# Position Specification

Seattle Foundation

Chief Executive Officer

Private and Confidential

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## Our Client

Founded in 1946, Seattle Foundation (The Foundation) uses their philanthropic expertise, deep roots in the community and network of partners, to develop targeted strategies to quicken the pace of progress toward a stronger community for all. Few regions in the world can match Seattle’s growth and prosperity. Unfortunately, that prosperity is not universal; as many rush towards new opportunities and wealth, too many Seattleites lack equitable pathways to success. The Foundation believes that philanthropy is an essential and critical lever that can and should help to improve this imbalance by committing its resources and influence to elevate the community. Every day, the Foundation engages, guides, and inspires their philanthropic partners, uniting passion, and discipline to make investments that directly address inequities to effectuate powerful change.

“Community” means more than just a neighborhood and philanthropy does more than simply invest money. Effective philanthropy must also leverage civic leadership and voice to accelerate policies and systems change to secure racial and economic equity. Seattle Foundation knows their community philanthropists are engaged in a broad range of causes at the local, national, and global levels. The Foundation has facilitated donor engagement with hundreds of nonprofit groups to develop local giving strategies designed to make the biggest impact. The Foundation facilitates global giving initiatives by way of our supporting organization, Seattle International Foundation.

With over \$1.4 billion in charitable assets under management, Seattle Foundation awards more than \$125 million annually to nonprofit organizations. Further, there is a \$10 million portfolio annually of discretionary grants aligned with our strategic framework focused on advancing racial and economic equity through solutions defined by communities most impacted by deepening disparities in the region. Driving this mission are the dedicated people who work there. The staff possesses diverse expertise, with specialists in public policy, nonprofit effectiveness, community action, family philanthropy, planned giving, research, and much more. The team’s philanthropic passions reflect a wide range of issues, enriching the collective knowledge they bring to partnerships.

The Seattle Foundation is committed to reimagining philanthropy and, and like many communities across the country, Seattle is facing an existential crisis as inequities continue to grow, particularly those caused by systemic racism and the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Foundation aims to serve as an effective bridge builder that can unify organizations, individuals, and institutions across sectors toward proven solutions to fight these inequities. The Board of Trustees affirms that, in order to effectively carry out its mission - ***to ignite powerful, rewarding philanthropy to make Greater Seattle a more vibrant community for all*** – The Foundation will need to build new capabilities, comprehensively reviewing its grantmaking policies and impact strategies.

**INTRODUCTION TO THE BLUEPRINT FOR IMPACT**

The Blueprint for Impact is Seattle Foundation’s guiding framework that outlines a series of strategies for advancing racial equity, shared prosperity, and belonging in their region.

The Blueprint for Impact is informed by lessons from the past, bolstered by research revealing stark racial inequities among Black, Indigenous, People of Color and under-resourced communities, and encouraged by the belief that centering equity in the work will lead to a better future for all.

The Blueprint for Impact creates a path toward long-term, systemic change by directing philanthropic dollars to initiatives led by communities most impacted. Changing systems requires patient, durable capital that will not waver with elections nor business cycles, and philanthropy is uniquely positioned to focus on a problem for decades instead of months or years.

The Blueprint for Impact is informed by decades of partnership with local nonprofit organizations. The Foundation’s relationships with diverse communities have enabled candid feedback, and with partners’ deep expertise has profoundly informed innovative approaches to grantmaking and helped direct resources to communities most impacted. In the past five years, Seattle Foundation has dramatically expanded the core purpose to invest in strengthening community capacity and resilience through organizing and movement building, while growing leadership and power in communities most impacted by persistent inequities, including those accelerated by Covid-19 and climate change. A key challenge remains to raise awareness and deeper engagement across their large donor base and across the region’s philanthropic sector.

For more information about The Seattle Foundation, please visit: <https://www.seattlefoundation.org/>

**The Role**

The Foundation seeks a visionary leader that can build trusting relationships with staff, Board, and community to draw a clear picture of a vibrant future for the Foundation and its role in improving the Greater Seattle Region. They will lead a team of approximately 57 full and part time staff, with an operational budget of \$16MM, and will be an advocate for the communities they serve. In addition, this leader must have the character, experience, and competencies to translate this vision into an innovative engagement strategy, execution plan, and a business model that identifies diversified sources of revenue.

The next CEO will build on The Foundation’s history and past successes and create a transformational strategy and financial model for affirming The Foundation’s Blueprint for Impact grantmaking, and engagement with donors. The Foundation’s vision focuses on ensuring a thriving community of shared prosperity, and the next CEO must authentically navigate conversations about racial equity and systems of oppression with grace and humility. They will be a strategic and inspiring thought leader, who is able to strengthen the health and vitality of the community by connecting generous people with well-informed philanthropic strategies.

The CEO's specific responsibilities include:

- **Innovative and Transformational Leadership:** Guide the organization and provide strategic thought leadership to The Foundation's business model, its staff, Board, and key stakeholders. Serve as a catalyst to increase the Foundation's presence and bring creative and innovative problem-solving in accordance with the mission. Work closely with the Board of Trustees and staff to develop an organizational strategic vision and determine alternatives for growth, long-term sustainability, and competitive differentiation.
- **Relationship and Community Building:** Amplify the visibility of The Foundation and its stature in the region by connecting across the philanthropic, non-profit, business and government spheres. Bring a proven, authentic, and tangible commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, as both an internal way of operating and as an external priority.
- **Fundraising and Effective Communications:** Attract new partners, advocates, donors, and volunteers. Be able to lead The Foundation in building on its impact by increasing assets (including assets under influence) and attracting a broader high net-worth and next generation funding base. Convey The Foundation's activities effectively and persuasively to staff, thought leaders, and the broader public with their energy and thoughtful communication tools.
- **Business and Financial Acumen:** Provide guidance and leadership on all internal financial, operational, and staff development matters. Display entrepreneurial vigor in designing a sustainable business model, evaluating financial investment, and optimizing impact. Ensure that all activities and programs meet the highest standards of ethics and transparency and are aligned with the Foundation's values.

### **Candidate Profile**

The CEO will demonstrate capacity for leadership through vision, communication, inclusion, integrity, and action. They must possess an absolute commitment and proven track record to racial and economic justice. The ideal candidate will have a track record of accomplishments, credibility, and recognition in community-oriented leadership roles, with exceptional strategic, advocacy, political, fundraising, organizational, and people skills. The next CEO will have experience managing a diverse and complex organization of similar scope and scale, where they have grown revenue and managed complex budgets. They will have the ability to assess challenges of a changing world and, in partnership with the staff and Board of Directors, develop, implement and execute a vision for how The Foundation can have continued impact that matters.

Highlights of the performance and personal competencies required for the position are:

#### **Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

- Experience translating an organization's diversity and inclusion values and commitments into specific strategies and actions.
- Demonstrated personal and professional commitment to DEI; displaying cultural competence while operating in an environment with a wide range of constituents and communities.

**Visionary and Inspiring Leadership**

- Proven track record of leadership in the regional community or the ability to develop an allegiance to greater Seattle, and a tireless pursuit for the well-being of communities served by The Foundation.
- A confident and flexible leader who possesses a capacity to be a good listener, to give and receive feedback graciously and candidly, and to operate with high integrity and transparency.
- Ability to measure and report on outcomes and impact of partnerships by ensuring the appropriate performance management systems and metrics are in place to track performance against agreed upon goals.
- Significant leadership experience directing a complex organization spanning an array of disciplines and supporting staff to do their best work.

**Fundraising & Business Development**

- Ability to connect with high net-worth donors and community leaders.
- Significant experience with and/or aptitude to fundraise with individual, corporate, institutional, and foundation donors.
- Highly networked, with a demonstrated record of success initiating and fostering strategic partnerships with key external audiences.
- Demonstrated talent to strategically partner in the development of transformative gift ideas while also managing a development program designed to build lifelong donor relationships at every level.
- Successfully engage Board of Directors in fundraising activities on an ongoing basis.

**Contact****Nomination and application process**

Inquiries, nominations, and applications are invited. Interested candidates should submit confidentially, a resume and letter of interest to [seattlefoundationCEO@russellreynolds.com](mailto:seattlefoundationCEO@russellreynolds.com)