

Location: Chicago, IL

Status: Full-time, exempt

Reports to: Executive Director

Start date: Spring 2019

Education Program Officer

About the Foundation

Grand Victoria Foundation, with offices in Chicago and Elgin, is a private foundation that annually awards upwards of \$7M in grants and other support. The Foundation is in the midst of great change -- in addition to new leadership and team members, we have retooled our mission, vision and strategy to focus our philanthropy more deeply on supporting community-driven solutions to persistent challenges. Our vision is a strong, livable and equitable Illinois where every resident has an opportunity to thrive.

Our grantmaking focuses on creating change for and with communities closest to the need, with a goal to achieve equitable outcomes that reduce disparities and ensure fair access to resources in our areas of interest.

Our new grantmaking approach will:

1. develop and nurture individual leadership;
2. build and sustain strong and effective organizations;
3. support the development and execution of new ideas to address long standing systemic challenges;
4. offer opportunities for leaders and organizations to connect, share information and take collective action when necessary; and,
5. encourage and uplift civic engagement

The Education Program Officer will join the Foundation during this time of big change and opportunity. The Foundation seeks candidates who are deeply invested in pursuing educational equity for parents, teachers and students and who believe that community-based strategies and approaches are credible and powerful ways to bring about systems and policy change in education. We also are looking for candidates who are excited about helping us build a strong organizational culture that is aligned with our values, mission and vision.

The Role

The Education Program Officer will help us support educational champions (parents, teachers, and students) in their efforts to create stronger and more equitable educational opportunities, experiences and outcomes. The Foundation historically has supported K-12 work, with a more recent focus on early education. However, given the new direction of our work, the Education Program Officer will lead the effort to build a more vision-aligned education program.

If this work is done successfully, examples of anticipated outcomes are:

- creative leadership development will spur ideas for more equitable solutions and generate new resources for the field;

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- new ideas will be defined, developed and implemented, and learnings about community and policy impact will be generated and shared; and,
- more students, families, and teachers will actively participate in shaping the education system, resulting in increases in well-being

The strongest candidates for the Education Program Officer role will be able to demonstrate their ability to thrive in the organization's emerging work norms:

- **Purpose-driven:** Grounded in the work, aware of the impact that is possible, and able to purposely engage and collaborate with others internally and externally to move the work forward
- **Innovation:** Able and eager to identify new opportunities, strategies and approaches to philanthropy within and outside of traditional systems and structures
- **Entrepreneurialism:** Able to grow the Foundation's education work and establish our identity in the field throughout the state
- **Ideas and inquiry:** Generate ideas, then test those ideas internally and externally to establish original methods and points of view
- **Comfort with ambiguity:** Possess the confidence and flexibility to successfully work in an environment where experimentation is encouraged

Responsibilities

The primary goals of the Education Program Officer are as follows:

- Restructure and rebuild the Foundation's existing education program to help us realize our goal of building a more grantee-centric philanthropy practice;
- Build a pipeline of education grantees whose work has the greatest potential to bring about systems and policy changes in education, and create new education grants criteria and application process;
- Manage the program budget, allocating resources to community-based coalitions and organizations whose work has the potential to spur systems and/or policy change
- Establish, cultivate, and manage relationships with education champions and organizations in order to generate new ideas and resources and foster partnership
- Help support internal efforts to build a strong organizational culture at the Foundation that is rooted in equity, inclusion and aligned with our values and vision

Skills and Characteristics

The most competitive people for this role will have many of the following skills and/or characteristics:

- Direct and progressively responsible experience working with community-based education organizations
- Understanding of how education systems work, intersect and influence one another, along with knowledge of how to create impact in education outside of traditional systems and structures
- Ability to manage up and across the Foundation to effectively engage colleagues and to keep important initiatives and programs moving forward
- Strategic, analytical problem solver, who identifies and leverages resources to advance grantmaking

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Qualifications

- A belief in the Foundation's mission, vision and theory of change
- Bachelor's degree required; graduate degree preferred
- At least 5 years of progressively responsible work experience working on education issues, with experience working with community-based programs and coalitions
- Experience facilitating productive collaborations among multiple parties, and designing and leading meetings to build consensus on problems and their solutions
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office applications and databases

Travel: A valid driver's license is needed, and occasional evening work and local and overnight travel is expected.

Compensation and benefits: Salary is competitive and based on qualifications. Benefits include health, dental, and life insurance, a 401K plan with employer-paid matching contribution, generous paid vacation and holidays, and professional development resources.

How to apply: Please apply using the following link: tinyurl.com/GVF-Education. No phone calls please.

The Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and actively invites a diversity of candidates regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, or religion.

KLB Consulting: Grand Victoria Foundation has retained KLB Consulting to lead this search. KLB Consulting is an executive search consultancy that helps find highly qualified leaders for nonprofit organizations.