



Rockefeller  
Brothers Fund

# PRESIDENT AND CEO Position Specification



Blueprint North Carolina (grantee). Photo by Jennifer Gonzalez.

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*Oceanus, Kykuit. Photo by Ben Asen.*

# THE OPPORTUNITY

At a time when democracy, climate stability, and global peace are under mounting pressure – and when civil society is being tested in new and consequential ways – the Rockefeller Brothers Fund remains firmly committed to its mission of **advancing a more just, sustainable, and peaceful world**. This is not a moment for retreat, but one for principled leadership and bold, values-driven action.

**The Rockefeller Brothers Fund seeks a president who will lead with vision, conviction, empathy, and a deep sense of purpose to guide a prominent institution into its next chapter.**

The president will lead an organization renowned for its integrity, courage, and innovative disposition—one that matches its resources to the scale of the challenges it seeks to address, aligns its investments with its mission, and stands in solidarity with those working on the front lines of social, environmental, and democratic progress.

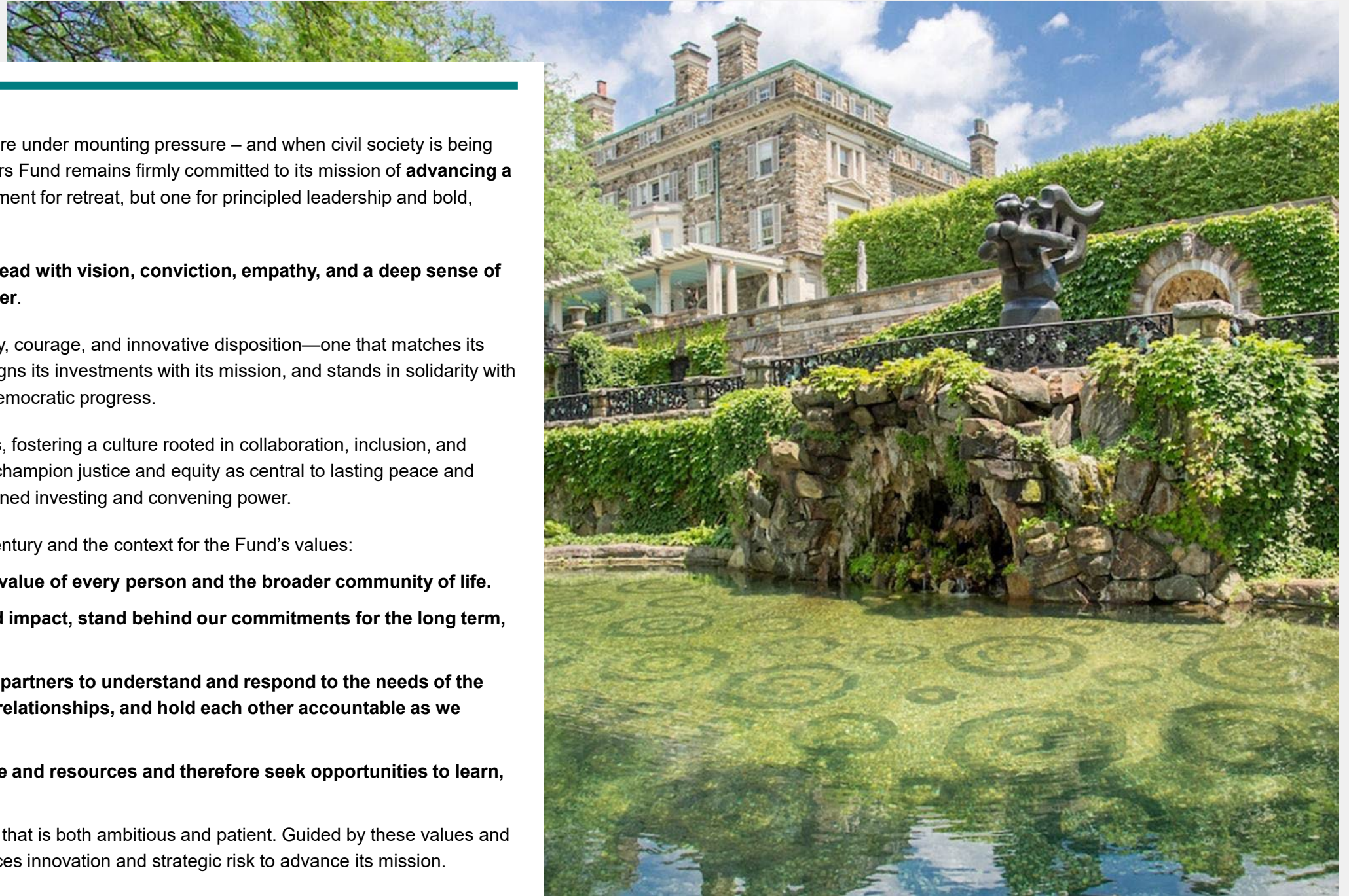
The next president will effectively partner with staff and trustees, fostering a culture rooted in collaboration, inclusion, and principled action in a rapidly evolving world. The president will champion justice and equity as central to lasting peace and sustainability and build on the Fund's leadership in mission-aligned investing and convening power.

Global interdependence is the fundamental reality of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the context for the Fund's values:

- **Dignity: We uphold the innate rights and inherent value of every person and the broader community of life.**
- **Integrity: We are transparent about our efforts and impact, stand behind our commitments for the long term, and strive to meet the highest ethical standards.**
- **Solidarity: We work alongside grantees and other partners to understand and respond to the needs of the communities they serve, build long-term trusting relationships, and hold each other accountable as we contribute toward common goals.**
- **Humility: We recognize the limits of our knowledge and resources and therefore seek opportunities to learn, adapt, and improve.**

We recognize that durable social change requires an approach that is both ambitious and patient. Guided by these values and the legacies of Rockefeller family philanthropy, the RBF embraces innovation and strategic risk to advance its mission.

**This is a rare and compelling opportunity to lead and shape the next chapter of courageous, values-aligned philanthropy.**



*Kykuit, the former Rockefeller family home in Tarrytown, NY. Photo by Jamie Martorano.*

# ABOUT THE FUND

## History

### PHILANTHROPIC TRADITION

The Rockefeller Brothers Fund was created in 1940 by the sons of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and Abby Aldrich Rockefeller—John 3rd, Nelson, Winthrop, Laurance, and David—and later joined by their only sister, Abby Rockefeller Mauzé. Originally conceived as a vehicle to coordinate their individual philanthropic efforts, the RBF received a substantial gift from John D. Rockefeller, Jr., the founders' father, in 1951 and a major bequest from his estate in 1960. Together, these gifts constitute the original endowment of RBF.

On July 1, 1999, the Charles E. Culpeper Foundation merged with the RBF, increasing the Fund's assets by a third. A generous bequest from the estate of David Rockefeller in 2018 raised the endowment to over \$1 billion.

Since its founding, five successive generations of Rockefeller family members have provided exceptional board leadership to ensure that the RBF remains dedicated to the Rockefeller family philanthropic ideals while also inviting the participation of distinguished non-family trustees and staff.

Beginning with John D. Rockefeller 3rd, who served as president from inception until 1956, seven presidents (the first three being Rockefeller family members) have guided the RBF. They include Nelson A. Rockefeller, 1956–1958; Laurance S. Rockefeller, 1958–1968; Dana S. Creel, 1968–1975; William M. Dietel, 1975–1987; Colin G. Campbell, 1988–2000; and the RBF's current president, Stephen B. Heintz, who assumed office in February 2001 and plans to retire in 2026.

For nearly 90 years, several themes have persisted throughout the history of RBF. These include a special interest in conservation and the environment; civic participation and democracy; and international engagement.



*The children of John D. Rockefeller, Jr.: John 3rd, Winthrop, Abby, Laurance, David, and Nelson. 1960. Photo © Ezra Stoller/Esto.*

# ABOUT THE FUND

## Mission



RBF staff retreat, December 2024. Photo by Margaret Fox.

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**The Rockefeller Brothers Fund advances social change that contributes to a more just, sustainable, and peaceful world.**

As a private family foundation rooted in the Rockefeller tradition of philanthropy, RBF believes it has an obligation to take the long view, to experiment and take risks, to share its learning, and to leverage all its resources for the common good. Through its grantmaking, mission-aligned investing, and convenings at The Pocantico Center, RBF supports the people and organizations building lasting solutions to the challenges facing today's increasingly interdependent world.

RBF has worked diligently to foster an environment in which every person knows they are valued and feels strongly that they belong. This is central to the Fund's mission and has enabled it to broaden its impact.

# ABOUT THE FUND

## Approach and Programs

### PROGRAM ARCHITECTURE

2025 RBF TOTAL PROGRAM BUDGET \$56,715,000



- DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE \$11,750,000
- PEACEBUILDING \$8,200,000
- SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT \$12,600,000
- CHARLES E. CULPEPER ARTS & CULTURE \$4,300,000
- CHINA \$8,200,000
- CENTRAL AMERICA \$4,300,000
- WESTERN BALKANS \$4,300,000
- PROGRAM RESERVE \$750,000
- OTHER \$2,315,000\*

\* "Other" encompasses budget lines such as Philanthropic Stewardship, Pocantico Conferences, Employee Matching Gifts, the President's and Executive Vice Presidents' discretionary budget grants, and the Staff Grantmaking Fund.

#### PROGRAM GOALS

PROGRAM GOALS	% OF PROGRAM BUDGET
<b>DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE</b> Advance a vital and inclusive democracy in the United States. Advance transborder democratic practices for social and environmental justice.	21%
<b>PEACEBUILDING</b> Advance just and durable peace.	14%
<b>SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT</b> Advance solutions to climate change.	22%
<b>CHARLES E. CULPEPER ARTS &amp; CULTURE</b> Nurture a vibrant and inclusive arts community in New York City.	8%
<b>CHINA</b> Advance healthy and low-carbon development.	14%
<b>CENTRAL AMERICA</b> Advance a democratic, inclusive, and sustainable Central America.	8%
<b>WESTERN BALKANS</b> Advance a peaceful, democratic, and European Western Balkans.	8%

#### STRATEGIC FOCUS

- UNITED STATES**
  - Equality of Representation
  - Elections and Voting Rights
  - Movement Building
- GLOBAL CHALLENGES**
  - Analysis and Communication
  - Citizen Organizing
  - Innovative Ideas

- Analysis and Policy
- Dialogue and Engagement
- Constituencies for Peace
- Civil Society Protection

- Public and Policymaker Awareness of Climate Change
- Clean Energy Economy
- Reduced Reliance on Carbon-Intensive Energy
- International Progress on Climate Change

- Creative Process
- Artist Residencies
- Field Building

- SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**
  - Policies and Practice
  - Environmental Governance
  - Market Forces
  - International Development Collaborations

- DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE**
  - Transparency and Anti-Impunity
  - Democratic Culture and Civic Participation
- PEACEBUILDING**
  - Justice, Reconciliation, and Conflict Resolution
- SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**
  - Sustainable Development and Climate Change

- DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE**
  - Transparency and Accountability in Governance
- PEACEBUILDING**
  - Constituencies for Reconciliation and Peace
- SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**
  - Climate Action and Healthy Environment

RBF's grantmaking is organized into seven programs. Thematic programs work across a variety of geographic contexts, with an emphasis on the United States, to generate cross-cutting innovation and learning. Pivotal Place programs focus efforts on one or more of our grantmaking themes in the unique context of a subnational area, nation-state, or region the future of which will have disproportionate significance for a surrounding area, an ecosystem, or the world. Progress in each of these programs is often and deliberately interconnected with developments in the others.

# ABOUT THE FUND

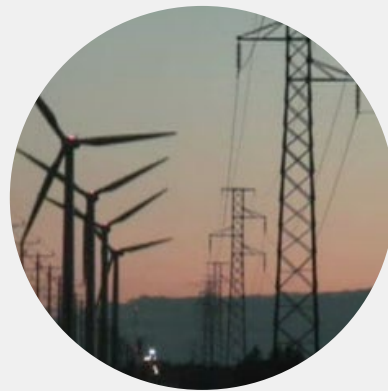
## Thematic Programs



### DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE

**GOAL: STRENGTHEN THE VITALITY OF DEMOCRACY IN THE UNITED STATES AND IN ADDRESSING GLOBAL CHALLENGES**

For democracy to deliver on its promises, its citizens must be engaged and empowered, and its institutions must be inclusive and responsive. In the United States, the Democratic Practice program supports innovative strategies to strengthen participation in democratic governance, foster greater accountability of government, and promote social, economic, and racial justice in democratic systems. Globally, the program focuses on cross-border, citizen-based coalitions that are finding innovative ways to frame, address, and align the rules of the global economy with needed climate action.



### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**GOAL: ADVANCE SOLUTIONS TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

Human activity is causing climate change, rapid loss of biodiversity, and accelerating degradation of Earth's life support systems. These developments threaten the livelihoods, health, and security of people in all nations and cultures. The Sustainable Development program focuses on advancing solutions to climate change by supporting a low-carbon economy in the United States and promoting international cooperation to address climate challenges.



### PEACEBUILDING

**GOAL: ADVANCE JUST AND DURABLE PEACE**

Complex factors drive threats to global peace and security, including geopolitical rivalries, weapons flows, authoritarianism, and xenophobic nationalism. By engaging a diverse array of actors—especially communities impacted by conflict—the Peacebuilding program seeks to advance policy change that improves security for all. Its grantmaking focuses on conflicts in Afghanistan and Israel-Palestine; reducing geopolitical tensions between the United States and Iran; and addressing the dynamics that drive and result from violence, including forced migration.



### CULPEPER ARTS & CULTURE

**GOAL: NURTURE A VIBRANT AND INCLUSIVE ARTS COMMUNITY IN NEW YORK CITY**

Arts and culture promote free expression, foster a deeper understanding of human experience, and provide a fresh lens on persistent problems and emerging challenges in diverse communities. The Charles E. Culpeper Arts & Culture program honors the legacy of Charles E. Culpeper by supporting the artists and cultural organizations that make New York City one of the world's most dynamic creative capitals. Its grantmaking focuses on the social impact of the arts, artistic innovation, and inclusion.

# ABOUT THE FUND

## Pivotal Place Programs

The RBF established pivotal places in 2003 in recognition that regions, ecosystems, and cities can be pivotal to global progress across multiple dimensions. The concept is based on a foreign policy theory proposed by historian Paul Kennedy in a 1995 article, “The Pivotal States.”



### CENTRAL AMERICA

**GOAL: ADVANCE A DEMOCRATIC, INCLUSIVE, AND SUSTAINABLE CENTRAL AMERICA**

Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras are young democracies, still in transition from decades-long civil wars and authoritarian regimes, struggling to build strong and accountable public institutions that provide effective governance and support the aspiration of prosperity for all citizens. The Central America program supports the efforts of inclusive civil society groups, independent media, social movements, multilateral institutions, and other partners to strengthen democratic practice, advance reconciliation and peace, and promote sustainable and just resource use.



### CHINA

**GOAL: ADVANCE HEALTHY AND LOW-CARBON DEVELOPMENT**

Government and citizen concerns over the health impacts of environmental pollution have become a powerful driver for change in China, prompting a shift in expectations about the relationship between development and the environment. The China program seeks to assist vigorous efforts by the Chinese people and government to create a sustainable and carbon-neutral future through innovative policy, a vibrant marketplace, and public participation in environmental governance.



### WESTERN BALKANS

**GOAL: ADVANCE A PEACEFUL, DEMOCRATIC, AND EUROPEAN WESTERN BALKANS**

Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina are working to build truly peaceful and democratic societies where institutions of governance are transparent, accountable, and responsive and citizens are engaged, empowered, and assertive. The Western Balkans program supports efforts of civil society groups, governmental institutions, and other partners to strengthen democratic practice, advance reconciliation and durable peace, enable sustainable development, and promote a European future for the region.

# ABOUT THE FUND

## Mission-Aligned Investing

Rooted in the 2014 decision to divest from fossil fuels, RBF mission-aligned investing spans a range of initiatives. RBF dedicates a growing portion of the endowment to impact investments that deliver both market-rate financial returns and measurable social impact. RBF also directs investment dollars to companies distinguished by their environmental, social, and governance standards, as well as to firms in which women or underrepresented people of color hold majority ownership. Ultimately, it empowers shareholders to exercise their voting rights and improves corporate practices.



*World Resources Institute (grantee). Photo courtesy of Camp Action Climate 2010.*

# ABOUT THE FUND

## The Pocantico Center

Once home to the Rockefeller family, The Pocantico Center’s verdant campus in the scenic hills of the Hudson Valley has been host to some of the most influential leaders, thinkers, and creative minds of the last century. A thoughtfully designed and curated retreat just 20 miles north of Manhattan, Pocantico offers guests an immersive experience of unrivaled beauty, featuring breathtaking gardens and grounds, historic architecture, and a renowned art collection that inspires and provides respite.

Today, The Pocantico Center is the community-facing extension of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund’s mission. Through a robust slate of programming—including conferences for nonprofit and policy leaders, artist residencies, tours, performances and exhibitions, and educational programs for the community—Pocantico continues to bring together people from near and far to learn, share, and imagine a better future.

Opened in fall 2022, the David Rockefeller Creative Arts Center (DR Center) is a sustainable (LEED Platinum) and inclusive home for the creative process at The Pocantico Center, where artists and the community come together to develop, present, and experience new works of performing, literary, and visual arts. The DR Center includes a gallery, performance space, and flexible artists' studio, housed in John D. Rockefeller’s 1908 Orangerie.



Site Specific Dances at Kykuit, September 2025. Photo by SUSA Designs

# ABOUT THE FUND

## Governance

The Rockefeller Brothers Fund is governed by a board of 20 trustees. Approximately half the board are members of the Rockefeller family, including seven from the fifth generation. Trustees represent a variety of professional backgrounds, including the arts, education, finance, international relations, law, and social work. Their combined experience has enhanced the board's ability and strong interest in setting policies related to the Fund's management and institutional culture, governance, investment practices, and grantmaking activities. The trustees meet three times a year in May, October, and December to engage with staff and grantees, review and approve program guidelines, assess impact and progress, and set priorities for both the long and short term. Board meetings are held at The Pocantico Center in Tarrytown, New York in May and October, in-person only, and in December at the Rockefeller Brothers Fund offices in New York City with a virtual option.

The Fund operates with transparency and has long provided detailed information about its history, governance, grantmaking strategies and impact, management practices, and finances and operations.



RBF Trustees, October 2025. Photo by Margaret Fox.

# THE ROLE

The president of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund will build on the institution's legacy of leadership and impact, advancing an organization that is dynamic, effective, and steadfast in its commitment to mission and values. In partnership with the Board, the president implements a clear vision and oversees its execution across the Fund's organizational strategy, which, in collaboration with staff, spans talent and culture leadership, programs and grantmaking, financial investments, and Pocantico Center offerings.

Specifically, the president will:

- Weave the Fund's legacy into a forward-looking vision grounded in its mission, continually refining strategies to enhance effectiveness and impact.
- Externally, serve as a highly effective convener and influential voice across the philanthropic sector, advocating for RBF's mission, grantees, peers, and partners, and communicating the foundation's learnings to a broad range of domestic and international audiences.
- Steward the endowment, including through mission-aligned investing, to sustain and amplify the Fund's global reach through its work and impact.
- Lead a values-aligned organization that embodies trust, empowerment, collaboration, and innovation, ensuring the principles of belonging and impact shape how justice and equity are reflected in its culture, programs, Pocantico offerings, and investments.
- Leverage and amplify the Rockefeller philanthropic legacy and ecosystem of related family institutions.
- Develop a highly effective, transparent, and collaborative partnership with the board of trustees, fully engage on all levels with the staff, and facilitate meaningful engagement between the staff and the board.
- Guide the Pocantico Center's strategic direction, operations and programming.
- Effectively lead the RBF in a shifting context, sociopolitical, technological (proliferation of AI), and legal landscape while safeguarding and advancing the Fund's legacy, mission, commitments and its people—grantees, staff, trustees, and partners.



*New American Leaders (grantee). Photo by Che Sehyun.*

# CANDIDATE PROFILE (1 of 2)

The president will be a proven leader who will embody a mix of the following competencies and others:

## VISIONARY AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

The successful candidate will bring visionary strategic insight and the ability to define and communicate a compelling direction for the Fund in the current shifting sociopolitical, technological and legal context. They will have experience developing and implementing strategies that connect mission, program, and investment work to drive measurable impact. The ideal leader will demonstrate sound judgment, political acumen, and adaptive thinking. The president will bring knowledge of current challenges, unique opportunities, and potential risks facing foundations and nonprofit institutions—including governance, financial, and regulatory dynamics. They will also bring an understanding of how to address these challenges with courage, integrity, transparency, and resilience, demonstrating bold and careful collaborative leadership that informs new opportunities to advance calculated strategies that result in greater impact of RBF’s legacy, mission, and longstanding commitments.

## PROGRAM INSIGHT AND SECTOR EXPERTISE

The president will have broad experienced perspective on program strategy and a deep understanding of the philanthropic ecosystem, including both domestic and international landscapes. They will possess an ability to synthesize information from multiple sources to form a nuanced perspective on interconnected global, regional, national, and local issues. Familiarity with global and U.S. policy environments is essential. Familiarity with mission-aligned investing is preferred.

## ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

The successful candidate will demonstrate proven leadership in organizational development, with experience managing change while fostering a strong organizational culture. They will bring a record of cultivating talent, mentoring staff, and fostering a culture of trust, inclusion, collaboration, and excellence. A demonstrated commitment to diversity, mutual respect, and building a strong, inclusive community and sense of belonging, along with the ability to embed these values institutionally, is crucial. The new leader will also oversee how the RBF integrates Artificial Intelligence (AI), including utilizing AI as a potential talent resource. It does not require an AI expert but requires someone who understands how to partner to align talent management, culture nurturing, and AI expansion in the Fund’s work and workplace.

## RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING, GOVERNANCE, AND EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

The president will possess strong relationship management skills and experience engaging diverse stakeholders, including trustees, grantees, peers, and global partners. They will have demonstrated experience working effectively with boards, including governance, partnership, and strategic collaboration, and the ability to represent a family-led, legacy institution with diplomacy and integrity. The ideal candidate will have a proven track record of building successful coalitions and advancing collaborative initiatives that strengthen shared impact. They must have a reputable local, regional and global network that can be leveraged to amplify RBF’s work.

# CANDIDATE PROFILE (2 of 2)

## COMMUNICATION AND CONVENING POWER

The successful candidate will be a skilled communicator, capable of articulating ideas clearly and persuasively across written, spoken, and digital platforms. They will bring experience representing institutions publicly and engaging diverse audiences, thereby increasing understanding, reach, and impact. A demonstrated ability to convene leaders and foster dialogue across sectors is essential.

## FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Candidates will possess sound financial judgement and experience in managing substantial institutional resources. They should demonstrate an understanding of investment strategy and the ability to partner effectively with investment professionals and trustees in aligning endowment performance with mission objectives. The president will adopt an inclusive and relationship-driven approach, recognizing the importance of shared accountability and transparency in resource management. Ability to responsibly leverage technology to advance RBF's impact is important.

## PERSONAL QUALITIES

The president will embody boldness, integrity, humility, and emotional intelligence, with strong interpersonal skills and the ability to work effectively across cultures and contexts. They will bring self-awareness, adaptability, and resilience, together with a genuine commitment to justice, equity, and service. The ideal leader will be reflective, grounded, inclusive, and generous of spirit, inspiring trust and confidence throughout the organization and with its partners.



Higher Heights Leadership Fund (grantee). Photo courtesy of Higher Heights.

# COMPENSATION AND CONTACT

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## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The base salary range for this position is \$700,000 to \$750,000 per annum. The final offer will be influenced by a candidate's relevant experience and qualifications and will be balanced by the Fund's commitment to internal pay equity and its commitment to external compensation competitiveness. RBF offers comprehensive benefits, including health insurance (medical, dental, and vision), twice annual salary life insurance, a generous 401(k) plan, significant flexible work arrangement structure, and paid time off to support work-life balance, funding to match gifts, and funding for personal career advancement. The president has access to a discretionary grantmaking budget for causes and projects that amplify the Fund's mission.

## LOCATION

The new president will work from the RBF's office located at 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 900, New York, NY 10115. Significant travel will also be required, largely due to the geographic diversity of RBF's work. The RBF will provide relocation support for the finalist who may benefit from that.

## 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 [RBFCEO@russellreynolds.com](mailto:RBFCEO@russellreynolds.com).