

POSITION DESCRIPTION
THE JAMES IRVINE FOUNDATION – PROGRAM OFFICER
San Francisco or Los Angeles, CA
March 2016

The Opportunity

The James Irvine Foundation (<http://www.irvine.org>) is engaged in an exciting process of redefining its approach to grantmaking. Early this year, the Irvine Foundation announced its new grantmaking focused on families and young adults who are working but struggling with poverty. The Foundation will specifically address expanding economic and political opportunity for these families and young adults, including exploring ways to remove the systemic barriers that prevent too many Californians from achieving economic stability and political influence.

The Foundation is seeking a new Program Officer who will work in strategic and creative partnership with the Foundation's program and other staff on initiatives to advance Irvine's strategic goals. The ideal candidate brings deep content expertise in fields related to economic opportunity and/or political opportunity with diverse communities, a track record of working with cross-sector collaborations, prior grantmaking experience, excellent project and/or portfolio management experience, strong relationship management and interpersonal skills, entrepreneurial drive, and the ability to thrive and succeed in a dynamic, fluid workplace environment.

Background

The mission of The James Irvine Foundation is to expand opportunity for the people of California. The Foundation board recently approved two overarching goals for the Foundation: expanding economic opportunity (so more California families and young adults are self-sufficient) and expanding political opportunity (so more low-income Californians are engaged and have influence in the decisions that affect their lives). The Foundation views these as mutually reinforcing goals.

The Foundation is seeking to expand its program staff to contribute to the development of new initiatives as well as implement ongoing, existing initiatives.

Program Officers work in teams by initiatives, which may be led by a Portfolio Director, Senior Program Officer, or another senior staff member. Program Officers have an advisor, typically a Portfolio Director, who provides professional development coaching

and performance assessments. The Portfolio Director to whom this position will report will depend, in part, on the person's background and interests and the distribution of staff reporting to various Portfolio Directors.

Key Responsibilities

The following are the Program Officer's key responsibilities:

1. Grantee Partnerships and Support

- Monitor the performance of a set of grants; coach and advise grantees, including the negotiation of performance milestones to support grantee partner success.
- In partnership with the Portfolio Director and relevant initiative leads, identify organizations with strong potential for partnership; conduct due diligence and assess grantee partners for effective track records, internal capacity, and strategic skills.
- Consult and coordinate with other Irvine program staff in exploring new grantmaking opportunities.
- Contribute to written materials that communicate the alignment of grantee activities with portfolio goals and strategies, including grant recommendations and context papers.
- As appropriate, and in partnership with other Irvine staff, convene grantees and others in the field to advance collective action, networking, and learning opportunities for partners.

2. Strategy Development

- Remain well informed of current research, activities, and trends in the issues addressed by grantees.
- Participate in the ongoing refinement of Irvine's initiatives, through discussions with relevant program initiative teams.
- Contribute to the development of new program initiatives as appropriate.

3. Collaboration with Colleagues to Execute Portfolio and Foundation-wide Efforts

- Collaborate with other staff — to coordinate with and contribute to projects and relationships that may connect to other Foundation efforts.

- Maintain a working knowledge of other Foundation efforts.

Qualifications

The ideal candidate has the following qualifications:

- Work experience in grantmaking or project execution focused on benefitting target communities or populations, which could be in the public, nonprofit or private sectors, or in a substantive volunteer capacity.
- An understanding of issues related to economic opportunity and/or political opportunity.
- A commitment to and track record of working with disadvantaged communities.
- A Bachelor's degree is required.

The ideal candidate has the following skills and abilities:

- Demonstrated ability to plan and think strategically, set and achieve realistic goals, and objectives, and balance multiple priorities.
- Ability to assemble and assess data and research, and conduct landscape analyses
- Ability to learn new content areas quickly.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, and listening skills, and judgment in communicating within a variety of settings.
- Creative and entrepreneurial.
- The ability to work across the political spectrum, and to respect diverse perspectives.
- Ability to assess the leadership, track record, and capacity of social sector organizations and collaboratives.
- The personal presence to represent the Foundation in diverse forums and relationships.
- A desire to work collaboratively in a dynamic team-oriented environment.
- Comfort with ambiguity and willingness to be flexible and adaptable to changes in the needs of the Foundation's various initiatives.
- Ability to thrive and succeed in a dynamic, fluid workplace environment. A track record of having worked in an organization in a formative stage and an ability to get things done.

Application Process

Interested applicants should send a resume, cover letter and salary information by email to:

Martha Montag Brown & Associates, LLC

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