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The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

Racial Justice Initiative Director

Position Description & Candidate Profile

Racial Justice Initiative Director

Location

Menlo Park, CA

Reports to

Chief of Equity and Culture

Our Client

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation is a nonpartisan, private charitable foundation that advances ideas and supports institutions to promote a better world. For more than 50 years, the foundation has supported efforts to advance education for all, preserve the environment, improve lives and livelihoods in developing countries, promote the health and economic well-being of women, support vibrant performing arts, strengthen Bay Area communities and make the philanthropy sector more effective.

Founded in 1966, the Hewlett Foundation is one of the largest philanthropic institutions in the United States, with more than \$11 billion in assets, awarding more than \$450 million in grants in 2019 to organizations across the globe to help people build better lives. In addition to its core programs, the foundation makes grants for special projects and has initiatives to address other timely problems, such as challenges related to cybersecurity and U.S. democracy, and now, racial justice in the United States. The Board of the Hewlett Foundation has approved a ten-year, \$150 million Special Initiative focused on racial justice. The Initiative will take its place alongside the foundation's two existing initiatives in Cyber and Economy and Society, as well as its long-term core programs.

The Hewlett Foundation depends on a cooperative working relationship between the president, board and staff. The position will report to Charmaine Mercer, the Foundation's recently-appointed Chief of Equity and Culture, who was previously a Program Officer in education at the foundation, and has a background in politics, policy and educational equity, working on Capitol Hill early in her career. The Initiative has the full support of the foundation's President, Larry Kramer, who is a constitutional law scholar and the former dean of Stanford Law School, and the position reports to. The foundation has approximately 120 employees, all located in the Bay Area, working together to advance the foundation's mission and support its grantees.

We invite you to learn more about the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation at <https://hewlett.org>.

Initiative Background and Position Responsibilities

About the Racial Justice Initiative:

The Hewlett Foundation recognizes that “racial justice” is a widespread, multi-faceted problem; the pervasiveness of systemic racism could naturally encompass efforts directed at virtually any and all aspects of society. The new Director’s first task will be to identify and choose a problem or opportunity where the foundation can have meaningful impact with its available resources.

The Hewlett Foundation deploys its grant dollars and other resources under a rubric called “Outcome-Focused Philanthropy” (OFP). At its heart, OFP comprises three core commitments that shape all of the foundation’s grantmaking strategies:

- A clear articulation of a problem to solve or opportunity to capture; framing the approach in this way has real consequences in shaping the investigations undertaken, the hypotheses tested and the strategies that eventually emerge
- A causal story – that is, a “theory of change” – that explains how the foundation’s grantmaking and other efforts will solve the problem or capture the opportunity, which results in carefully articulated hypotheses and testing through on-the-ground experiments or less formal approaches; the foundation believes that the appropriate philanthropic tools and methods to employ follow from the articulated goal and theory of change, rather than the reverse
- And, ensuring there will be means to know whether the foundation is making progress – in this case, on racial justice

Conversations with a range of leaders in the racial justice movement and with the Hewlett Foundation board have pointed toward two broad areas to explore in order to achieve the greatest impact:

- *Building political strength and capacity in BIPOC communities.* This could entail building on efforts that already exist in such areas as voting rights, voter registration, get out the vote, and candidate pipeline development. But it might also, more ambitiously, comprise work to build sustained

community-level engagement around electoral activity – efforts akin to the political infrastructure built by the conservative movement in the 1970s and '80s. There may still be other creative ways to approach this issue.

- *Addressing pervasive disparities in the economic power and welfare of BIPOC communities.* While this could involve at least some work advocating for government policies to address economic inequalities, the foundation may also look to have impact by supporting efforts to channel private capital to BIPOC entrepreneurs and communities. The foundation has done analogous work in its Climate Initiative: deeming its resources too small to have a significant impact through direct investment, the foundation has instead made grants to help build the infrastructure needed to encourage other investors, with greater capital, to invest in clean energy projects. Here, too, there may be other ways to advance this goal.

These two areas of potential focus are not unrelated; building political power can be a means to address economic disparities, and building economic power can be a means to address political disparities. There may, indeed, be strategies in which theories of change would call for grantmaking along both lines.

At this stage, the foundation remains open to creative thinking and is looking for candidates with thoughtful, strategic ideas and approaches for how the foundation should focus its work in either or both of these areas.

About the position:

The Racial Justice Initiative Director will contribute creative, dynamic, and forward-thinking leadership to, and is responsible for, the success of the Foundation's Racial Justice Initiative.

Specifically, the Racial Justice Initiative Director will:

- Collaborate with the Chief of Equity and Culture and other staff members on strategy development, grantmaking, and evaluation plans for the initiative
- Identify and guide potential grantees through the foundation's proposal process, including its compliance-related procedures
- Manage grant activity, including track grantees' progress, respond to financial and programmatic reports, and make decisions about grant renewals
- Incorporate the full range of the foundation's resources – grant funding, capacity building and technical assistance expertise, influence,

communications, investments, and relationships to support the racial justice field

- Establish and maintain existing grantee relationships
- Partner with the Chief of Equity and Culture and external consultants to develop initiative success indicators and ensure related systems are in place to track and assess progress toward strategic initiative goals
- Organize foundation-sponsored meetings of grantees and field experts
- Frame, commission, and oversee evaluations
- Help develop briefing papers and reports that contribute to the foundation's understanding of new approaches, best practices, and program issues
- Participate in relevant affinity groups, and represent the foundation at appropriate meetings, conferences, and site visits as well as in all interactions with prospective and current grantees
- Manage a small team, as appropriate

Profile of the Successful Candidate

The foundation seeks a leader who has strong interpersonal skills, values humility and collaboration, is open-minded and inquisitive in nature, and is committed to and knowledgeable about racial justice history and issues, with a deep understanding of policies that have caused disparities or those that could ultimately remedy them. The successful candidate will be creative, yet grounded in the practical realities of the state of racial justice in the United States, and issues facing the field of advocates, activists, and scholars. The Racial Justice Initiative Director will combine a flexible leadership style with the ability to deliver and execute on innovative ideas and solutions that serve the goals of the initiative. The foundation seeks a professional with superb leadership, strategy, and execution skills, demonstrating an appreciation for ambiguity combined with a problem-solving instinct and a willingness to explore new ideas. The successful candidate will have a strong work ethic and a collaborative approach, with high personal and professional standards of transparency and accountability.

More specifically, the foundation seeks a professional who reflects the following:

- Significant and distinguished work experience (8+ years) in fields relevant to racial justice policy focused on equitable opportunity and outcomes
- A demonstrated understanding of the racial justice landscape across the country, including racial justice-related policies and discriminatory systems, and an understanding of how racial justice interacts with other systems
- Working knowledge of best, promising, and emerging practices and innovations in the field of racial justice nationally

- Demonstrated ability to translate concept into action, with a proven record of success in developing and implementing innovative strategies and solutions with the engagement of others
- Experience with technical assistance, facilitation, convening, and/or grantmaking
- Demonstrated experience and creativity in operationalizing equity and inclusion at the systemic level
- A demonstrated willingness to reiterate a strategy and approach, with the ability to course correct as necessary
- Demonstrated ability to integrate knowledge and learning, and the capacity to effectively use research and evaluation
- Demonstrated experience working effectively with a broad range of stakeholders to address complex policy and systems change challenges
- A willingness to challenge conventional thinking coupled with the ability to collaborate effectively and encourage dialogue
- Strong written and oral communication skills, interpersonal awareness, and excellent listening skills; a communication style that reflects clarity, authenticity, transparency, and approachability
- Ability to travel on an as-needed basis (when safe and appropriate)

Start Timeframe

We seek to have someone in place by Summer 2021.

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 Monica Rodgers, Senior Consultant. 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.

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation embraces the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion, both internally in its hiring process and organizational culture, and externally, in its grantmaking and related practices. The foundation is an equal opportunity employer, and welcomes applications from people of all backgrounds, cultures, and experiences.

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.