



TITLE: Vice President of Entrepreneurship

DEPARTMENT: Entrepreneurship

REPORTS TO: President and CEO

DATE: September 2019

BACKGROUND

The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation (“Kauffman Foundation”) is a private, fully endowed foundation established in 1966 by the late entrepreneur and philanthropist Ewing Marion Kauffman. Based in Kansas City, Missouri, the Kauffman Foundation is among the thirty largest foundations in the United States with an asset base of approximately \$2.5 billion.

Mission:

To help individuals attain economic independence by advancing educational achievement and entrepreneurial success, consistent with the aspirations of our founder, Ewing Marion Kauffman.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Vice President of Entrepreneurship is the leader for the Kauffman Foundation’s work in entrepreneurship, which is one of the core areas of the organization’s mission. As such, the Vice President is responsible for leading a team of ~30 associates in the development and implementation of entrepreneurship strategies and programs to meet Foundation goals. The Vice President of Entrepreneurship leads the Foundation’s entire entrepreneurship portfolio – including grantmaking, operating programs, convening, research, and policy. S/he will report to the President and CEO and be a member of the Foundation’s senior leadership team. The Vice President of Entrepreneurship works in close partnership with the Senior Director of Entrepreneurship – the Senior Director oversees the day-to-day implementation and execution of the strategy, and provides guidance and oversight to the team – and reports directly to the VP of Entrepreneurship.

The Foundation is seeking a Vice President to lead our entrepreneurship strategy and to use data, trends, and emerging innovations to scale, refine, and evolve the strategy over time. The Vice President of Entrepreneurship is charged with leading the team to achieve the impact called for by the Foundation’s entrepreneurship strategy. The Foundation is not seeking a new entrepreneurship strategy – rather a leader with the vision, strategic thinking, and thought leadership to scale and deepen the impact of the Foundation’s current entrepreneurship strategy.

In addition to the responsibilities noted below, the Vice President of Entrepreneurship contributes to the management of the overall Foundation by actively participating on the senior leadership team, engaging in cross-departmental integration and learning, articulating, and supporting the overall vision and goals of the Foundation, and participating in organizational planning. This includes regular meetings and presentations to the Board of Trustees.

Specific responsibilities include:

1. Vision and strategy

- Articulate a clear, accessible, and compelling vision to guide the team in achieving the impact called for by the entrepreneurship strategy – this includes providing high level benchmarks or milestones to guide the team in what the strategy should look like annually to achieve key results.
- Position the Foundation to anticipate trends, new ideas, innovations and disruptions and to use data, evidence and emerging patterns to shape and evolve the Foundation's entrepreneurship strategy.
- Position the Foundation to be intellectually and programmatically agile – to learn from results and use those to inform future directions.
- Lead the research and development of new strategies and opportunities not yet initiated and network within the national entrepreneurship community.

2. Team leadership and culture

- Create and nurture a high performing, high trust team culture where associates achieve ambitious goals.
- Provide high level leadership of all team functions – budget, staffing, strategy implementation, performance management – and provide guidance and direction to the Senior Director of Entrepreneurship to ensure these functions are carried out effectively.
- Provide guidance and direction to the Senior Director of Entrepreneurship to ensure tracking and use of key performance measurements to inform program strategy, design, and effectiveness, working in collaboration with the Foundation's evaluation department.
- Foster ongoing learning, growth, and development.
- Work in close collaboration with internal departments critical to the entrepreneurship team's success, including evaluation, public affairs, finance and grants administration, legal, and talent & culture.

3. Thought leadership

- Maintain and advance the Foundation as a highly credible, compelling and insightful leader of the entrepreneurship field.
- Articulate the Foundation's vision for entrepreneurship – and share insights and lessons learned from the Foundation's work – on the national, regional, and local stage.
- Further the department's and Foundation's work by continually upgrading content knowledge, contributing to publications and media inquiries, and participating in local and national forums as such opportunities arise.
- Develop and convene a robust national network – including leaders in philanthropy but also adjacent fields – so that the Foundation's entrepreneurship strategy is informed by diverse and well-informed perspectives and real-world experiences.
- Position the Foundation as a thought leader in entrepreneurship research & policy – curating and widely disseminating actionable, practical research that informs policy and leads to actions that support thriving national entrepreneurship ecosystems.

4. Strategic partnerships

- Develop and nurture local and national strategic partnerships to extend and enhance entrepreneurship and Foundation goals.

- Develop and maintain a council of high-level entrepreneurs to ensure relevance, adoption, and effectiveness of entrepreneurship programs.
- Develop and nurture new relationships and ideas – take ideas/possible partnerships from an ambiguous state to a relationship/project that adds value in advancing the entrepreneurship strategy.
- Become a visible and engaged entrepreneurship leader in the Kansas City community.

EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE/COMPETENCIES

Education:

- Bachelor's degree required; master's degree preferred.

Required work experience:

- A minimum of ten years of relevant professional experience.
- Understanding of the entrepreneurial landscape and the critical challenges facing startups and growing firms.
- Track record in developing and executing strategies and programs to achieve results and further organizational goals.
- Track record collaborating across an organization with multiple departments (legal, talent & culture, public affairs, etc.) to achieve a goal.
- Outstanding communicator – one-on-one, small groups, large groups, locally and on the national stage, including with media.
- Track record identifying, communicating and rallying thought leaders around a new idea or set of patterns and trends.
- Experience building, supervising, and developing high-caliber team of professionals.

Preferred experience includes:

- Experience as a founder of an enterprise or experience working in a startup firm, preferably as a founding team member.
- Built and scaled an initiative/project/product inside a large enterprise.
- Led complex community/economic development.
- C-level leader at entrepreneur support org (accelerator, incubator...)
- For-profit experience.
- Understanding of capital access issues and opportunities for entrepreneurs.

Travel:

- Given the nature of this nationally visible position, 20-40% business travel is expected.

QUALIFICATIONS

Qualified candidates for this position must be highly motivated, capable of self-direction, and able to work collaboratively in a teamwork capacity. Candidates must exhibit a keen sense of responsibility and enjoy working with multiple demands.

A successful candidate will possess:

- A network of national thought leaders, experts, and practitioners who could be tapped to advance the Foundation's entrepreneurship work.
- Outstanding communication and presentation skills – one-on-one, small groups, large groups, locally, on the national stage, with media, and especially in high profile forums.
- Proven ability to make big ideas accessible and actionable.
- Demonstrated agency in launching new ideas/solving problems and developing agency, ownership, and accountability on a team.
- Demonstrated track record seeking and making use of feedback to improve performance.
- Understanding of entrepreneurship research and trends, ability to identify gaps, and think creatively about solutions and connections.
- Financial acumen and experience developing and managing budgets.
- Proven ability to use data to develop and execute new strategies, make course corrections, or terminate ineffective programs.
- A high level of ethics with a strong sense of integrity and committed to the values of the Foundation and maintenance of confidentiality.
- Confident in his/her abilities but approaches work with humility.
- Strong interpersonal and leadership skills with the ability to establish and develop credibility quickly at all levels of the organization.
- Demonstrated skills at building relationships and leveraging existing relationships to improve outcomes of Foundation initiatives.
- An ability to maintain a calm and competent demeanor in uncomfortable or difficult situations.

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature of the work being performed and are not intended to be construed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills required. This document describes the position currently available. The organization reserves the right to modify job duties or job descriptions at any time.

TO APPLY

Interested applicants can apply for this position by submitting a cover letter and resume to [Koya Leadership Partners, LLC](#).