

Position and Candidate Specification



The Boston Foundation

President and CEO

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The Boston Foundation (“Foundation” or “TBF”) has responded to the changing needs of the community and the people it serves for the past century, and the next President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will lead at a crucial time. As the needs of the communities of Greater Boston change drastically and as the resources of the government – the city, the Commonwealth, and the nation – struggle to meet the demands, The Boston Foundation will need to pivot its emphasis to rebuild services and infrastructure and to join the national conversation about how to create more just, inclusive communities.

The CEO of The Boston Foundation is responsible for ensuring that the Foundation deliver on its mission:

“As Greater Boston’s community foundation, the Boston Foundation devotes its resources to building and sustaining a vital, prosperous city and region, where justice and opportunity are extended to everyone.”

The Board seeks a courageous, aspirational thinker on issues of equity and justice and a superb organizational leader and manager who has a vision for how to address the pressing problems in Boston and the region. She/he/they will possess the strategic acumen required to chart a course for the future in a dynamic environment, the operational acumen to oversee successful execution of goals, and the agility to be responsive to a changing external environment. The CEO will inspire confidence and broader investment through extensive partnerships with civic, business, and nonprofit leaders, through impact analysis, and by fostering effective grassroots leadership.

The President and CEO will drive organizational initiatives, both strategic and tactical, that will catalyze this ambitious mission in the Greater Boston community. To be successful, the President and CEO will embrace the Foundation’s values statement to “foster collaboration and heal racial, ethnic and community divisions.” These values require that the President and CEO and the Foundation engage with the Greater Boston community with empathy and authenticity so that ideas and voices coming from places of genuine need are fully heard and engaged. This inclusive based approach to the Foundation’s work applies within the organization and the new CEO will continue to inculcate these values in the internal operations of the Foundation.

The Boston Foundation is poised to serve the city and region as a convenor, a leader, a partner and a supporter. The next CEO will inherit a strong organization primed to lead during this critical moment that is filled with significant challenges and change.

Priorities for the next President and CEO:

- Expand TBF’s impact, leveraging its strengths, resources, and power to convene in order to build, drive and support critical efforts to embrace a “new normal” across the city and region where equity, justice and opportunity are truly available to all
- Develop strong, authentic relationships across the community, inviting input and partnership in crafting priorities
- Drive an ethos of continuous improvement and accountability in all areas of the Foundation’s work

- In partnership with a strong and committed Board, expand and maximize fundraising strategy and engagement with a focus on deepening relationships with current donors, identifying the next generation of donors and directors, forging partnerships with professional advisors, and creating compelling opportunities for investment and impact
- Inculcate the organization with a culture of collaboration and partnership; build high-functioning teams; develop structures, systems, and practices that optimize the internal effectiveness and build a strong sense of purpose
- Attract, develop and retain a diverse, talented team throughout the Foundation, and create a culture that enables all to thrive and contribute

Building upon the early efforts initiated this spring, lead the completion of the strategic planning process and deliver a plan that outlines the vision, priorities, and goals for the next chapter of The Boston Foundation. Serve as an effective advocate for, and champion of, the plan among key stakeholders and the broader community.

CORE CAPABILITIES

Strategic Visionary:

At a time when the focus on creating an equitable, sustainable, more compassionate future for the city and region has never been stronger, the next President and CEO will:

- Authentically engage the community in the shaping of a bold, audacious vision for the city and region; encourage risk-taking; and convene thought leaders and members of the community in imagining the future of the region
- Through the completion of the upcoming strategic plan and beyond, convey a compelling vision and articulate a clear set of priorities about how The Boston Foundation can evolve and innovate to drive greater impact of philanthropic capital in meeting the needs that are emerging from within the communities of Greater Boston
- As President and CEO, seek out new sources of wealth in Greater Boston and amplify TBF as the premiere philanthropic vehicle in the region with an emphasis on community impact and our long history of fiduciary stewardship
- Engage and influence the national philanthropic sector by setting the standard for community foundation engagement, integration, and impact

Collaborating and Partnering:

In a city with distinct history, strong communities and neighborhoods, and a range of challenging social, racial and economic issues, the next President and CEO will:

- Develop trusted, authentic relationships with a wide range of community members, approaching conversations with humility, a penchant for listening, and a desire to understand challenges and opportunities from the communities' perspectives
- Build partnerships with local organizations, community, business, and governmental leaders, donors, and individuals based on a shared commitment to the pressing needs of Greater Boston
- Embody and cultivate an open and accessible approach to engagement both internally and externally; be prepared to lead, to follow, to influence, or to partner as appropriate to reach the Foundation's goals
- Amplify community voices by directing TBF's considerable research and convening powers and by advocating for change to serve the needs of Greater Boston in collaboration with community partners
- Work closely with the board to align its funding opportunities (donor advised funds, unrestricted endowment funds and annual campaign for civic leadership giving) with its goals

Organizational Capacity Building

A large complex organization with outsized impact and evolving demands, TBF must develop a strong organizational framework and the resources to accomplish its ambitious goals. To do this, the next President and CEO will be a tested executive who will:

- Create an organizational structure that is both robust and flexible; bring strong financial, operational, managerial, and strategic acumen to all decisions, permitting the organization to be highly effective, responsive, and fluid
- Attract, develop, and motivate a talented, diverse staff throughout the organization; ensure that all feel engaged, aligned and valued; and foster a culture of teamwork, trust, and belonging
- Set a tone that invites and encourages critical and constructive input. Thrive on discussion and debate, listen thoughtfully, and create an environment where all voices are invited and heard
- Serve as principal champion as the Foundation shapes itself into an organization driven by continuous experimentation, evaluation, learning, adjustment and improvement

OTHER PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Deep, personal commitment to social and economic justice
- Appreciation for and encouragement of different perspectives
- Intellectually curious
- A skillful and authentic listener
- Embraces living in Boston and participating in its civic leadership
- Approachable, empathetic, and balanced
- An authentic and effective advocate and influencer
- Self-aware with the ability to be self-reflective
- Unquestioned integrity
- Optimistic and joyful; sense of humor

Now more than ever, The Boston Foundation has work to do. With Covid-19 raging throughout the world, the long-overdue focus on systematic racism, and the increased focus on equity and justice, the mission of the Boston Foundation could not be more pressing, more relevant:

“As Greater Boston’s community foundation, the Boston Foundation devotes its resources to building and sustaining a vital, prosperous city and region, where justice and opportunity are extended to everyone.”

As one of the nation’s [oldest and largest](#) community foundations, TBF serves the people, organizations and communities of Greater Boston and its region and has pivoted to meet the changing needs of the region. Since 1915, the Boston Foundation has invested more than \$2.05b into the city, \$1.6b of this since 2001. While these figures are large, the important focus is on what the leaders – civic, community, and business – accomplished with these funds to improve the city of Boston in a myriad of ways.

A New Era with New Challenges has enveloped the city, the region, the country and the world. The Covid-19 pandemic, combined with the demand for racial justice following George Floyd’s brutal murder, will change the city of Boston and demand a new role for The Boston Foundation. The City and Commonwealth will call upon The Boston Foundation, its partners, donors and peers, to collaborate in addressing many significant challenges: racial inequality in education, employment and health; the need to create a new vision for public safety and support; the impact of climate change, particularly on the most vulnerable; and the infrastructure needs of transportation and digital access.

These audacious problems will need equally audacious solutions, and the Boston Foundation will be a key player as a convener, a leader, a partner and a follower. Greater Boston relies on TBF to serve its numerous communities and the Foundation understands that a pivot is required – a pivot towards increased collaboration and partnership; a pivot towards the fundamental needs of the city’s most vulnerable; a pivot towards a profound, lasting change in the city’s racial and economic landscape. The next decade of the Boston Foundation promises to be one of bold shifts, ambitious vision, and broad collaborations in service of a more resilient, equitable, and thriving city and region.

Financial and Operational Highlights

The Boston Foundation has \$1.3b in assets - including a \$454m endowment (as of June 2019) and \$700m in Donor Advised Funds – and an operating budget of approximately \$18.5m. In 2019, the Foundation and its donors paid \$153 million in grants to nonprofit organizations, with \$16 million in grants going from the endowment, the Permanent Fund for Boston, to highly effective nonprofits working in its strategic areas. More than \$125 million in grants are made every year through donor advised funds, with some \$70 million of that giving going to nonprofit organizations in Greater Boston.

The Foundation has 111 full-time staff members and a 20-member Board of Directors, selected to represent the broad diversity of the community's interests and needs. Boston Indicators, the Foundation's research center, informs The Foundation's grant-making and publishes reports focusing on issues that are central to the city and region. The Philanthropic Initiative (TPI), a unit of the Foundation, provides third-party consulting services to families, foundations and corporations around the globe seeking to optimize their philanthropic giving.

THE SEARCH PROCESS

A Search Committee will advise the Board of Directors on the selection of The Boston Foundation's next President and CEO and has retained Spencer Stuart to support the search. The members of the Search Committee are actively seeking to identify the best candidates. To that end, they welcome your comments, inquiries, applications and nominations, which may be submitted via an e-mail message with supporting materials to: TBFCEO@spencerstuart.com.

The Boston Foundation is committed to providing fair and equitable consideration of all employees and applicants without regard to race, color, religion, ancestry, age, national origin, place of birth, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, genetic information, or status as a member of the armed forces or veteran of the armed forces, or any other category protected by federal, state, or local law.