Emerson Collective

Portfolio Director, Social Innovation

Position Description & Candidate Profile
Portfolio Director, Social Innovation

Location
Palo Alto, CA

Reports to
Managing Director of Philanthropy

Our Client
Emerson Collective (EC) is an organization dedicated to creating pathways to opportunity so people can live to their full potential. EC’s core focus areas for its philanthropic work are: education, immigrant justice, environmental justice, health equity, and media and journalism. EC uses a wide range of tools and strategies to build and execute innovative solutions, including partnering with entrepreneurs and experts, makers and policymakers, advocates, and creatives.

In order to address national and global-scale problems, EC employs a wide range of tools and strategies. EC believes that a combination of Philanthropy and Venture Capital can support the greatest leaps of innovation. This model allows EC to deploy resources in the most flexible way for the greatest impact and support of our grant partners. The Philanthropy team at EC supports nonprofits that are working to create a more just and equitable future for individuals and communities.

Learn more about Emerson Collective at https://www.emersoncollective.com/work/philanthropy!

Position Responsibilities
Reporting to the Managing Director of Philanthropy, the Portfolio Director, Social Innovation will lead the Social Innovation portfolio, which consistently aims to be flexible and dynamic in its approach and grantmaking. The Philanthropy team supports nonprofit partners that are undertaking critical and innovative work outside of EC’s core focus areas (noted above) including, but not limited to: financial justice, gun violence prevention, food access, and responsiveness to emerging situations. The Portfolio Director will work across a variety of issue areas, helping to shape philanthropic investment strategy, conduct research and due diligence on potential partners and new areas of investment, and advise and support grant partners. Importantly, the Portfolio Director will collaborate across issue areas and teams at EC. Because this is a generalist role by definition, EC needs a strong professional who understands the interconnected nature of many issues, and can easily switch gears among topics, strategies and organizations.
Specifically, the Portfolio Director, Social Innovation will:

- Conduct regular landscape scans of issue areas, which would include consulting with key partners in those respective spaces
- Design and execute grantmaking strategies for the Social Innovation portfolio, including identifying priority issues, gaps, and key organizations
- Lead due diligence on potential partner organizations; this includes researching organizations, leading diligence meetings and calls, analyzing financial documents, evaluating potential for success and strategic alignment, summarizing findings, making strategic recommendations, and regularly presenting investment recommendations to EC’s philanthropic decision-making committee
- Provide guidance and hands-on support to EC partners in the Social Innovation portfolio; this includes proactively identifying new connections or collaboration opportunities across the EC portfolio, as well as within EC’s support system (e.g., convening, advocacy, communications, capacity building)
- Conduct research and landscape analyses to assess and recommend potential new areas for support that reflect EC’s creative approach to funding
- Stay abreast of developments in various fields in order to put the work of EC’s current partners into context
- Provide thought leadership and convene partners, experts, and other thought leaders, particularly those with local knowledge and first-hand experience, when there are opportunities to advance the work of EC or the field
- Actively collaborate with and leverage other EC teams and initiatives
- Work collaboratively with the Managing Director, other Portfolio Directors, and Analysts

Profile of the Successful Candidate

Emerson Collective is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion, and seeks to continue to build a diverse and inclusive workforce to promote effective work in partnership with all communities and population groups that it serves. EC seeks a leader who is dedicated to promoting philanthropy and improving the quality of human lives around the globe. In addition, EC seeks candidates with a demonstrated track record of commitment to the power of philanthropy and civic action; strong curiosity and the desire to continue learning; and, a collegial work style. Most importantly, the successful candidate will have a strong sense of humility and a sense of humor. In its work, EC prioritizes professionals who
understand power dynamics between funders and grant partners because, in making social change, ecosystems and leadership are what matter. The successful candidate will have high standards in their work, be very pragmatic, and will be comfortable with ambiguity and “gray areas.”

Within this framework, EC seeks a Portfolio Director, Social Innovation with the following attributes:

- Significant leadership experience at a non-profit organization, foundation, or government entity
- Excellent oral and written communication
- Strong analytical skills, including experience conducting research, analyzing data, synthesizing information, and making strategic recommendations
- Proven ability to manage and provide leadership in multiple external relationships with high levels of empathy and responsiveness
- Ability to manage and prioritize multiple responsibilities within a fast-paced environment
- Ability to be efficient, balancing that instinct with the ability to be thoughtful about the deployment of significant resources
- Comfortable taking on new tasks or projects with little direction and adjusting course quickly in response to feedback
- Experience in working in the nonprofit environment preferred
- Bachelor’s degree or equivalent experience required, Master’s degree preferred

**Start Timeframe**
We seek to have someone in place in Winter 2022/early Spring 2023.

**Compensation**
This position offers a competitive salary and includes a comprehensive benefits package. We actively welcome all candidates from a wide range of backgrounds who have the skills to fulfill this role – regardless of compensation history.

**To Apply**
All applications are held in strict confidence. Please submit your credentials and a letter of interest through our private applicant portal to The 360 Group at:

https://the360group.us/portal/

Applications should be directed to the attention of Vincent Robinson, Managing Partner or Melissa Ulum, Of Counsel. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling
basis. Earlier applicants may receive priority consideration. To be considered, The 360 Group encourages all interested candidates to submit their applications promptly, via the confidential applicant portal linked above.

At The 360 Group, we know that a richly diverse mix of professionals makes organizations more effective. Using that principle as our “North Star,” we make diversity a hallmark of our firm, and all of our search engagements.

Learn more about The 360 Group at the360group.us.