

The Cullen Foundation of Western New York, Inc.

Program Officer

Position Description 6/25/2024

Position:	Program Officer (Education)
Reports To:	President
Location:	Buffalo, New York
FLSA Status:	Exempt
FT/PT Status:	40 hours/week (Monday through Friday); 100% in-person
Direct Reports:	None
Salary Range:	\$80,000 to \$100,000
Benefits:	Company contribution toward health, dental & vision plans. Company paid life insurance and short/long-term disability. Paid Parking. Paid time off. Retirement plan contribution.

Overview:

The Cullen Foundation of Western New York, Inc. of Buffalo, New York is seeking a **Program Officer** to manage its PreK-12 education programs and portfolio. The Foundation funds nonprofit organizations in Western New York with two main, separate focus areas: PreK-12 education and the performing arts.

The Foundation's education strategy comprises three main areas: local charter schools, human capital/talent, and supplemental academic programs (SAP). Within these areas, our priority is supporting evidence-based programs with specific, direct, measurable academic outcomes, particularly programs that serve economically disadvantaged students in the city of Buffalo.

Position Summary:

The Program Officer takes a leadership role in managing the Foundation's education investments/grants. The Program Officer works collaboratively with other staff members (3) and the Foundation's Board of Directors (6) and takes the lead on many projects. The selected candidate must have deep knowledge of PreK-12 public schools and the urban education landscape, preferably with some experience in the areas of charter schools, human capital/talent, and/or supplemental academic programs. Experience in the grant making processes is a plus.

The Program Officer conducts various due diligence functions; builds strong relationships with grantees and education sector experts; supports the implementation of the Foundation's education strategic plan; and is a positive contributor to the Foundation's efforts to support its grantees and their constituents in Buffalo, NY.

Primary Job Functions:

1. **Strategy & Knowledge Building:**

- In partnership with the Foundation's Board members and other staff/teammates, helps shape, implement, and manage the Foundation's work with local charter schools, human capital investments, and supplemental academic programs.
- Performs ongoing evaluation of the Foundation's progress toward its strategic education priorities; will build and manage the Foundation's education investment dashboard.
- Shares content expertise in periodic internal strategic planning work.
- Participates in continuous learning to advance knowledge of best practices, education policy, and research in the fields of urban education, charter schools, educational equity, supplemental academic programs, and human capital/talent.

- Is knowledgeable of current trends, best practices, and research in the local and national PreK-12 education landscape, including those related to charter schools, supplemental academic programs, and human capital/talent areas.
 - Serves as a lead contributor to Foundation’s education knowledgebase.
2. Grantmaking:
- Collaborates with local education nonprofits to develop proposals for possible funding; reviews, analyzes, and evaluates grant applications from education organizations; and makes funding recommendations to the Foundation Board that are aligned with its education strategy.
 - Implements assessment and evaluation methods for education grant requests and possess a strong understanding of data evaluation tools, performance metrics/indicators, and grant outcomes.
 - Reviews and analyzes resources provided by grantees before, during, and after the grant term, including data reports, financials, strategic plans, evaluations, and other key work products.
3. Relationships and Teamwork:
- Builds and maintains strong, collaborative, and community-focused relationships with multiple stakeholders, including staff/teammates, Board members, professional peers, and local nonprofit leaders.
 - Serves as a resource for education sector applicants/grantees, assisting them with the development of solid proposals/funding requests, and managing those proposals/requests funded by the Foundation throughout the grant term (fielding questions, problem-solving issues, etc.).
 - Prepares materials for Board meetings and community meetings as needed.
 - Performs other duties as assigned by the President.

Required Skills:

1. Education Sector Expertise:
- Extensive knowledge of the PreK-12 education sector, including evidence based academic programs and public policy issues around educational equity.
 - Familiarity with human capital/talent challenges facing traditional public schools and charter schools, and the strategies high-performing organizations are taking to address such challenges.
 - Experience working in one or more of the following areas is preferred:
 - High-performing charter school or charter management organization (CMO)
 - Results-oriented human capital/talent organization
 - High-performing, evidence-based supplemental academic program (SAP)
 - Philanthropic organization with an education focus
 - Urban school district serving economically disadvantaged PreK-12 students
 - Research and interpretation skills specific to education data: ability to locate, interpret, and analyze data related to student and school academic performance.
2. Communication Skills:
- Capacity to work collaboratively and effectively with education nonprofits, community leaders, the Foundation’s Board members (6), and staff/teammates (3).
 - Ability to build and maintain an education dashboard that communicates education investments’ effectiveness and overall progress in the Foundation’s education sector goals.
 - Demonstrated ability to work with a broad spectrum of individuals and across lines of difference in WNY communities.
 - Ability to effectively and positively represent the Foundation in a variety of settings.

3. Additional Professional Skills and Experience:

- Experience in the development, implementation, and evaluation of strategies to affect change.
- Excellent planning and project management skills, including ability to implement high-level strategy, problem solve, and see projects through to completion.
- Strong verbal, written and interpersonal communication skills, including the ability to listen well, convey thoughts clearly, and work effectively as a member of a team.
- Demonstrated skills in consensus-building, relationship building, collaborative planning, decision-making, and problem solving.
- Working knowledge of financial statements; ability to decipher and interpret information from a variety of financial forms.
- Technical skills in *Microsoft Office*; experience using *Foundant* (grants management system) is a plus but not required.

4. Personal Qualities & Skills:

- Integrity, honesty, diplomacy; ability to build and accept consensus decision making.
- Desire to work within a small, team environment with an emphasis on service, quality, attention to detail, and continuous improvement.
- Ability to work independently, as well as with others, in a collaborative team environment.
- Collaborative, objective, respectful of others, and ability to maintain confidentiality.
- A sincere dedication to the mission of The Cullen Foundation of Western New York, Inc.

Candidate Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree required. Master's Degree in a relevant field of study highly preferred (business, education, public policy, or related field).
- Minimum of 5 years of related work experience in non-profits, education, or a related field.
- Demonstrated knowledge of and experience with the PreK-12 urban education landscape, program assessment and evaluation, and evidence-based decision-making.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Willingness to work flexible hours (may need to attend some events/meetings outside of work hours).
- Ability to travel locally and occasionally nationally.
- Ability and willingness to work on-site/in-office in Buffalo NY for a five-day, 40-hour work week.

How To Apply:

The Cullen Foundation of Western New York, Inc. is an equal opportunity employer, and all qualified candidates are encouraged to apply. Applications will be accepted through **Friday July 19, 2024**. Interviews will be held on a rolling-basis and as applications are received.

To apply, qualified candidates should submit **both** of the following requirements **in a PDF format** to jobs@thecullenfoundation.org **by Friday July 19, 2024**:

1. **Cover Letter:** an effective cover letter will include a summary of the basis for your interest in the position, highlight relevant experience for the position, and indicate whether the salary range listed meets your salary requirements.
2. **Current Resume**

To be considered, applications must be received via email. Please direct all submissions to jobs@thecullenfoundation.org . **No phone calls, and please, no inquiries to Directors or Staff.**