Senior Program Officer
Boston, Massachusetts

THE KLARMAN FAMILY FOUNDATION

The Klarman Family Foundation seeks to identify areas of unmet need and to advance solutions to addressing them. Their intention as a Foundation is to help make measurable progress in improving the lives of others. Founded in 1990, The Klarman Family Foundation granted approximately $86 million in 2022 to advance its philanthropic interests.

The Foundation’s work is guided by the following principles and values:

- Approaching their work with a seriousness of purpose and evaluative rigor, and with an openness to tackle issues in new ways.
- Approaching their work with a sense of urgency and willingness to invest based on the opportunities to make a difference, rather than the limits of an annual grantmaking budget.
- A belief that the preservation of democratic norms lies at the core of all of their work and that a healthy democracy is crucial to all the Foundation seeks to achieve.
- A commitment to acting in partnership with other funders as opportunities to learn and leverage greater impact.
- Applying what they learn to improve their philanthropic practices and outcomes.

The Foundation’s grantmaking spans several areas of interest:

- Ensuring a healthy democracy.
- Advancing health equity and community wellness.
- Strengthening vibrant communities.
- Supporting Jewish communities and Israel.

These issues are complicated, requiring new and creative thinking and persistence over time. With a commitment to learning and assessing impact, these categories and strategies may evolve, but the dedication to applying best practices in philanthropy will remain unchanged.
YOUR POTENTIAL IMPACT AS THE SENIOR PROGRAM OFFICER

Reporting to the Program Team Director, the Senior Program Officer (SPO) holds a generalist role with significant responsibility for furthering the Foundation’s grantmaking in Massachusetts. The Foundation takes a broad view of what makes communities healthy and vibrant, and this role involves grantmaking in areas including supporting children’s mental health, improving access to high-quality care, and expanding access to critical services and enrichment opportunities that help make communities stronger. As part of a highly collaborative program team made up of experienced generalists working across a range of issue areas, the Senior Program Officer will serve as a utility player to further grantmaking opportunities across the Foundation and partner on an array of special projects.

The Senior Program Officer will join a team committed to continuous learning, partnership building, and problem solving, helping to realize the power of philanthropy as a critical lever for change. This is a team of lifelong learners, exploring complex issues and how best to translate learning into effective grantmaking. Biased towards action, and eager to engage in cross-portfolio initiatives, the SPO will bring humility, highly developed facilitative skills, and a team-based approach to working with internal and external stakeholders.

The SPO will help drive impact in the following areas:

Grantmaking

- Independently research, review, and oversee a mix of grantmaking responsibilities (with an emphasis within Massachusetts). Note, grantmaking responsibilities will evolve over time based on future Foundation needs/opportunities. Presently this includes:
  - Conduct thorough grant review, clear written analysis, and ongoing monitoring of existing and new grants. This includes review of large established institutions and early-stage and grassroots organizations. Grantmaking requires the ability to thoroughly analyze organizations’ strategies, financials, leadership and governance, programs, and operations.
  - Lead meetings with organizations and serve as grantees’ primary point of contact with the Foundation.
  - Ensure knowledge, interactions and data related to portfolios are captured in the grantmaking system, and proactively determine when to elevate as appropriate to senior staff and trustees.

- Consider and explore a full range of tools and approaches to funding, including outside of traditional grantmaking (e.g., fellowships, commissioning research, convenings, sponsorships, etc.).

- Possess a sophisticated understanding of grantmaking and the ability to contextualize grants within the Foundation’s big picture goals. Monitor and learn from grantees and organizations on an ongoing basis, assessing the overall effectiveness of grants as a whole.

- Possess an adaptive approach, including an ability to respond quickly and comprehensively to immediate needs and opportunities, ranging from rapid response to important one-time opportunities surfaced by Foundation leadership. Eagerly step-in to support grantmaking and research across issue areas as needed.
Cross-Organizational and Program Team Projects

- As an experienced generalist, provide senior-level capacity to the program team, bringing the relational skills, depth of knowledge and maturity, and versatility to step in on an interim capacity across the program team (e.g., leave coverage, represent the Foundation in external meetings).
- Partner as a strong utility player who can contribute as a strategic thinker, researcher, grant maker, and external foundation representative across a range of issue areas (e.g., Community Capital Fund, Basic Needs, Democracy, Music Pathways) as needed.
- Participate in other cross-program teamwork (e.g., all-staff gatherings, onboarding of new staff, program team meeting facilitation).
- Other projects and assignments to be determined by the Program Team Director.

External Collaboration and Partnerships

- Serve as a bridge builder with Foundation partners and stakeholders, surfacing shared values and pragmatic solutions. Balance empathetic listening while remaining steadfast in holding sound judgment and representing the Foundation’s values and beliefs.
- Participate in conferences, affinity networks, and meetings (e.g., Philanthropy MA, Grantmakers in Health) with thought leaders, actively advancing the Foundation’s learning, networks, and impact, while also confidently representing and bringing the Foundation’s voice into these spaces.
- Build productive and authentic working relationships with a range of key stakeholders holding diverse viewpoints and expertise (close and new funding colleagues, field leaders, and scholars) to advance the Foundation’s goals. At the same time, initiate ways to extend those relationships beyond the individual connection to strengthening the relationship with the Foundation as a whole.
- At times, serve as the Foundation’s representative in partnerships and pooled funds that can advance the Foundation’s drive toward large-scale impact. Proactively elevate questions and learnings emerging from partnerships to manager and colleagues.

Learning and Assessment

- Prepare written materials and presentations regularly for staff, program team, and trustee meetings. Utilize writing, presentations, and facilitated conversations to keep the team and trustees informed of current work and help advance further learning and action.
- Serve as a partner in advancing the overall development, learning, and refinement of the Foundation’s work across a range of areas, with a focus on work in Massachusetts.
- Possess a natural curiosity across a range of issues, serving as a point person for ongoing learning in areas the Foundation is driving toward or has an interest in. Share learning and connection-making with fellow colleagues/program team. Communicate key findings and provide clear analysis to KFF colleagues and listen openly for other points of view to help inform shared understanding.
- Build and maintain the Foundation’s knowledge base about issues and ecosystems; analyzing critical research, news, trends related to the Foundation’s interests. Continually scan fields, follow key developments and debates, attend conferences/meetings, and keep abreast of academic and popular literature.
- Participate actively in program team, at times facilitating team meetings and providing 1-1 peer support to team colleagues.
THE SKILLS YOU’LL NEED

Strong candidates will be strategic thinkers and problem solvers with the capacity to build and manage relationships toward Foundation goals. As an external bridge between grantee partners and stakeholders, and colleagues within the Foundation, the SPO will have the presence and confidence to facilitate conversations to gather points of view, welcoming differing perspectives and making sound recommendations. A willingness to constructively engage in organizational priorities beyond the immediate focus of the program team, and experience and comfort with periods of organizational ambiguity are highly desirable.

Core competencies include:

- Professional experience assessing organizational leadership, strategy, and financial position (e.g., through grantmaking, consulting, or program management); leadership experience working with or within nonprofit organizations is helpful.
- Experience distilling complex information to form opinions and make sound recommendations.
- Exceptional quantitative and qualitative analytic skills; curiosity and commitment to continuous learning.
- Excellent analytical and communication skills: using sound judgment, able to quickly gather, synthesize and summarize information in a clear and jargon-free manner in written and oral communications.
- Experienced bridge builder: ability to work productively across lines of difference, demonstrating deep, active listening skills, willingness to challenge own assumptions and openness to find and forge common ground opportunities for collaboration, especially when it seems elusive.
- Highly developed project management skills, including a proven ability to keep organized, prioritize, manage time, handle pressure and meet deadlines.
- Exceptional interpersonal skills and ability to develop relationships with diverse communities and nonprofit and philanthropic leaders.
- Sound professional judgment, objectivity, humility, and appreciation for nuance.
- Discretion and sensitivity for working in the context of a family foundation.
- Flexibility, sense of humor, creativity, and the ability to adapt to shifting priorities in a changing landscape and in a growing organization.
- Willingness to travel for site visits and other meetings regionally and nationally.

We estimate the salary range for this exempt position is $130,000 - $160,000 commensurate with prior experience and skills. Comprehensive benefits for this position include paid leave, health and dental insurance with a flexible spending account and dependent benefits, a transit account, and a 403(b) retirement plan. The Foundation is committed to professional growth and development for all employees, and to the continued learning and practice required as an organization to build and foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace.

All Foundation employees are required to be vaccinated for COVID-19 as well as boosted, and the Foundation will require any new employees to be fully vaccinated and boosted by their date of hire as well, absent a medical or religious accommodation as approved by the Foundation.
This position is based in The Klarman Family Foundation’s Boston office and is eligible for a hybrid of in- office and working from home.

TO APPLY

More information about The Klarman Family Foundation may be found at: www.klarmanfoundation.org.

This search is being led by Allison Kupfer Poteet and Robert Diggs of NPAG. Interested candidates are strongly encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Candidates may submit their cover letter, outlining their interest and qualifications, along with their resume via NPAG’s website.

The Klarman Family Foundation commitment to diversity includes the recognition that our mission is best advanced by contributions of people of diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and culture. Recruiting and mentoring staff to create an inclusive organization that reflects the diverse communities that we serve is a priority, and we encourage applicants of all ages, cultures, races, colors, religions, national or regional origins, disability status, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status or other status protected by law.