



**THE 360 GROUP**  
— EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED —

# Yellow Chair Foundation

## Senior Program Officer, Climate Position Description & Candidate Profile

# Senior Program Officer, Climate

## Location

Palo Alto, CA

## Reports to

Executive Director

## 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
- *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. In 2022, the foundation gave \$64 million to more than 150 organizations. 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 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 has a small, nimble staff and a board of two founders, 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.

## **Program Description and Position Responsibilities**

The Climate portfolio is focused on securing lasting and just climate solutions based on effective, scalable strategies. This is accomplished through three primary strategies: defending existing and securing new policies that shift towards 100% clean energy; exploring and supporting new technologies that mitigate climate change; and championing equitable solutions that defend the rights of people to live in resilient communities and breathe clean air. YCF has approached these issues through a combination of grants focused on advocacy and policy, technology innovation, litigation, movement building, and research. The current portfolio is predominantly U.S. focused, but is growing globally.

The Senior Program Officer, Climate will be a dynamic, engaged contributor to the overall efforts of YCF, working to develop and implement new approaches to stabilize the earth's climate so as to meet state, federal, and international climate change goals.

The Senior Program Officer's core responsibilities include developing and implementing strategies and managing the on-the-ground execution of YCF's climate grantmaking, which constitutes the foundation's largest portfolio. The Senior Program Officer, Climate will also help build mechanisms for continuous improvement within the program, analyzing and evaluating results to strengthen program strategy and increase impact.

Specifically, the Senior Program Officer, Climate will:

- Work with the Board and Executive Director and the broader YCF team to continue to deepen the Climate program strategy that leverages the realities and possibilities of environmental and climate innovation, advocacy and the social sector, and applies a justice lens to the grantmaking work
- Engage directly in program activities, including performing due diligence on grant applicants, inviting proposals and preparing docket materials to assist the Board in making decisions on prospective grants, and advising the Executive Director and Board on current and prospective grant applications

- Deepen current and developing relationships with a broad range of public, private, nonprofit, and environmental advocacy partners; work collaboratively to identify strategic approaches for climate-related opportunities and outcomes, become a trusted presence in the sector and region
- Continually survey the regional, national, and international landscape to identify emerging innovations, policy opportunities, and trends, furthering partnerships in the portfolio's area of focus and in philanthropy
- Work with applicants and grantees on all aspects of outreach and the grantmaking process
- Participate in developing methods and systems to assess the impact of grants and programs; review and respond to grantee reports
- Provide thoughtful and relevant support and assistance to prospective and current grantees and partners
- Prepare written materials for senior leadership and Board review
- Collaborate and share information with colleagues within YCF

### **Profile of the Successful Candidate**

Yellow Chair Foundation seeks a Senior Program Officer, Climate who is a content expert in climate change advocacy and environmental policy. The successful candidate will be curious in nature, analytical in approach, and committed to and knowledgeable about trends in climate funding. The successful candidate will be creative and entrepreneurial, combining a collaborative sensibility and work style with the ability to deliver and execute on innovative ideas and solutions that serve the goals of the portfolio and the entire organization. The successful candidate will be able to deepen YCF's existing work in climate advocacy and envision additional avenues for impact.

The Senior Program Officer, Climate will demonstrate a broad knowledge of the climate and environment sector, a passion for climate advocacy and innovation, and a commitment to promoting equity. This professional will possess excellent interpersonal, collaboration, and leadership skills. Additionally, the Senior Program Officer, Climate will have a strong work ethic and a drive for excellence, with high personal and professional standards of transparency and accountability.

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

- Significant work experience in the environmental advocacy sector, preferably in a variety of roles

- Demonstrated knowledge and experience in implementing effective strategies for promoting equity in climate and environment-related policy
- An existing network in the environmental and climate fields – including leaders, practitioners and funders for equity; the ability to develop partnerships with and learn from other funders
- Knowledge of state, national, and/or international climate advocacy
- Working knowledge of best, promising, and emerging practices, research, and innovations in the climate field regionally, nationally, and internationally
- Experience with both sides of the grantmaking process
- Comfort working with and representing a quickly growing family foundation, and working closely with staff and board to shape programs and practices
- A willingness to challenge conventional thinking coupled with the ability to collaborate effectively and encourage dialogue
- Thought leadership and the ability to guide the YCF team, Board, grantees and partners on priority strategies for climate change
- Excellent organizational and project management skills, with an appreciation for and understanding of nonprofit organizations and the infrastructure needed to execute the work
- Outstanding relational, interpersonal, and collaboration skills, both internally and externally, with a coaching style and a learning mentality
- A communication style that reflects clarity, authenticity, transparency, confidence, and approachability, along with the ability to balance different perspectives
- Excellent written and oral communication skills; effective facilitation and presentation skills
- Ability to handle sensitive information confidentially and with discretion

## Start Timeframe

We seek to have someone in place in Winter 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](https://the360group.us).**