

POSITION OPEN: LGBTQ Equality Program Officer

About Us

The Laughing Gull Foundation (LGF) is a progressive family foundation rooted in the US South. The foundation envisions healthy and sustainable communities where everyone can be their whole selves and live in balance with the earth. LGF works to create a world in which everyone is supported, included, embraced, and protected, especially those who have been pushed to the margins of our human family.

LGF's mission is to honor our family's evolving identity while proactively addressing broken systems that have created inequality and harmed our planet. The foundation leverages its resources to transform systems, institutions and relationships for the benefit of people and the environment. LGF works towards its mission through grantmaking, funder organizing and impact investing, in support of three priorities: LGBTQ equality, higher education in prison, and environmental justice. In the service of its commitment to the redistribution of wealth, LGF plans to spend out its assets over the next 16 years. LGF's strategic goals for its tenure include progress on the priority issues it supports, growth of progressive philanthropy in the US South, and sustenance of a vibrant learning community.

Laughing Gull Foundation was founded in 2012 and is based in Durham, North Carolina. LGF is led by an engaged and committed board of directors, all of whom are members of the founding family. LGF granted approximately \$3.5 million in 2019, and plans to achieve an annual grantmaking budget of \$6 million across all three grantmaking programs by 2022. Currently a staff of five, LGF plans to grow to a full staff of six by 2021.

LGF is the largest Southern-based funder of LGBTQ issues. In 2019, LGF made grants totaling \$1.9 million to 32 organizations supporting the LGBTQ community in the South. LGF played an instrumental role in creating and launching the Out in the South Initiative housed at Funders for LGBTQ Issues, and continues to serve as a leader in organizing support for LGBTQ issues among philanthropic peers.

The foundation's values guide how it carries out its philanthropic mission. Those values include building authentic relationships, supporting impact and sustainability, and holding a power analysis with humility. LGF is actively building its analysis of structural racism, and formalizing a racial equity lens in all of LGF's work. LGF honors the expertise of leaders and organizations, and therefore prioritizes multi-year grantee relationships and general operating support whenever possible. The foundation's organizational culture mirrors its values. LGF is a learning organization with a relational and engaged staff and board culture.

Opportunity

LGF is excited to welcome the next leader of its groundbreaking LGBTQ Equality Program. The Program supports advocacy, organizing, direct services and the work of changing hearts and minds. LGF prioritizes organizations that are intersectional and/or committed to building their racial equity analysis and practices. Geographically, the LGBTQ Equality Program focuses

specifically on Virginia and North Carolina, and also invests in work that supports the LGBTQ community across the South.

The Program Officer will manage the LGBTQ Equality Program and engage in philanthropic networking and organizing. The Program Officer will engage current grantees, identify new grantees, and support the learning and networking of LGBTQ communities and movements in the South. Given LGF's plan to spend down in 16 years, and its unique position as the largest Southern-based funder of LGBTQ issues, philanthropic organizing is integral to supporting LGBTQ communities and meeting LGF's mission. The Program Officer will play a critical role in working with other funders, both in the South and nationally, to increase support for LGBTQ communities in the South.

The Program Officer will be supervised by the Executive Director and will work out of LGF's office in Durham.

Responsibilities

Grantee Management and Engagement:

The Program Officer will build robust relationships with current and potential grantee partners, and promote trust-based engagement. Collaborating and learning with grantees, the Program Officer will review opportunities, challenges and advances as well as encourage mutual learning and strategic partnerships. Specifically, the Program Officer will manage and coordinate the LGBTQ grants portfolio, including: planning for long-term grants; identifying and working with prospective grantees to develop proposals for grant recommendations; undertaking periodic reviews of grantee progress; and conducting site visits.

Philanthropic Networking and Organizing:

The Program Officer will provide leadership to support initiatives and networks that increase philanthropic support of LGBTQ communities in the South. The Program Officer will identify and convene like-minded funders; present at conferences to highlight LGBTQ issues and the work of Southern organizations; and engage with Southern funders, national funders and intermediaries, to encourage interest in supporting LGBTQ issues and communities in the South.

Thought Leadership:

The Program Officer will be LGF's in-house expert on LGBTQ issues in the South and be expected to continually scan the field and keep abreast of the changing political climate related to LGBTQ issues and communities in the US, and specifically in the South. The Program Officer will share key findings, updates and learnings both internally and externally, in alignment with LGF's communications strategy.

Organizational Learning and Development:

The Program Officer will contribute to the thinking and work of the foundation overall and engage in team building and team effectiveness. LGF strives to be a learning organization, and the Program Officer will engage learning and evaluation activities to guide the evolution of the foundation's work. The Program Officer will help contribute to and build a learning, inspiring, fun and thriving organizational culture with LGF.

The Ideal Candidates

Requirements

- At least three years of experience in a field-building role with a philanthropic, policy-focused, or intermediary organization
- At least five years of successful employment within a social change oriented nonprofit at a programmatic or management level
- Lived experience with the communities and issues that LGF prioritizes in its programming
- Lived experience with racially and otherwise diverse LGBTQ communities
- Lived experience in the US South
- An understanding of the needs and complexities of LGBTQ communities in the South
- Ability and willingness to travel 40-50% of the time, primarily in NC and VA, but also in other areas of the South and nationally for site visits and conferences
- Availability for limited weekend work at relevant conferences and local board meetings
- Associate or Bachelor's degree, or equivalent relevant professional and lived experience

Commitment to Social Justice

- Deep commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and a sophisticated understanding of the systemic, structural, and historical challenges that impact LGBTQ communities
- Experience applying a racial equity and social justice lens to addressing complex problems
- Familiarity and experience working with social justice concepts and frameworks such as racial equity, gender analyses, economic justice, intersectionality, and implicit and structural bias
- Understanding of systems of oppression, and of the power dynamics inherent in the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors, and commitment to addressing those

Cultural Fit and Work Style

- Ability to internalize the vision and values of LGF's board of directors and to express and represent these values in carrying forward the Foundation's mission
- Experience and comfort working in a small organization where the board is actively involved and connected with the staff
- Ability to be a productive member of a community of people at work, respecting differences while working toward shared goals, being comfortable with periods of ambiguity, and constructively participating in organizational learning and development
- Openness to discovery, feedback, and continuous learning
- Qualities of humility, capacity for self-reflection, and a sense of humor
- Ability to work well independently and in teams
- Action-oriented and self-starter who can take initiative to enact the vision and priorities articulated by the board

Collaborative Relationship Builder

Excellent cross-cultural relationship-building skills; comfort moving between board rooms, professional conferences, grassroots events, and local organizations and communities

A track record of working collaboratively with a variety of stakeholders, including those with lived experience, to align in pursuit of common goals

Comfort taking the lead and possessing the maturity to create room for others

Ability to form positive, authentic relationships with potential and current grantees

Excellent Communicator

Strong analytic skills, and the ability to synthesize and frame information to support dialogue on complex issues

Exceptional communications skills: active listening, cogent and polished writing, constructive yet humble speaking, and comfort with public speaking and presentation to diverse audiences and in diverse contexts

Compensation

This is a full-time, exempt position. The salary range for this position, commensurate with experience, is \$75,000 to \$90,000. Additionally, a generous benefits package will be offered. A moving stipend will be offered as necessary.

Application

All submissions will be acknowledged and are confidential. Candidates should include a resume and a cover letter that describes how their qualifications and experience match the needs of LGF. Candidates are strongly encouraged to submit materials by March 1, 2020. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled, with priority given to those received by this date.

People of color, women, and LGBTQ people are encouraged to apply. The Laughing Gull Foundation is committed to equal employment opportunities for all applicants and employees. LGF does not discriminate against any individual based upon their race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation or preference, gender identity or expression, immigration status, national origin, marital/domestic partner status, former incarceration status, or disability.

LGF's ability to achieve its mission is enhanced by a diverse team, an inclusive culture, and strategies that apply an equity lens. LGF seeks candidates who possess the knowledge, skills, and lived experience that contribute to the diversity of our team and share a commitment to equity.