

OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS

SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA/DIRECTOR OF U.S. PROGRAMS

July 2017

The Open Society Foundations (OSF) is seeking a Special Assistant to work with the Regional Director for the United States and Canada supporting and representing the Regional Director/Director in a wide range of functions and participating as project leader in multiple projects within and outside of OSF. The Director also heads U.S. Programs which is the primary grant-making vehicle for OSF in the United States. In these roles, the Director establishes and adjusts strategies in the United States, fosters and sustains collaborations that are undertaken in the United States, and regularly assesses and strengthens the quality and effectiveness of the programs.

Job Profile

The Special Assistant provides direct programmatic and high level administrative support to the Regional Director for the United States and Canada. The Special Assistant is likely to have responsibility to convene and conduct status meetings, undertake special projects that require research and engagement of other OSF colleagues, develop regular reports and analysis, attend certain events on behalf of the Director, and otherwise facilitate the Director's effectiveness on issues, which will involve considerable judgment and autonomy.

The Special Assistant should be well-grounded in policy issues and the dynamics affecting non-profits and other institutional actors within the United States, including general knowledge of how non-profits operate, how policy and political change is achieved, and how philanthropy impacts the fields in which it operates. The role requires extensive knowledge of organizational management and cross-cultural leadership along with the ability to adapt and learn in a complex institutional environment. The individual is responsible for working collaboratively with minimal supervision and participating materially in developing, assessing, and executing strategies and specific projects.

The role includes significant engagement across departments, programs, and staff levels in a manner that encourages clear communication and respectful collegiality. Relationships are critical to the success of the role and diverse in scope. The role requires the development and nurturing of trusting relationships internally and externally, and understanding and managing competing interests, complex political and institutional factors, and tensions between long-term and short-term goals. The individual is responsible for working collaboratively with minimal supervision and participating materially in developing, assessing, and executing strategies and specific projects.

Typical duties and responsibilities will include:

- develops and manages elements of the Regional Director's role and activities. This is expected to include anticipating and following through on issues that have been highlighted as priorities for the program, initiating planning and scheduling for such priorities, preparing the Regional Director for such meetings, and working with other staff in the Office of the Director on scheduling and preparation to maximize successful execution of such priorities

- participates in, including at times convening, and reports on internal and external meetings and processes
- identify, respond, and assess matters that are in preliminary stages of development to determine if they are worth further follow-up, respond to efforts emanating from the Office of the President or Chairman, and ongoing efforts related to cross-OSF or cross-USP initiatives. This involves undertaking preliminary research and assessment of possible projects and determining appropriate paths to proceed with regard to early stage ideas
- communication functions which include working on speeches and publications of director, internal communications with staff, and working with Executive Assistant and others on correspondence and representation of the Director in outside forums that the Director cannot attend as requested
- ongoing research and information Assembly, including identification of issues and opportunities that could impact the executive team and alternative approaches to addressing problems or opportunities
- in collaboration with Executive Assistant and senior managers in USP, ensure the smooth running of the Director's office and active feedback for Director to improve functioning and institutional culture.
- support Director to create and manage effective and lean coordinating mechanisms to improve communication and team collaboration towards focused prioritization and open transparent communication. Support positive change management to champion new ways of working together.
- lead and actively manage projects from design to implementation as assigned by the Director ensuring efficient implementation and administration of the project plan, including coordination of diverse and multiple stakeholders, work streams prioritization, change management, and tracking of outcomes and requirements.

Candidate Profile

As noted above, the Special Assistant should be well-grounded in the knowledge of policy and institutional issues within the United States, including extensive knowledge of organizational management and cross-cultural leadership with the ability to adapt and learn in a complex institutional environment. As the Regional Director's 'trusted counsel,' the role requires strong emotional intelligence, self-motivation, analytical and interpersonal skills, and attention to detail and follow-up.

Additional desired qualifications include the following:

- bachelor's degree (B.A.) from a four-year college or university and 7 years of progressively responsible experience working in a relevant field; or equivalent combination of education, experience and accomplishment. Advanced degree preferred. substantive and/or organizational professional experience in one or more of the subject areas in which OSF focuses, ideally in roles which required facilitating participatory processes and leading ad hoc teams. Non-profit or

foundation experience preferred but equivalent experience in public or private sectors accepted with experience in multiple sectors valued

- experience in organizational problem solving, project planning and management, and change management in complex organizations
- highly developed oral and written communications skills, and proven ability to effectively communicate with senior executives and staff at all levels
- strong qualitative and quantitative research skills using on-line and off-line, official and unofficial, field-based and traditional sources
- effective, versatile, and action-oriented approach
- strong project management, strategic, and organizational skills, including ability to be self-reflective, read complex interpersonal and political dynamics, and provide critical and confidential input and feedback
- strong negotiation and persuasion skills
- ability to think quickly and rigorously, ask probing clear questions, and drive toward practical solutions quickly in a fast-paced environment involving multiple priorities
- ability to work strategically and collaboratively with multiple stakeholders
- ability to travel with the Executive Director as necessary
- sense of humor and excitement about the potential for positive social change a requirement

Work Environment and Physical Demands: Essential functions are typically performed in an office setting with a low level of noise. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

We are strengthened by the diversity of our colleagues across the Open Society Foundations, and we welcome and actively seek applications from people of all cultures, backgrounds, and experiences

To Apply, please click the following link: <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/jobs/jr-0000643/special-assistant>