

**Ford
Foundation**

Position Specification

President

Ford Foundation



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01 | Our Client

Ford Foundation Values and Approach

Ford believes that social movements are built upon individual leadership, strong institutions, and innovative, high-risk ideas that can be transformative over time. While the specifics of what Ford works on have evolved over the years, investments in these three areas have remained the touchstones of everything they do and are central to their theory of how change happens in the world. These approaches have long distinguished the Ford Foundation, and they have had a profound cumulative impact.

Ford works with a sense of urgency but recognize that meaningful change requires sustained investment over time in those living and working closest to the problems. For this reason, they focus on strengthening civil society at every level through supporting participation by people of diverse backgrounds and life experiences. They also closely collaborate with governments, the private sector, academia, and the creative community.

Investing in individuals

Through leadership development, scholarships, exchanges, and professional training programs, we have supported tens of thousands of leaders around the world.

Building institutions

We have created or helped sustain thousands of pathbreaking organizations working on a broad range of social change issues.

Supporting new ideas

Ford has invested in the early stages of novel ideas for social good—among them public media, microfinance, women’s rights, public interest law, digital human rights, and many more.

Ford's culture is driven by trust, constructive debate, and leadership that empowers innovation and excellence. The foundation strives to listen and learn and to model openness and transparency. They are accountable to one other at the foundation, to their charter, to the sector, to the organizations they support, and to society at large—as well as to the laws that govern Ford Foundation's nonprofit status.



01 | Our Client

About The Ford Foundation

Ford Foundation believes in the inherent dignity of all people. But around the world, too many people are excluded from the political, economic, and social institutions that shape their lives.

In addressing this reality, Ford Foundation is guided by a vision of social justice—a world in which all individuals, communities, and peoples work toward the protection and full expression of their human rights; are active participants in the decisions that affect them; share equitably in the knowledge, wealth, and resources of society; and are free to achieve their full potential.

Across eight decades, Ford’s mission has sought to reduce poverty and injustice, strengthen democratic values, promote international cooperation, and advance human achievement.

The foundation is governed by a distinguished and diverse Board of Trustees, which includes the president. Ford’s grantmaking is led by directors and regional representatives with expertise in their fields and a profound commitment to social change. Today, with an endowment of \$16 billion, the foundation has headquarters in New York and 10 regional offices across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Learn more about Ford’s [mission, values and culture](#), and [how they approach their work](#).

The Ford Foundation is not connected to the Ford Motor Company. The Ford Foundation and Ford Motor Company are two separate and legally unrelated entities whose operations are completely independent and have been for more than 50 years. There is not any financial authority, decision making nor funding relationship between the two organizations.



01 | Our Client

Across eight decades, the Ford Foundation has invested in innovative ideas, visionary individuals, and frontline institutions advancing human dignity around the world. Selected highlights below:



1950 | Gaither Report

A blue-ribbon panel, commissioned by Henry Ford II and led by H. Rowan Gaither advises the foundation to become an international philanthropy dedicated to advancing human welfare by reducing poverty and promoting democratic values, peace, and educational opportunity.

1936 | Founded

The Ford Foundation is chartered in Michigan by Edsel Ford, with an initial gift of \$25,000 to be used “all for the public welfare.”

1952 | International Offices

The foundation opened its first international non-US office in India. In subsequent years, the foundation opened offices in Indonesia (1953), Nigeria (1958), Egypt (1959), Brazil (1962), Kenya (1962), Mexico (1962), China (1988), South Africa (1993), and Colombia (2016).



1990 | Native American art and culture rights

To bolster its commitment to Native American art and culture, Ford supports the Smithsonian Institution’s newly established National Museum of the American Indian.

1994 | Fighting violence

Research and advocacy grants in Brazil and the Philippines fight gender-based violence. In South Africa, the foundation supports the Women’s Development Foundation to establish a legal aid and advocacy clinic.



2015 | BUILD

Ford launches BUILD, a five-year, \$1 billion investment in the long-term capacity and sustainability of 300 social justice organizations addressing inequality around the world. The foundation renewed BUILD in 2021 with an additional \$1 billion.

2017 | Mission-related investments

With a \$1 billion commitment from its endowment, Ford makes a 10-year pledge to support the nascent field of mission-related investments, leading by example and encouraging other foundations and institutional investors to consider the promise and potential of impact investing.



2020 | Social justice bond

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Ford issued a \$1 billion social bond, the first by a non-profit in the U.S. taxable corporate bond market. The social bond allows the foundation to double its grantmaking in 2020 and 2021 to help sustain essential non-profit organizations.

01 | Our Client

Ford Foundation Grantmaking Areas

To address and respond to the drivers of inequality, Ford works and makes grants in nine interconnected areas that together, they believe, can help challenge inequality.



Civic Engagement and Government



Creativity and Free Expression



Disability Rights



Future of Work(ers)



Gender, Racial and Ethnic Justice



Global Governance



Mission Investments



Natural Resources and Climate Change



**Technology and
Society**

01 | Our Client

Awarded Grands: 2022 Grantmaking at a Glance

1,797

GRANTS MADE

1,470

GRANTEES

\$715M

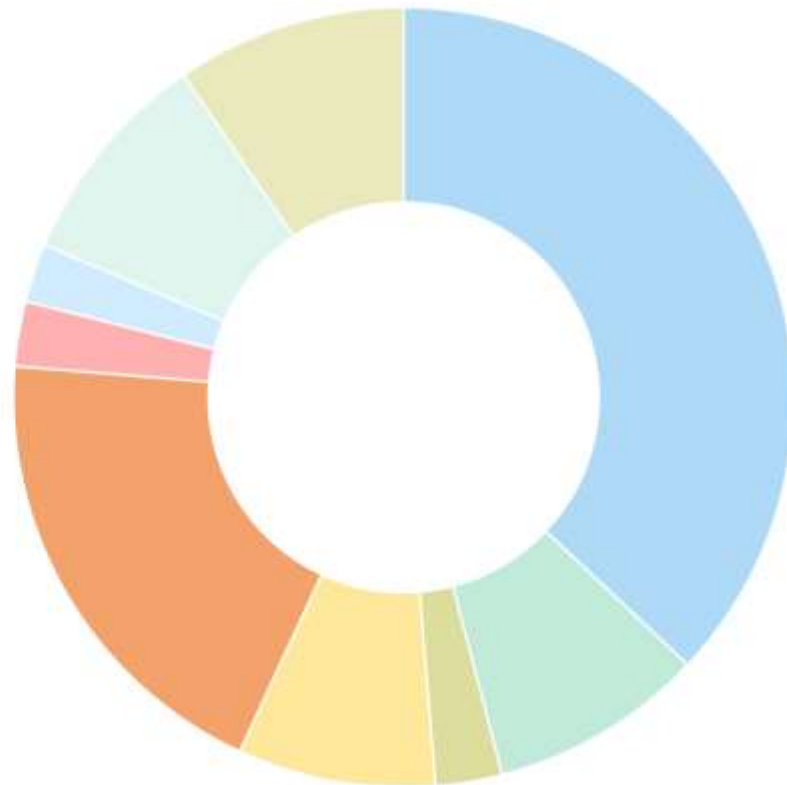
TOTAL FUNDING

\$250K

MEDIAN GRANT

2022 grantmaking by program

All grantmaking by program



Program	U.S.	INTERNATIONAL	Program	U.S.	INTERNATIONAL
Civic Engagement and Government	\$213,888,059 330 GRANTS	\$55,563,385 214 GRANTS	Creativity and Free Expression	\$64,885,572 289 GRANTS	\$15,000 1 GRANT
Disability Rights	\$20,086,103 55 GRANTS	\$0 0 GRANTS	Future of Work(ers)	\$59,077,000 88 GRANTS	\$600,000 2 GRANTS
Gender, Racial, and Ethnic Justice	\$118,912,909 175 GRANTS	\$22,158,333 69 GRANTS	Global Governance	\$11,700,000 12 GRANTS	\$0 0 GRANTS
Mission Investments	\$17,395,828 31 GRANTS	\$200,000 1 GRANT	Natural Resources and Climate Change	\$28,681,500 51 GRANTS	\$37,412,483 153 GRANTS
Technology and Society	\$65,691,106 132 GRANTS	\$3,694,167 13 GRANTS			

Learn more at: [Awarded Grants](#)

02 | The Role

Today, with rising geopolitical, economic, and social uncertainty and compounding inequality, the mission of Ford Foundation has acquired increasing urgency. The next president of the foundation has a generational opportunity to reimagine philanthropy and catalyze leaders and organizations driving social justice and building movements across the globe.

Reporting to and working with the Board of Trustees, the president has responsibility and accountability for leading and inspiring the vision, strategic, programmatic, financial, and management operations of the foundation.

Specifically, the president will:

- Weave the foundation's legacy into a future vision and holistic narrative that is grounded in its mission to reduce poverty and injustice, strengthen democratic values, promote international cooperation, and advance human achievement;
- Provide credible organizational management fostering a culture of trust, constructive debate, and leadership that empowers innovation and excellence;
- Continually reexamine the foundation's work, looking for opportunities to hone its strategies and improve its effectiveness;
- Communicate what the foundation learns to a broad array of audiences and strive to strengthen the philanthropic sector's performance, compliance, and transparency;
- Manage an enduring endowment that enables its mission, while recognizing the foundation's global reach and relevance to amplify its impact; and
- Ensure that the organization is managed in a manner that is aligned with its values and vision, and led by dedicated, diverse, and creative staff



03 | Candidate Profile (1 of 2)

The president of the Ford Foundation will be a visionary leader who possesses the intellectual breadth, practical experience, and demonstrated leadership to ensure the institution's unwavering commitment to build a future grounded in justice.

In terms of the performance and personal competencies required for the position, we would highlight the following:

- **Visionary Leadership:** The president will bring a demonstrated capacity to define and communicate an inspiring vision for the Ford Foundation and the ability to develop tactics of distribution and impact to curate new ideas, and to both represent and challenge the philanthropic ecosystem. They will be viewed as a leader with a high degree of integrity and forethought in their approach to making decisions and will possess the ability to lead in a transparent and consistent manner while always considering what is best for the organization.
- **Credibility and Commitment to the Mission:** A strong candidate for the role will model and empower the kind of social good that the institution exists to support. They will bring a demonstrated commitment to global justice and an inspiring and visible body of work or practical experience. The president will need to be credibly curious across the full range of the foundation's areas of work, and have a strong, well-informed grasp of the complex issues shaping the country's future and their global implications, and vice versa.
- **Management Experience:** The right candidate will have relevant experience in managing people and institutions and the capacity to manage a variety of constituents, including the staff and the Board of Trustees. A galvanizing manager, they will be driven towards solutions, accountable to colleagues, and open to innovation. They will bring a demonstrated ability to recruit, cultivate, and retain talent and to develop and maintain a healthy institutional culture. The president will drive a culture of excellence that is open, courageous, honest, and real, while ensuring staff can find joy and fulfillment in their work.

03 | Candidate Profile (2 of 2)

- **Financial Acumen:** The president will play a vital role, working closely with investment staff, in ensuring the success of the foundation's investment process and the performance of the endowment. The president must be willing to learn and work closely to ensure they have sufficient understanding of and familiarity with the foundation's investment objectives, investment strategy, and the principal investments in the endowment to be able to commit to well-considered, long-term investment strategies.
- **Convening Power:** The president meets with people around the world to help deepen the foundation's grasp of different perspectives on how to solve problems. They will possess an ability to inspire trust through compelling influence, galvanizing connection, impact, and interpersonal charisma. They will bring a demonstrated ability to represent not only the foundation but the philanthropic sector in the public sphere.
- **Strategic Acumen and Judgement:** The president of the foundation must bring unquestionable integrity and implicit generosity of spirit. They will possess the ability to make clear, timely decisions and to set limits even in the face of resistance, while nurturing an adaptive and self-regenerating institution that accounts for the need to balance risk management with the imperative for courageous leadership.
- **Demonstrated Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** The president will bring not only demonstrated experience in creating diverse teams where everyone feels represented and respected but also leadership that embeds equity and inclusion practices across their work. For Ford, a culture of excellence means fully aligning the way it works together with its work in the world so that it can maximize the full range of its potential impact. Compassion, mutual respect, humility, and empathy define the foundation's relationships and will anchor the president's approach to leadership.

03 | Ford Foundation Board of Trustees



Francisco Cigarroa

Chair, Board of Trustees
Acting Dean, Joe R. and Teresa Lozano Long School of Medicine Professor of Surgery and Director, Alvarez Transplant Center, University of Texas Health Science Center

📍 San Antonio, Texas



Ursula Burns

Founding Partner, Integrum Holdings; Non-Executive Chair, Teneo Holdings LLC; Retired Executive Chair and CEO, Xerox Corporation and VEON, Ltd.

📍 Boca Raton, Florida



Catalina Devandas

Representative of the Director General and Senior Director, Office of Partnerships, Advocacy and Communications, International Organization for Migration

📍 Geneva, Switzerland



Amy C. Falls

Vice President and Chief Investment Officer, Northwestern University

📍 Evanston, Illinois



Henry Ford III

Director, Ford Motor Company

📍 Detroit, Michigan



Laurene Powell Jobs

Founder and President, Emerson Collective

📍 Palo Alto, California



Thomas Kempner, Jr.

Retired Executive Managing Member, Davidson Kempner Capital Management

📍 Southampton, New York



Lourdes Lopez

Artistic Director, Miami City Ballet

📍 Miami, Florida



Paula Moreno

President, Manos Visibles

📍 Bogota, Colombia



Gbenga Oyebo

Of Counsel, Aluko & Oyebo

📍 Lagos, Nigeria



Ai-jen Poo

President, National Domestic Workers Alliance

📍 Chicago, Illinois



Chuck Robbins

Chairman and CEO, Cisco Systems

📍 San Jose, California



Bryan Stevenson

Founder & Executive Director, Equal Justice Initiative

📍 Montgomery, Alabama



Gabrielle Sulzberger

Senior Managing Director, Centerbridge Partners

📍 New York, New York



George H. Walker

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Neuberger Berman

📍 New York, New York

Learn more at: [Board of Trustees](#)

Compensation and Contact

Compensation

The Ford Foundation is committed to practicing salary transparency. The minimum hiring salary for this position is \$1,162,000 and maximum is \$1,350,000. It is not typical for an individual to be hired at or near the top of this range. The final offer is determined by a candidate's relevant experience and our commitment to internal equity. We review global compensation on a regular basis to ensure market competitiveness and equity. The hiring range for this position has been carefully crafted in alignment with the market.

LOCATION: This position is based in the foundation's New York office. We operate in a hybrid model and require staff to be in the office three days per week.

WORK AUTHORIZATION: This position is not eligible for employment visa sponsorship now or in the future. All candidates must be legally authorized to work in the United States.

Contact

Russell Reynolds Associates has been exclusively retained for this search and prospective candidates are invited to contact Russell Reynolds Associates directly. All inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential.

To apply for the role or submit a nomination, please reach out to fordfoundationpresident@russellreynolds.com.