



THE 360 GROUP
— EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED —

Yellow Chair Foundation

Executive Director

Position Description & Candidate Profile

Executive Director

Location

Palo Alto, CA

Reports to

Board of Directors

Our Client

Founded 22 years ago, Yellow Chair Foundation (YCF) is a Palo Alto-based family foundation that funds local, national and global organizations tackling problems at their roots, and shifting systems toward a more equitable and just future. The foundation works in the following areas:

- *advancing climate change solutions* that secure lasting and just results based on effective, scalable strategies in solidarity with the communities most adversely affected
- *advancing educational equity* by working to address systemic barriers to fair and equitable public school funding; supporting diverse, high-quality teachers and school leaders; and, improving college access and success for first generation students
- *ensuring just, democratic opportunity by defending civil liberties*, such as voting rights, guaranteed income and racial justice, and safeguarding freedom of speech and journalism
- *improving maternal health outcomes* and the childbirth experience by expanding access to the midwifery model of care and reducing medically unnecessary interventions in hospital settings with a focus on making birth equitable and just

Yellow Chair Foundation's grantmaking and the family's other philanthropic work have totaled more than \$290 million to date. Last year, the foundation gave \$44 million to more than 150 organizations and is on track to give more than \$60 million in 2022. The foundation has a long-held philosophy that emphasizes a high level of trust in the leadership of the organizations it funds. Most grants provide general operating support. The foundation seeks to create long-lasting partnerships with its grantees that align with the principles of trust-based philanthropy and the time horizon needed to create and sustain change on complex social issues. The strategy of the foundation is guided by the core values of gratitude and hope; justice and opportunity; curiosity and humility; trust and partnership; and, urgency.

The foundation has a small, nimble staff, based in Palo Alto, CA. This is a hybrid role that includes working from home as well as regular, in-person meetings held at the Foundation's offices. The foundation prioritizes a straightforward application and review process that enables more grantmaking dollars to go directly to the organizations it supports. Shared learning and collaborations with other funders are sought regularly to leverage content knowledge and expertise.

The foundation operates in partnership with Pacific Foundation Services, which brings substantial strategic expertise through a staffing model that enables multiple foundations to each be more efficient and effective. Staff members benefit from a diverse Pacific Foundation Services team who work across more than 40 foundations and have a wide range of program knowledge. Learn more about Pacific Foundation Services at www.pfs-llc.net.

Position Responsibilities

Yellow Chair Foundation seeks an Executive Director who will be a dynamic leader with a strong equity lens and strong operational skills to guide this private family foundation in executing its mission and implementing foundation policies and programs globally. The Executive Director will oversee the foundation's activities to ensure they are effectively aligned to advance the foundation's mission and goals and to ensure maximum impact.

Reporting to the founding two board members and working closely with Pacific Foundation Services, the new Executive Director will provide thoughtful strategic and operational leadership, promoting the fulfillment of the foundation's mission. The preferred candidate will have a compelling mix of experiences, skills, personal characteristics and motivations to lead, manage, and advance the foundation's initiatives, grantmaking, evaluation and civic engagement. Serving as the foundation's primary spokesperson and chief ambassador, the Executive Director will inspire confidence with both external and internal audiences while demonstrating superior leadership, management, and communication skills.

The successful candidate will be able to develop trust with the Board and staff; understand family philanthropy; prepare high-quality, considered and succinct board materials; and, facilitate robust and meaningful Board discussions. The Executive Director will be responsible for providing strategic leadership to develop and implement programs that enable the achievement of the foundation's overall mission, supporting the governance of the board, developing and managing a committed and high-performing team, and effectively representing the foundation.

More specifically, the Executive Director's responsibilities will include:

Strategic and program leadership

- Leading vision and strategic development processes to envision the next chapter of Yellow Chair Foundation in collaboration with the Board, ensuring that benchmarks are established for measuring success and that planning cycles recur as appropriate
- Implementing and evaluating an action plan based on the approved strategic goals and opportunities
- Driving impact in the four primary focus areas of the foundation's work, doing everything possible to lend credibility to grantee organizations, and considering new ways that grantmaking can shift systems toward equitable and fair participation and outcomes
- Managing and supporting a team of six, four members of which are senior program staff, with growth on the horizon

Supporting Board Governance

- Collaborating with the Board to develop meeting agendas, and regularly providing information to the Board on activities in relation to the mission and progress toward the strategic goals adopted by the Board
- Providing information and recommendations to the Board for setting or revising the foundation's vision, goals and objectives, operating policies, strategic planning and grant making priorities
- Working with the Board and the Pacific Foundation Services finance team to determine annual and long-term budgets
- Engaging the Board effectively, both during and between meetings
- Filtering and prioritizing issues and current events to identify foundation opportunities

Team Leadership

- Building, motivating and fostering a high-quality, diverse team and work culture, with an emphasis on deepening equity practices
- Aligning the team around the foundation's values and trust-based practices
- Actively advancing both the foundation's learning journey and diversity, inclusion and belonging practices
- Developing, establishing and maintaining strong relationships nationally and within the community
- Creating and encouraging a collegial and participatory work environment where trust, integrity and open communication are valued
- Anticipating trends and issues in business, society and philanthropy as they relate to and inform the foundation's mission

- Developing, inspiring and providing regular feedback to a high-performing team

Profile of the Successful Candidate

The Executive Director will be a dynamic, effective philanthropic leader who is passionate about strategic advocacy, organizational management and development, and the foundation's mission. The successful candidate will possess proven leadership, team management, relationship management, equity acumen, and leadership development experience. The Executive Director could come from a variety of leadership backgrounds; the successful candidate will have a demonstrable commitment to social impact, with experience in other fields, such as working in the public, private, or philanthropic sectors. The successful candidate will have strong values alignment with Yellow Chair Foundation, and a track record that demonstrates personal and professional integrity.

More specifically, Yellow Chair Foundation seeks a professional who embodies the following:

- Minimum 10 years of experience with social policy, community trends, program evaluation, board relations, financial management, and trust-based philanthropy
- Minimum five years of experience in a leadership role with a foundation, advisory or non-profit organization
- In-depth knowledge and understanding of the social sector, and how social change happens both in real time and over time
- Having a keen intellect that can be brought to bear on a wide range of programmatic and organizational issues
- Grant making and family philanthropy experience that is aligned with the values of Yellow Chair Foundation
- Astute manager with a high EQ that can oversee a team with care and high expectations
- Strategic thinker with the ability to unify a staff and board around a shared vision and mission
- Ability to identify, develop and maintain strategic relationships with key internal and external stakeholders critical to the foundation's goals
- In-depth understanding and appreciation of cross-cultural differences, practices and customs both in the workplace and communities where the foundation operates
- Open and honest communicator and good listener who is open to influence yet willing to provide a strong, personal point of view

- Track record as a valued advisor to leaders with the ability to influence others and take risks
- Commitment to lifelong learning and the ability to help an organization and team learn and grow continuously
- Persuasive written and verbal communication skills
- Proven decision-making capabilities, with the ability to be nimble and responsive in the moment – and to the moment
- Demonstrated success in working with boards and other private and public funders
- Understanding of the role and nuances of philanthropy in closely supporting grantee partners
- A communicative and collaborative approach, evidenced through strong written and oral skills as well as strong listening skills
- An inclusive, consensus-building leadership style that inspires others
- A track record of effective and judicious deployment of financial resources
- Strong integrity and a commitment to professional excellence, combined with values that wear well over the long term

Start Timeframe

We seek to have someone in place by early 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 Maureen Capitolo, Principal 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.

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.