



## **Program Officer For Mississippi/New Orleans**

Jackson, MS & New Orleans, LA

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation, a leading philanthropic force helping communities create the conditions children need to thrive and the nation's fifth largest foundation, is seeking nominations and applications for a program officer for its formally established programs in Mississippi and New Orleans. In recent years the Foundation has sharpened its focus on improving conditions for vulnerable children, concentrating on three key factors of success and their intersections: education and learning; food, health and well-being; and family economic security. Across these three areas, they have committed to seek opportunities to promote racial equity and healing, build a critical mass of engaged volunteers, and expand the reach and influence of the philanthropic community.

Serving under the direction of the Vice President for Programs, the Program Officer will provide leadership and oversight for on-the-ground execution of program efforts that nurture opportunities for affecting positive systemic change within communities. S/he will screen and recommend grants for funding; conduct site visits; and manage and monitor a portfolio of grant programs aligned with the strategic framework, and collaborate with the other foundation program staff to develop a more interdisciplinary approach to grant-making. The program officer will maintain strong, authentic relationships with grant seekers and grantees, and act as a spokesperson for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, effectively communicating the foundation's goal of working with communities to improve the lives of their children.

The ideal candidate will have a master's degree and substantial work experience in fields related to the Racial Equity area as well as a national network of contacts and a deep and comprehensive understanding of program design and development. S/he will have expertise in asset development and building, including financial literacy, community assets, workforce development, and economic mobility policy. S/he will have the capacity, skill and hunger to assume leadership and management of a large body of work.

Successful program officers at the Foundation are holistic and interdisciplinary thinkers with a current understanding of broad social and economic forces affecting communities and families, demonstrated ability to develop and implement impactful programs, and the skill to facilitate authentic, productive dialogue within diverse communities and settings. The new Program Officer will demonstrate the ability to translate concept into action and stimulate direction for the program that capitalizes upon emerging opportunities. S/he will possess a strong team orientation, a high tolerance for ambiguity, the ability to adapt quickly to change, and success working effectively with persons from diverse cultural, social, and ethnic backgrounds.

The search committee is being assisted by Associate Vice President Allison Kupfer Poteet and Associate Jahkedda Akbar Mitchell of the Nonprofit Professionals Advisory Group. Please see application instructions at the end of this document.

### **HISTORY AND MISSION**

In 1930, breakfast cereal pioneer Will Keith Kellogg donated \$66 million in Kellogg Company stock and other investments "to help people help themselves" launching the W.K. Kellogg



Foundation. The Foundation began its work in Michigan, but by the 1940s had expanded its work internationally and was breaking ground in areas such as rural children’s health, “mainstreaming” children with disabilities, and the development of the healthcare profession. By its 50th anniversary, the Foundation was among the world’s largest private philanthropic organizations and, now in its 80th year, the Foundation celebrates over \$3 billion spent toward helping people to help themselves.

In 2007, the Foundation reviewed its work and revised and refocused program goals toward helping vulnerable children and realigning with W.K. Kellogg’s original intent. The new mission statement reads:

“The W.K. Kellogg Foundation supports children, families, and communities as they strengthen and create conditions that propel vulnerable children to achieve success as individuals and as contributors to the larger community and society.”

To bring the vision of this refreshed mission into action, the Foundation unveiled a new strategic framework for its programming. Previously, both the organization and its grantmaking were structured around individual programming areas. The new framework, built on 80 years of grantmaking experience, recognizes that success for vulnerable children depends on an intricate weave of elements. The three program areas (Education and Learning; Food, Health, and Well-Being; and Family Economic Security) all play interconnected roles in creating an environment in which vulnerable children are protected, nurtured, equipped and stimulated to succeed. Moreover, the attention to racial equity, the eradication of structural racism, and the rigorous encouragement of civic and philanthropic engagement across each of these program areas is essential to the creation of a social context in which all children can thrive, particularly the most vulnerable.

## **MISSISSIPPI PROGRAM**

In Mississippi, educational disparities and residential segregation help create pockets of poverty that endanger women and children and limit opportunities for young adults. Studies have proclaimed it the “worst state for women,” a state where women earn 26 percent less than men. And though the teen birth rate is the highest in the nation, the state offers no publicly funded childcare. Furthermore, enrolling two children in full-time care consumes 70 percent of a minimum wage earner’s salary. As a result, in 2007, 261,000 Mississippi children lived in poverty—almost twice the national average.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation has been partnering with grantees in Mississippi for more than 40 years now. By partnering with foundations, organizations and concerned community members, The Foundation is working to give children living in vulnerable communities in the Delta, in north Mississippi pathways to better education, equality and security.

In 2007, rooted in impactful relationships and a belief in the possibilities in Mississippi, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation made the decision to formally name Mississippi as a priority place. Understanding that change does not happen overnight, the Foundation will support local

communities in Mississippi and New Orleans, LA for at least a generation. If successful, this commitment to improving the conditions children face will change the trajectory of lives and communities throughout the state, and serve as a powerful example of what is possible in across the nation.

## **OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FACING THE PROGRAM OFFICER**

Work at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation is both a great privilege and a great responsibility. The new Program Officer will join an extraordinary team of individuals in the Mississippi/NOLA Programs office, passionate about eradicating social disparities and improving well-being for all children. Reporting to the Director of the Mississippi/NOLA Programs, the new Program Officer will have deep expertise in racial equity and healing and community development. S/he will identify and nurture opportunities for affecting positive systemic change within communities and lead on-the-ground execution of program efforts as follows:

- ***Execute across a well-developed, clearly articulated and unified vision and direction for programming across the Foundation that is aligned with the Foundation's mission, vision and core values and addresses broad social and policy issues.***  
Provide leadership and oversight for on-the-ground execution of program efforts.  
Communicate strategic direction and particular funding interests to various audiences, internal and external to the Foundation, so that the Foundation honors and communicates the nation's shared fate, ensures success for children of color living in poverty and affirms the power of communities to lead and make changes in the lives of their children.
- ***Collaborate with and support prospective and existing grantees in developing funding strategies, requests and plans.***  
Provide high-level technical assistance to grantees including conducting site visits and consulting on model development, partnership negotiations, leadership capacity building, and coaching. Provide sophisticated management and monitoring of grant portfolio including effectively screen, prioritizing and recommending grants for funding and preparing funding documents. Maintain strong, authentic relationships with grant seekers and grantees, ensuring understanding of WKKF program direction, goals, and expectations.
- ***Develop and steward partnerships in support of creating new opportunity structures for children and families.***  
Understand and effectively communicate the Foundation's mission, vision, core values and strategic direction to internal and external groups, including key stakeholders and intermediaries. Cultivate, forge and successfully maintain strategic relationships to leverage participation of other foundations, businesses, governmental agencies, and other key decision makers in alignment with WKKF core values and program interests. Working with key internal and external partners, identify and recommend grantmaking opportunities that leverage WKKF investments for maximum impact in creating systemic change.
- ***Maintain a wide breadth and depth of knowledge about trends, practices and issues relevant to program area.***

Work closely with Learning and Innovation to incorporate assessment components into program efforts to measure progress and impact. Document and circulate lessons learned from grant investments, networking meetings, and other Foundation-related activities. Work jointly with the Director of Learning and Innovation to identify and prioritize the highest value knowledge and learning from the Foundation's grant investments and networking meetings.

- ***Build public will and awareness of issues affecting vulnerable children and families.*** Contribute ideas for how the Foundation's highest value knowledge and learning could be packaged and disseminated to benefit nonprofit executives, business leaders, government officials, community leaders, parents, and other external stakeholders of the Foundation. Serve as a credible, articulate representative and spokesperson for the Foundation. Communicate the program's strategic direction and particular funding interests to various audiences, internal and external to the Foundation

## QUALIFICATIONS OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate will be first and foremost committed to the foundation's mission and will have a current understanding of broad social-economic, systemic forces affecting the economic wellbeing of children, their families and their communities. S/he will be distinguished in a relevant field of practice, with a strong team orientation, a high tolerance for ambiguity, the ability to adapt quickly to change, and success working effectively with persons from diverse cultural, social, and ethnic backgrounds. An advanced degree in a relevant field is preferred.

While no one person will embody all of the qualities enumerated below, the ideal candidate will possess many of the following professional and personal abilities, attributes and experiences:

- Master's degree and 8-10 years of relevant of practice with strong networks and contacts, as well as a broad, generalist background with deep and comprehensive understanding of program design and development, systems, networking, and community change.
- Evidence of effective work beyond areas of relevant field of practice and technical skills in one or more core programming areas (health, food systems, community development, etc.) that support the goal area/regional strategy are essential.
- Accurate and current knowledge about trends, movements, and developing policy to stimulate appropriate programming directions and capitalize on emerging opportunities. Understanding of broad social and economic forces that affect communities and families and shape programming efforts.
- Ability to translate concept into action and stimulate program direction that capitalizes upon emerging opportunities. Capacity to develop and implement impactful programs and effectively communicate conceptual program frameworks to grant-seekers and trustees.
- Demonstrated success in forge and stewarding partnerships with government agencies, foundations, policymakers and stakeholders in racial justice and equity, economic development, education and community organizations in support of advancement for children and families.

- Knowledge and sensitivity to effectively work with and support vulnerable communities including appreciation for historical context, discernment of relationship nuances and power dynamics, and understanding of social, racial and ethnic realities.
- Strong relationship building and communication skills; ability to have authentic dialogue around sensitive issues including funding priorities, WKKF expectations and community concerns. Highly developed emotional intelligence skills.
- Thorough knowledge and grasp of systems change and the ability to identify and orchestrate the levers of change. Sound judgment and the ability to make complex, multidimensional decisions based on both facts and experience.
- Excellent writing, editing, analytical, and oral communication skills. Ability to collect, review, synthesize, disseminate and present information and findings to broad and diverse audiences.
- Strong organizational skills and exceptional attention to detail. Ability to multitask and meet deadlines, and demonstrated resourcefulness in setting priorities. Capacity to work both independently without close oversight and a team player who will productively engage with and support others.
- An optimistic outlook and the humor, integrity, and patience necessary to work within a transformative environment.
- The ability and willingness to travel approximately 70 percent place (New Orleans/Mississippi) and 30 percent in Battle Creek, MI; varies according to work assignments.

## **APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS**

More information about The Kellogg Foundation may be found at <http://www.wkkf.org>.

Due to the pace of this search, candidates are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Applications including a cover letter describing your interest and qualifications, your resume (in Word format), salary history and where you learned of the position should be sent to: [KF-POMSNOLA@nonprofitprofessionals.com](mailto:KF-POMSNOLA@nonprofitprofessionals.com). In order to expedite the internal sorting and reviewing process, please type your name (Last, First) as the only contents in the subject line of your e-mail.