DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Steans Family Foundation
steansfamilyfoundation.org/
Reports to: Executive Director
Location: Chicago, IL

MISSION

The Steans Family Foundation ("SFF") concentrates its grant making and programs in North Lawndale, a community on Chicago’s west side, and North Chicago, a city 40 miles north of Chicago, and on aligned policy and ecosystem initiatives. By dedicating time, resources, and skills, The Foundation works in partnership with local residents and institutions to build and enhance both communities. The Foundation’s work supports the idea that effective revitalization can occur within the embedded social and economic networks that create and sustain communities. In addition, the Steans Family Foundation supports policy efforts that bolster the work on the ground, specifically focused on Early Childhood and Education, Employment, Criminal Justice Reform, and Community Development.
In 1986, the Steans family created the Steans Family Foundation to sponsor a class of sixth graders through the “I Have a Dream” program. The family’s familiarity through their work with “I Have a Dream” showed that a long-term personal involvement with individuals could change lives.

The Steans Family Foundation observes the model of “place-based” giving, focusing on communities rather than a particular set of issues. It engages with those communities – listening to their concerns and needs – and then pursues opportunities to further the interests of the communities, always in close partnership with “on the ground” stakeholders. The Foundation believes that this model of philanthropy enables it to have the most impact in its grantmaking. Novel approaches can be piloted, and important lessons learned which can then inform the work of others.

There are currently about 14 employees, when fully staffed there will be approximately 20. There are two offices, one in downtown Chicago and another in North Chicago. SFF grants about $15M annually to its community partners in North Lawndale and North Chicago. The Foundation is governed by a 7-member Board of Trustees comprised of family members and close advisors. It is co-located with two other family businesses, the law firm of Massey & Gail and Financial Investments Corporation (“FIC”), a private equity firm that also houses the Steans family office operations.
THE OPPORTUNITY

With the passing of the Steans Family patriarch, Harrison I. Steans in 2019, the corpus of the Foundation grew dramatically, making it now one of the largest funders in Chicago. With the substantial growth in the Foundation, it is now able to build internal capacity which will support programmatic expansion and impact. To ensure that systems, communications and grantmaking priorities remain aligned, the need for more operational support has become a priority. The goal is to bring a strategic, comprehensive, birds-eye perspective to the team serving as the glue between programs, staff, and Trustees.

During this exciting growth phase, the organizational structure has been evolving, with a number of new initiatives, committees and roles being created. Two key priorities for SFF will be to utilize data to shape and form strategic direction and to ensure systems are in place to monitor quality and evaluate performance.

Notably, a new programmatic pillar focusing on business creation and expansion has been created and the Trustees have established a new Impact Investment Committee. By using data and metrics, knitting together strategic initiatives, and ensuring effective project management, the program staff will be able to focus on the core business of building strong communities. While there is a need for operational oversight and systems, there is also a multitude of projects that require leadership. Examples of projects in progress include refining the programmatic dashboard, overseeing communications efforts, updating internal policy and procedures manuals such as human resources policies and branding guidelines, migrating software, redesigning the website, as well as serving as the point person for Board materials, the annual audit and budget preparation.

Supporting new, bold initiatives strategically and operationally while maintaining ongoing programmatic activities has led to the creation of a new role, Director of Operations. As a key member of the leadership team, this position presents an opportunity for a creative, nimble operations professional to serve as a strategic business partner, advisor, and thought leader guiding SFF into the future.
POSITION SUMMARY

Reporting to the Executive Director, the Director of Operations works with internal and external stakeholders to execute SFF’s mission and goals. As the Steans Family Foundation has expanded significantly over the past few years, the new Director of Operations role is designed to address the operational and communication needs across all the “pillars” of its grantmaking and policy programs. The Director of Operations will work closely with the Executive Director and the staff to provide leadership and promote teamwork and collaboration across the Foundation to further the mission. Working through the Executive Director, the Director of Operations will develop quality goals and objectives and analyze data to develop and support management decisions. The Director of Operations will be a trusted partner and resource to all internal stakeholders, including the Board of Trustees.

The Director of Operations is responsible for promoting integrity and consistency in all matters relating to fiscal operations, human resources, communications, and information technology. Contract negotiations and management of external vendors are also essential components of the job. The Director of Operations develops written and facilitated presentations for the Board of Trustees. In partnership with Chief Financial Officer of FIC, this person will serve as the liaison to the Finance Committee and, newly created Impact Investment Committee.

The successful candidate will be a multi-talented, flexible administrative professional who will oversee a range of human resource functions including: recruitment and onboarding, compensation and benefits, performance management, training and development, and employee relations. The Director of Operations will be the principal liaison with the auditors and Family Office Chief Financial Officer as well as other outside consultants.

The position will manage a staff of four including the Grants and Project Manager, two Administrative Assistants, and the Grants Manager. Providing professional development opportunities and ensuring access to needed resources for this team is expected.
SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Programming and Operations  (approximately 30% of time)

- Design and implement multi-year planning processes, engaging staff, key stakeholders, and Trustees in the development of a strategic plan
- Manage and enhance systems that allow for efficiency and smooth functioning of SFF’s operations. Responsible for delegating responsibility for various office functions to ensure that these run appropriately
- Operationalize policies and procedures aligned with strategic goals and grantmaking to ensure reflection of the Foundation’s values
- Prepare and present any annual adjustments to that plan to the Trustees
- Help coordinate and present performance results, comments, and recommendations to the Trustees at quarterly meetings
- Actively participate on the Leadership Team, give counsel, plan, and take actions that further the work

Budgeting and Finance  (approximately 30% of time)

- Serve as liaison to the CFO’s office and facilitate the board’s oversight of financial position, investment strategies, and 990 preparations
- Coordinate and oversee annual internal and external audits
- Coordinate and oversee development of annual plan and budget
- Prepare and present financial reports to management, auditors, and Trustees
- Review and negotiate all contracts with third party vendors
- Maintain and centralize contracts
- Ensure compliance with regulatory and reporting requirements of all internal and external stakeholders, including the IRS, auditors, partners, and the Trustees
Track Accounts Payable
- Maintain corporate records and ensure timely information sharing as required
- Raise staff awareness and knowledge of financial matters affecting the organization

**Human Resources Management** (approximately 25% of time)
- Oversee and enhance HR policy and practice and provide organizational HR leadership to ensure consistency with the Foundation’s values
- Develop and lead a results-based performance evaluation linked to the strategic plan
- Create and maintain an environment that fosters a high-performance learning culture, good employee morale, teamwork, and collaboration
- Revise SFF-specific personnel policies when needed
- Recommend disciplinary and other personnel actions in accord with personnel policy
- Develop and maintain HR system and ensure best practices are in place
- Possess and understanding of the compliance issues with federal, state, and local labor laws.

**Communications** (approximately 10% of time)
- Hire outsourced communications professional to design a communications strategy for SFF and serve as their liaison to staff and Trustees
- Oversee and ensure the ongoing development of the Foundation’s website
- Oversee and standardize the development of periodic reports to the Trustees across grantmaking programs, including coordination of the board book production.

**Facilities and IT Infrastructure Management** (approximately 5% of time)
- Analyze the current technology infrastructure and scope out the next level of information technology and financial systems that support the growth of specific programs and the organization overall
- Oversee the Foundation’s facility spaces to ensure they are maintained to highest standard and serve as liaison to property owner and/or tenants to address any needs or update agreements
- Serve as liaison to third party IT vendor including contract negotiation.

**OTHER**
- Represent SFF at community events
- Ensure that confidential information relating to the Foundation and its partners is kept confidential
- Be an excellent steward of the Steans family name, modeling the values that the family holds true

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**NOETIC**

Executive Search For Nonprofits
CANDIDATE PROFILE

They will be a credible and influential leader, with a track record of success in managing organizational change. As a skilled project manager, the successful candidate will have proven success achieving measurable, meaningful results. The ideal individual will focus on operational and stakeholder satisfaction while demonstrating the highest standards of ethics and integrity. A trustworthy, service-oriented individual who maintains confidentiality and fairness is sought.

They will thrive in a multicultural environment with open communication and a commitment to diversity, equity, anti-racism and inclusion. The successful candidate will be a competent, and confident leader who can serve as a guardian to the Foundation’s culture and translate its organizational strategy and priorities into workforce requirements and employment engagement strategies.

The ideal candidate must be a multi-tasker with the ability to identify and leverage resources, identify fiscal and operational best practices and implement accordingly. This person will be able to roll up their sleeves and quickly toggle between oversight of routine functions to high level strategy and everything in between. The successful candidate will support the Executive Director, Board of Trustees and program team by providing key financial information and operational analytics. Utilizing data to inform decision-making, narrative change, and communicate financial and programmatic data to others who may lack a finance background is required.

We seek a proven financial and operational strategist who has a successful track record of fiscal integrity as well as strong communication, interpersonal and management skills. The person we seek should embrace diversity and demonstrate a commitment to SFF’s mission and vision statements. A passion for creating positive social change is essential.

A balance between management acumen and creative thinking as well as the ability to assess and maintain policies, procedures and systems that enhance the capacities of SFF is sought. The successful candidate will have exemplary analytical skills and will excel in systems improvement, effective communication and the judgment to determine the best courses of action.
We seek a strategic thinker, analytical and imaginative problem solver with a track record establishing relationships marked by trust, respect and integrity. Excellent presentation, written, and verbal communication skills are necessary.

The person we seek will have high standards for planning, accountability, controls, timeliness, reporting, and accuracy. Understanding of IRS regulations related to foundations, philanthropic practices, and non-profit law is desired. Previous experience developing and monitoring budgets; financial oversight including compliance and risk management in an organization whose budget, size, and complexity of operations are comparable to those of the Steans Family Foundation is expected.

The qualified candidate is a collaborative, hands-on, self-starter with a consultative style who has an entrepreneurial personality yet is a team player. They are a multi-tasker who can easily adapt to a fast-paced environment where success is achieved through effective cross-department coordination. Excellent judgment, a sense of urgency, and a balance between analytical and intuitive skills is also sought. The successful candidate will have a sense of humor, ability to embrace and incorporate direct feedback and a high level of self-motivation. A trustworthy, service-oriented individual who maintains confidentiality and fairness is sought.

Undergraduate degree required, MBA or Master’s degree in Public Administration, Finance, or other business-related field desired. The qualified candidate will have ten or more years of experience, with five years leading staff. The Foundation’s staff are currently working in a hybrid fashion and taking all necessary precautions due to COVID-19.

**COMPENSATION**

Salary range is $142,000 - $175,000. Comprehensive benefits package includes employer paid medical, dental, and life insurance; long-term disability; an employer contribution of 4% of salary to a retirement account; and generous paid leave.
TO APPLY

Applications and nominations are being received by Noetic Search. Please click here to submit a current resume and letter of introduction to Noetic Search. For more information, please see our website at noeticexsearch.com or the Steans Family Foundation’s website.

Equal Opportunity Employer. Decisions and criteria governing the employment relationship with all employees are made in a non-discriminatory manner, without regard to race, ethnicity, creed, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, national origin, citizenship status, military service and/or marital status, order of protection status, handicap, disability, or any other factor determined to be unlawful by federal, state, or local statutes.