



POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT
Program Officer, U.S. Disability Rights

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Ford Foundation seeks a dynamic, strategic leader to serve as a Program Officer in its new U.S. Disability Rights portfolio, which seeks to strengthen the power, influence, and inclusion of disabled people in social justice movements by supporting a strong, intersectional disability movement within the U.S.

Using disability rights and justice frames, the foundation's U.S. Disability Rights portfolio aims to fuel the impact of organizations that effectively advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities, a deep and diverse community of disability activists committed to social change, and a movement that has a pipeline of diverse leaders who have the opportunity to carry out the social change they seek.

In close consultation with the disability community and Ford colleagues, the Program Officer will envision and create a Disability Rights portfolio strategy; develop and manage a grant portfolio, serve as a key convener and thought-leader with various stakeholders in public and private settings; and support the foundation's efforts to build philanthropic partnerships that elevate disability within the sector.

BACKGROUND

People with disabilities experience deep and persistent inequality. The world's largest minority, 1 billion people worldwide and one in five Americans - disabled people remain largely out of view: segregated in our communities, living with some of the highest rates of unemployment and poverty, experiencing disproportional gender-based and police violence, and confronting significant stigma and discrimination in healthcare access. Moreover, disability exacerbates such disparate outcomes for women, those of color, sexual minorities, and religious or ethnic minorities. Structural racism, class, and gender discrimination compound the ableism people with disabilities experience. Despite these intersections, social movements have also been slow to explicitly include disabled people and their priorities. At the same time, vibrant communities of disabled people have been advocating for decades with little recognition of or investment into their power and influence by private philanthropy.

Addressing inequality is a key focus of the Ford Foundation globally. Throughout the foundation's history, we have worked to remove the obstacles that prevent people from participating fully, freely and with dignity in the world. In 2016, as part of our mission to disrupt inequality in all its forms, we committed to ensuring that disability rights and inclusion were included in our mission, including in our grantmaking, communications, hiring, and our physical space and operations.



Now four years into our journey and celebrating the 30th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, we consider the work ahead. Through disability-inclusive grantmaking across our programs, we are one of the largest funders of disability rights. The creation of a formal U.S. Disability Rights portfolio will deepen and strengthen this commitment and ensure a more sustainable approach that benefits from a strategy developed by and for disabled people.

Ford Foundation has a history of field building from early portfolios in civil rights in the 1960s to today's emerging portfolio of Technology & Society. Our investments in these spaces and so many others helped establish fields, strengthen the landscape of organizations, identify gaps, and encourage other funders to recognize and invest. Strong fields and influential voices require strong organizations, but also strong field infrastructure.

Embodying “nothing about us without us,” through collaborative and consultative program design, Ford's Disability Rights portfolio will use the disability rights and justice frameworks to support a vibrant disability movement in the U.S.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Developing Ford's first disability grantmaking portfolio, the Program Officer will recommend grants and design complimentary activities to deliver on the program goals, strategies and anticipated outcomes. Specifically, the Program Officer will assess and analyze the disability field; identify key ecosystems and opportunities to shape and influence agendas; and leverage Ford's US funding to inform our global grantmaking approaches. The PO will share substantive knowledge internally and provide thought leadership on disability rights with a strong race, class and gender analysis.

The Program Officer will work in a team under the supervision of the Director in the Office of the President. As part of a multidisciplinary team, the Program Officer will:

- Develop the U.S. Disability Rights portfolio strategy, creating program goals and priorities together with the foundation's Office of Strategy and Learning and through a consultative process;
- Make grants that are aligned to the strategic goals of the portfolio strategy and designed to achieve significant impact over the medium-term;
- Manage, monitor and coordinate a grants portfolio, including annual grant planning and budgets; identifying and working with prospective grantees to develop proposals for recommending grants; conducting organizational assessments; undertaking periodic reviews of progress with grantees; and reviewing financial and narrative reporting from grantees;
- Engage with grantees, external stakeholders and the philanthropic community to review opportunities, challenges and advances, build networks, and encourage collaboration, learning, exchange and strategic partnerships;
- Work collaboratively and productively with partners across the foundation, including, but not limited to: (1) Senior Advisor, Disability Inclusion who is tasked with advising the foundation on integrating a disability lens across all U.S. and



global grantmaking and on inclusion in operations; and (2) Program staff across the foundation who make disability-inclusive grants within the foundation's other strategies.

- Work as a resource and in collaboration with colleagues in the foundation's Regional Offices who are supporting disability rights grantees.
- Recommend and participate in evaluation and learning activities to guide the evolution of programmatic work, working with the team and the foundation's Office of Strategy and Learning;
- Support the foundation's efforts to galvanize funding from other funders through the work of the Presidents' Council for Disability Inclusion in Philanthropy and other funder networks;
- Identify connections and opportunities for bridge-building between the disability movement and the other social movements supported by the foundation's U.S. programs;
- Contribute to the public discourse through writing, speaking and other thought leadership; and
- Represent the foundation in meetings with other donors, potential grant seekers and in disability movement and social justice spaces.

QUALIFICATIONS

This Program Officer must have a demonstrated track record of successful collaborations and:

- A minimum of 8 years of experience in either the disability rights and/or social justice philanthropy space.
- A thought leader that is highly respected in terms of disability rights and civil rights. Has an excellent understanding of challenges within the U.S. disability movement in relation to race, gender, class, and sexual orientation as well as the ability to navigate diverse disability movements and stakeholders.
- Understanding of disability justice and strong relationships with networks of disability justice leaders to support the foundation in its ongoing efforts to integrate a stronger disability justice approach.
- An excellent team player—flexible, collaborative with an ability to build supportive relationships with and coordinate among diverse programs across the foundation and within the disability community.
- A diplomatic leader with strong ethics and integrity as they represent the foundation's values and strategies on disability with diverse stakeholders.
- A recognized influencer and trusted partner who can build relationships with funders and other social justice movements—with a demonstrated track record of successful collaborations, an understanding of organizations and networks.
- Knowledge of the philanthropic sector and grantmaking processes.
- Proven experience devising, monitoring and leading impact-driven strategies that is grounded in a participatory approach to evaluation, learning and strategy.
- Exceptional communications skills—strong active listening skills, constructive verbal and written skills, strong public presentation skills.



- Intellectually curious; demonstrated openness to new ideas and a diversity of perspectives.
- A master's degree in a relevant field of study or equivalent experience or a baccalaureate degree and equivalent experience.
- Ability and willingness to travel both domestically (approximately 15%). Some travel is directly related to grantmaking, but also to attend conferences and meetings.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

This position is primarily a sedentary role. However, the person in this position may need to occasionally move about inside the office to liaise with internal staff, access files, office machinery and a copy machine/printer. As stated above, the position involves some travel.

The Ford Foundation is committed to providing access, equal opportunity and reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities in employment, its programs, and operations. As part of this commitment, the Foundation will ensure that persons with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodations. If a reasonable accommodation is needed to participate in the job application process, please contact Krystin Falcone, People and Culture, k.falcone@fordfoundation.org (212) 573-4627.

ALIGNMENT TO THE MISSION AND THE CULTURE OF THE FORD FOUNDATION

- Commitment to the Foundation's mission and core values of equity, openness, collaboration, trust, accountability and urgency
- Personal qualities of humility, capacity for self-reflection, and a sense of humor
- Discretion and ability to handle confidential issues
- Action-orientated and entrepreneurial self-starter who can work independently and in teams

Benefits

- Medical and dental benefits for employee and immediate family on first day of work
- Retirement savings account with matching company contributions of up to 13%
- Three weeks' paid vacation in first year of work; four weeks in subsequent years
- Tuition Reimbursement
- Office closed the week between Christmas and New Year's Day
- Professional development initiatives for growth
- Generous parental leave (maternal and paternal) during new child's first year (born into family or adopted)

Location: New York, NY

Salary: is based on experience and on the Foundation's commitment to internal equity. A generous benefits package is provided.

To apply: Please visit <http://www.fordfoundation.org/careers> by October 1, 2020.



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Equal employment opportunity and having a diverse staff are fundamental principles at The Ford Foundation, where employment and promotional opportunities are based upon individual capabilities and qualifications without regard to race, color, religion, gender, pregnancy, sexual orientation preference, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, disability, veteran status or any other protected characteristic as established under law.

September 2020