



EllisKirkGroup



## **Chief Administrative Officer**

### **Confidential Position Specification**

## COMPANY PROFILE

### Mission

The [Mellon Foundation](#) (“Foundation”) believes that the arts and humanities are where we express our complex humanity, and we believe that everyone deserves the beauty, transcendence, and freedom to be found there. Through our grants, we seek to build just communities enriched by meaning and empowered by critical thinking, where ideas and imagination can thrive. It makes grants in four core program areas (Higher Learning, Arts and Culture, Public Knowledge, and Humanities in Place). Since its inception in 1969, the Foundation has paid out nearly \$6B in grants. At the end of 2021, its endowment totaled approximately \$9B. The Foundation has grown to approximately 150 staff members.

### History

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation was formed on June 30, 1969, through the consolidation of two existing foundations—the Avalon Foundation and the Old Dominion Foundation. The Avalon Foundation had been established in 1940 by Ailsa Mellon Bruce, daughter of Andrew W. Mellon. The Old Dominion Foundation had been established in 1941 by Paul Mellon, son of Andrew W. Mellon. When the two foundations were consolidated, the Foundation adopted the name The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to honor their father. At the end of 1969, the assets of the Foundation totaled \$273 million.

<https://mellon.org/about/>

## POSITION SUMMARY

Position: Chief Administrative Officer  
Reports to: Elizabeth Alexander, President  
Location: New York, NY

Reporting to the President, the Chief Administrative Officer (“CAO”) is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and provides strategic and sound expertise for the Foundation in a fast-paced operating environment.

As a member of the Senior Leadership Team (“SLT”) the CAO will contribute to the overall direction of the Foundation by delivering ideas and insights which will help shape ongoing strategies, policies, and organizational effectiveness, as they begin their new approach to institutional thinking, and a new assessment of both their grantmaking and operations through the lens of social justice. Through a team of direct reports, the CAO will oversee Grants and Data Management, Grant Accounting, Business Operations, Facilities Management, will be responsible for organizational effectiveness throughout the enterprise, and will collaborate closely on a wide range of projects with the officers and staff across the Foundation. The CAO may lead foundation-wide projects.

### Key Accountabilities

- Creates and leads ongoing assessment and continuous improvement of the organizational effectiveness of the Foundation, including but not limited to
  - Leading the Operations and Business Systems team to identify and implement tools and evaluate and enhance processes that improve efficiency and effectiveness of the foundation's operations.
  - Identifying best practices for hybrid working consistent with the Foundation's policies.
  - Collaborating with various SLT members to continually evaluate the Foundation's policies and practices with respect to effective working and enhanced employee engagement.
  - Collaborates with Chief Communications Officer and Chief Human Resources Officer on internal communications.
  - Builds and manages internal project management function.
- Oversees Foundation-wide grant management practices and policies, in consultation with the Chief Programs Officer and the Chief Legal Officer.
- In partnership with the Chief Legal Officer and Chief Programs Officer, establishes the schedule for Docket preparation; collaborates with program officers in the drafting and editing of Docket submissions and other Docket materials, and oversees legal and fact-checking of the Docket, and the compilation and postings of the Docket to the Trustees.
- Oversees the design, configuration, maintenance, and utilization of Foundation-wide grant management systems, grant databases, grant paper and digital files, grant database and management training, and contractual and grant record-keeping.
- Oversees the formulation of Foundation-wide grantmaking policies and guidelines concerning grant-related proposals, reporting, amendments, and rescissions, and associated staff training.
- Reviews and monitors grant files and documentation, including grant budgets, proposals, and financial and other reporting, to ensure compliance with Foundation requirements and the law.
- Manages, with the Chief Programs Officer and others, the annual grantmaking budget planning and tracking:
  - Monitors, with the Chief Financial Officer, throughout the year, the consistency of grant recommendations with budget approvals.
- Assists program staff in the structuring of grants and recovery of grant funds, as needed, and in the analysis of proposed grant terms and associated documents.
- Monitors the effective use of grants by grantees, working with program officers and other staff.
- Oversees the analysis of budget, financial, accounting, and other grant reporting and compiling of data into composite reports.
- Develops budgetary, proposal, reporting, and other Foundation-wide templates.
- Responsible for enterprise risk assessments and management:
  - Oversees the design and execution of enterprise risk assessments, with the Chief Financial Officer.
  - Oversees the development of mitigation strategies.
- Responsible for the maintenance, updating, and testing of the Business Continuity Plan, with the Chief Financial Officer.

- Manages day-to-day facilities operations and ongoing maintenance of the three buildings held by the Foundation.

### **Desired Skills and Experience**

The successful candidate will have the following qualifications:

- A bachelor's degree is required and an MBA is preferred.
- A minimum of ten years in a foundation, other not-for-profit, university, bank, insurance company or professional services.
- Experience with not-for-profit organizations; understanding of grantmaking and strong working knowledge of foundation tax regulations would be ideal.
- Understanding of board governance requirements.
- Experience with financial/business/operational analysis techniques.
- A track record of impressive achievements in administrative leadership roles of increasing responsibility.
- Outstanding inspirational leadership and influencing skills, high integrity, adaptability and flexibility, superb listening and communications skills: a positive individual who is respectful and approachable.
- Will take a hands-on and highly collaborative approach to managing all key issues and will communicate matters of priority openly across the team.
- Must be a clear thinker and a critical thinker, someone with a strong process orientation, able to translate complex ideas into cogent and influential communications to drive action.
- Strong organizational, project management and problem-solving skills.