The Hyams Foundation (Hyams) seeks an Executive Director who will further its mission to advance racial, economic, and social justice and build power in low-income communities and communities of color across Boston and Chelsea, Massachusetts. Hyams is committed to dismantling the systems of oppression that create persistent, racialized economic disparities and strives to create a future of collective liberation and equitable access, opportunities, and outcomes for all. Hyams’ next Executive Director will join the organization on the eve of its centennial, at a moment when its mission has particular resonance. The COVID-19 pandemic and continued police killings of black and brown people only reinforce its resolve to be part of movements to abolish white supremacy, advance racial justice through structural change, and center the leadership and experiences of frontline communities.

Hyams nurtures close, collaborative, and respectful relationships with its grantees, community partners, and fellow funders to address intersectional challenges and their root causes. The Foundation’s responsive and strategic grantmaking strengthens the base of community power in Boston and Chelsea and has helped develop networks and alliances that are advancing education justice, workers’ rights and community wealth building, anti-displacement and equitable development, and immigrants’ rights. Hyams complements its traditional grantmaking with program- and mission-related investments and plays an active role in building the local movement infrastructure through convenings and capacity-building efforts.

The Hyams Foundation is supported by eight staff and ten trustees, the majority of whom are people of color, including those in leadership positions. Hyams is supported by an endowment of $127 million (as of April 2020) and has a FY2020 operating budget of $7.7 million. In FY2019, the Foundation distributed $4.8 million in grants and in FY2020 expects to distribute nearly $5.1 million.
Hyams seeks an Executive Director who shares its commitment to furthering racial justice and community-led transformation. The next Executive Director will work closely with board and staff to ensure that Hyams’ approach is grounded in the lived experiences of its community partners and that its internal culture is just and inclusive. A grassroots and community organizing orientation is critical to the role, as is experience with policy and systems change and involvement in movements that advance black and brown and other marginalized communities.

The Executive Director will be an accomplished leader who successfully demonstrates skill as a facilitator, collaborator, and convener, with colleagues and with partners in the field. Key attributes include transparency, accountability, creativity, empathy, self-awareness, and a willingness both to challenge and to learn. Staff and financial management expertise is required. Familiarity with philanthropy, as a grantmaker or grantee; endowment and investment management; and mission- and program-related investing is preferred.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES FOR THE NEXT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Further embed racial justice as the Foundation’s guiding mission and continue to align Hyams’ practices with its core values and the priorities of its community partners.

Hyams seeks to deepen the alignment of its policies, practices, and programs with its foundational values and core beliefs centered on racial justice. Board and staff understand that this work requires reflection and learning in order to disrupt and move beyond aspects of dominant white culture that show up in internal practices and external programs. Of principal importance is making certain that historically oppressed black and brown communities play a leading role in the creation and implementation of organizational strategy. The next Executive Director will work closely with trustees and staff members, who each bring their own expertise, lived experiences, and perspectives, to further the conversation around core values and to determine how these values are to be expressed in a common language and reflected in mission-aligned investment policies and the Foundation’s broader policies and practices.

Leverage tools beyond grantmaking to effectively achieve Hyams’ vision.

Hyams will continue to diversify its approach beyond traditional grantmaking in order to increase its impact and effectiveness. The Foundation will strategically use its reputational and financial power not to advantage itself, but rather to amplify the voices of grantee and community partners and movements that seek to dismantle systems of racial and economic oppression. Hyams will accomplish this through greater investment in capacity-building, convening, and field-building work. In order to be effective, it will be important for the Executive Director to collaborate productively with a range of partners, from grassroots organizers to fellow funders and government decision-makers.
Hyams also expects to grow its program- and mission-related investments in the near future. The next Executive Director will work closely with the board’s Investment & Finance and Program Committees to build the Foundation’s expertise and capacity in these areas.

**Steward Hyams’ financial resources in an impactful, equitable, and innovative manner.**

It is important for Hyams to deploy its financial resources strategically and thoughtfully, especially during the current economic conditions created by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Executive Director will work with board and staff to sustain Hyams’ financial assets for the long term while responding to the urgent needs of communities disproportionately impacted by the current public health and financial crisis. Critical conversations for the future will focus on endowment investment and spending policies, resource allocation, and the role of risk taking, adaptation, and creative thinking. This moment presents an opportunity for Hyams to reexamine its business model, to think beyond how traditional foundations operate, and to consider what it means to be an effective and authentic social justice movement funder.

The current heightened public consciousness surrounding systemic racism and white supremacy in the United States further reinforces the importance of the Foundation’s strategy, priorities, and engagement in the years to come. The Executive Director will ensure that Hyams evolves into an even stronger and more impactful funder.

**Maintain a healthy internal culture that effectively engages and supports trustees and staff.**

Hyams’ next Executive Director will join a small, close-knit, thoughtful, and highly committed organization. Board and staff members collectively value the collaborative spirit within the board, among staff, between trustees and staff, and across the broader community. Hyams staff are skilled and highly knowledgeable and maintain close professional relationships with trustees and community partners. The next Executive Director will manage staff effectively and will actively engage the full board to leverage and facilitate its diverse perspectives in shared learning, strategy discussion, and decision-making. The next leader will reinforce a culture of justice, compassion, open communication, transparency, accountability, and results.

**Enhance organizational and operational effectiveness.**

The Executive Director has the opportunity to strengthen Hyams’ internal policies, procedures, and systems to ensure that the Foundation is as responsive, accountable, and efficient as possible. Hyams aims to update and streamline processes and ensure that proper checks and balances are implemented and up-to-date technologies are in place. In addition, there is an opportunity for Hyams to further develop its evaluation procedures to assess the impact and outcomes of its grantmaking and ancillary activities.
QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

The next Executive Director will bring many of the following qualifications, professional experiences, and personal attributes:

Values & Leadership Experience

● A steadfast commitment to racial, economic, and social justice values and analysis and the intention of implementing those values into every facet of Hyams’ work;
● Experience as an authentic and effective facilitative leader and collaborative partner, with expertise in leading complex conversations, bridging across differences, and engaging in community organizing and transformative change efforts;
● Demonstrated skill as an effective and eloquent oral and written communicator;
● An approach to leadership that is inspiring, authentic, inclusive, patient, facilitative, collaborative, accountable, and transparent;
● Creativity, an open mind, self-awareness and the willingness to both respectfully challenge others and to be challenged as opportunities and circumstances require.

Community & Movement Experience

● Grounded experience working with historically oppressed communities and communities of color, and deep involvement with grassroots organizing, anti-racist policy and systems change efforts, and social justice movements;
● Experience working productively with a diversity of groups who have different and at times conflicting priorities, from community organizers and nonprofit leaders to government officials and funders;
● Knowledge of the Boston and Chelsea communities/neighborhoods in which Hyams operates and/or experience with analogous communities and landscapes elsewhere.

Management & Organizational Experience

● Success in leading an organization or complex program; expertise in translating a vision and strategy into a practical plan with concrete methods of implementation and anticipated outcomes;
● Demonstrated ability to guide, support, and leverage staff expertise and capacity; success in nurturing a healthy and dynamic work environment;
● Experience with financial oversight, including budgeting, planning, reporting, and investments; experience with program- and mission-related investing is preferred;
● Experience working with a governing board, or analogous experience; eagerness to work with a very active board and to engage in close staff-board interactions;
● Experience as a funder and/or grantee is preferred; an understanding of and appreciation for an intersectional approach to grantmaking that addresses the structural roots of societal inequality.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO APPLY

An appendix containing additional detail and information can be found below. Inquiries, nominations/referrals, and applications (including resumes and letters of interest responding to the opportunities and challenges outlined above) should be sent to:

Rebecca Swartz and Tatiana Oberkoetter
www.imsearch.com/7464
Isaacson, Miller
263 Summer St
Boston, MA 02210
1-888-873-6989

Applications will be held in strict confidence.

*The Hyams Foundation is committed to an inclusive work environment and welcomes a diverse pool of candidates in this search.*
APPENDIX

HISTORY OF HYAMS

The Hyams Foundation was founded in 1921 when Godfrey S. Hyams, a Boston metallurgist, engineer, and financier, established a trust to ensure that his wealth would be used for charitable purposes. During his life, Mr. Hyams maintained a simple lifestyle, chose not to seek public attention, and did most of his giving anonymously. After his death in 1927, a major portion of his estate was given to the trust; at the time, this was one of the largest philanthropic gifts made in Massachusetts history. The trust’s mandate was broad and to be interpreted over time by its trustees, based on evolving community needs. Over the years, the Foundation has shifted its focus from direct service and issue-based projects to addressing the root causes of the injustice and oppression experienced by communities of color.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

In 2014, Hyams Foundation board and staff completed an extensive strategic planning process, whose purpose was to embed racial justice more deeply into the fabric of the Foundation’s work. As part of that effort, Hyams adopted its own definition of racial justice, which now serves as the organization’s vision statement; created a structural race analysis with which to advance and assess its work; and targeted the policies and systems contributing to racial disparities that were in need of greater attention. In addition to shifting its overall framework, the Foundation selected three important racial justice issues that presented significant opportunities for transformative change, driven by grassroots communities. These include education justice (disrupting the “school to prison pipeline”); economic justice (fair wages and work conditions and community wealth-building); and equitable housing, land-use, and place (anti-displacement and community control over development). Since 2014, based on the evolving conditions and priorities of its communities, Hyams has also woven support for immigrants’ rights efforts across all of its issue priorities and is seeing the emergence of environmental and climate justice as a concern.

APPROACH

The Hyams Foundation acknowledges its privileged position as a funder and therefore strives to be guided by the needs identified by its grantee partners in historically oppressed communities and communities of color. Hyams staff take the time to understand deeply and authentically the experiences of its partners and the communities they serve, and ground their relationships in mutual accountability, respect, and trust. Recognizing that transformation takes time and that nonprofit organizations require support as they develop new capacities and grapple with change, Hyams tends to fund its grantee partners for long-term, sustained periods with general operating support, which allows for greater grantee flexibility.

Hyams is unique in that its program officers are not bound to specific issue areas. The team brings an intersectional approach to grantmaking to ensure that systemic problems are confronted as multifaceted issues reflecting the complex identities and experiences of black, brown, and immigrant communities.
Strategic Programs and Grantmaking

Hyams employs a three-tiered strategic program and grantmaking framework. The “base” level is responsive to and supports a broad set of community-identified initiatives that build grassroots power. The “enhanced” level pursues institutional and policy change in the important racial justice priority areas emerging from the community base. In FY2019, Hyams directed $427,000 to education justice, $592,000 to economic justice, and $503,000 to anti-displacement. Through the third and most “intensive” level, Hyams fuels policy change and structural transformation by supporting alliance-building and convening, leadership development and capacity-building, strategic communication and narrative infrastructure, and field-driven research and evaluation. In FY2019, Hyams allocated 30 percent of its grants to its “base” level strategy, 48 percent to its “enhanced” level, and 12 percent to its “intensive” level.

Hyams also dedicates approximately ten percent of its annual grantmaking budget to its Special Opportunities Fund (SOF), which supports efforts to address racial disparities that fall outside of strategic grantmaking guidelines and provides timely responses to unanticipated and compelling community needs. Hyams’ most recent SOF grants were distributed in response to the COVID-19 crisis. A sample of the initiatives supported include the Boston Impact Initiative’s Enterprise Guarantee Pool, which helps cover short-term, emergency loans; MassUndocuFund, which provides relief for undocumented workers left out of proposed public safety nets; and the Boston Resiliency Fund, which coordinates philanthropic efforts to provide essential services to impacted residents.

The Foundation aims to be responsive, inclusive, and transparent with existing and prospective grantees. Grant applicants are assessed on whether they have a clear mission and goals; a commitment to developing grassroots leadership and building the base of power in their communities; a structural and intersectional analysis of issues and solutions; a movement orientation to work with others to achieve systems change; effective staff who are reflective of the communities they serve and with the appropriate backgrounds for their roles; and evidence of clear financial management and accountability practices. Hyams trustees review and approve grants for each of the Foundation’s three annual grantmaking cycles. Hyams considers both solicited and unsolicited inquiries and typical grants are $30,000 to $60,000 per year.

Convening and Network-Building

The Hyams Foundation collaborates actively with diverse entities across Greater Boston and beyond to collectively address long-standing racial and economic inequities. Hyams holds both informal and formal gatherings with its grantee and community partners, which provide a venue for dialogue on challenges facing grantees and their constituencies and allow for critical discourse around new ideas or potential approaches. Hyams is also involved with several local entities, including the Boston Jobs Coalition, which promotes policies to hire people of color and women, and the Boston Ujima Project, which brings together residents from the city’s low-income neighborhoods of color to democratically invest in a local economy that upholds justice over profit.

Hyams regularly joins with other funders to coordinate around community priorities; foster relationships across issue areas and constituencies; share fresh perspectives and innovative solutions; and pool critical resources. Hyams is involved with numerous local funder networks, including the Equitable Transit-Oriented Development Accelerator Fund, the Greater Boston Immigrant Defense Fund, Home Funders, and the Social Justice Funders Network. Hyams is also involved regionally with the Solidarity Economy Initiative and nationally with the Communities for Just Schools Fund, the Neighborhood Funders Group, and Justice Funders, which envisions a new approach for philanthropy that democratizes power and redistributes wealth.
Program- and Mission-Related Investing

Hyams deploys non-grant financial assets to advance its program strategies and shift resources to underinvested communities. It engages in program-related investments (PRIs), which can include loans, loan guarantees, and equity investments. The Foundation currently has over $5 million invested in PRIs and has a policy to utilize up to five percent of its endowment for this purpose at any one time. Current PRIs support affordable housing development, through Home Funders and the Equitable Transit-Oriented Development Accelerator Fund, and small business development, through Boston Impact Initiative and the Boston Ujima Project.

Hyams also makes mission-related investments (MRIs), which produce a market rate of return while achieving a goal consistent with mission. To date, direct market rate MRIs have included a $2.6 million housing-related bond investment in Community Capital Management and the selection of Boston Private Bank to handle the Foundation’s cash, based on the bank’s positive Community Reinvestment Act ranking and its commitment to affordable housing. Hyams has also pledged to hire investment managers who are women and people of color and screens out from investment companies that harm the planet and its people.

ORGANIZATION, FINANCE, & GOVERNANCE

The Hyams Foundation is a private, independent foundation that works in the cities of Boston and Chelsea, Massachusetts. Hyams has a FY2020 operating budget of $7.7 million and a staff of eight including the Executive Director. Reporting to the Executive Director are a Senior Program Officer (who supervises three other program officers and a program associate), the Director of Administration and Finance, and the Grants Manager. Hyams’ next leader will have the opportunity to strengthen the team with communications, and financial management support. In keeping with Hyams’ commitment to reflecting its core values internally, the majority of staff and trustees are people of color, and all staff attend each board meeting. The Foundation’s current $127 million endowment is managed by the Investment & Finance Committee of the board, with assistance from investment consultants Cambridge Associates.

Hyams is governed by a ten-member board of trustees who are drawn from a range of fields and backgrounds. Trustees work intensively, collaboratively, and closely with the Executive Director and individual staff in setting the Foundation’s strategic direction and assessing its impact. In addition to participating in Hyams’ seven, day-long annual board meetings, each trustee is a member of at least one of three standing committees: Governance, Program, and Investment & Finance. Trustees are reviewed at the end of each five-year term by the Governance Committee for their contributions and engagement, but there are no term limits on the board.

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

The Hyams Foundation has been served by numerous committed leaders throughout its 100-year history. From 1990 until 2016, Beth Smith stewarded the Foundation through challenges, changes, and remarkable achievements, including the creation of the Foundation’s racial justice strategic framework. In 2016, Hyams welcomed Jocelyn Sargent as Executive Director. Jocelyn brought to the Foundation substantial experience working within social justice and philanthropic organizations. Under Jocelyn’s leadership, Hyams strengthened connections in the city of Boston and with national racial justice and philanthropy movement leaders. David Moy, Hyams’ Senior Program Officer, has served as interim Executive Director since late 2019.