



POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

Senior Program Officer, Education

Location: Boston, MA

About the Barr Foundation

The Barr Foundation's mission is to invest in human, natural, and creative potential, serving as thoughtful stewards and catalysts. As stewards, Barr nurtures and enhances vital community assets. As catalysts, the Foundation cultivates and advances the breakthrough ideas that will shape our collective future. Barr focuses on achieving impact as a constructive partner, willing to exercise leadership.

Based in Boston, the Foundation focuses regionally, and selectively engages nationally, working in partnership with nonprofits, foundations, the public sector, and civic and business leaders to elevate the arts and creative expression, advance solutions for climate change, and expand educational opportunity. Barr is one of the largest private foundations in New England with assets of more than \$1.6 billion and a 2017 grantmaking budget of \$80 million.

A set of core values defined by the Barr Foundation's founding trustees express beliefs about what constitutes effective philanthropy and guide how the Foundation carries out its philanthropic mission. The Foundation is committed to strive for excellence, act with humility, adopt a long-term perspective, and embrace risk. Additionally, while each program is guided by distinct priorities and goals, Barr embraces a common set of approaches in all aspects of its work, namely flexibility and nimbleness, a broad range of tools, knowledge and learning, openness and transparency, and active collaboration.

For more information on the Barr Foundation, please visit: www.barrfoundation.org.

Barr's Education Program

The Foundation [announced](#) new strategies for the Education Program in March 2016, expanding the geographic footprint from a focus on Boston alone to New England, with additional, targeted investments nationally. The 2017 calendar year marks the first year of activity under the new strategy, supported by expected investment of \$27 million. The education team's in-depth strategic planning efforts focused on grounding the local and regional focus within a broader national context for education progress and need, with a specific emphasis on understanding where and how students connect to success in secondary and post-secondary environments related to both educational and career/workforce pursuits.

The national and local contexts underscore a real need for new secondary strategies and solutions to connect students to success, both within and following high school. To this end, the Education Program has defined a program-wide goal to increase the number of youth who connect to secondary and post-secondary success, with a purpose-driven focus on high-need students.

(1) Our regional strategy represents a new vision of secondary education designed to bring about long-term transformative changes to secondary education and post-secondary connections in the Commonwealth and beyond. This strategy is a long-term endeavor comprised of three direct investment areas focused in the greater New England region:

- Broadening the definition of student success to include competencies as well as mastery of academic subjects.
- Supporting the development of new high school models and programs that are flexible and conducive to innovation, and that move away from an outdated, one-size-fits-all approach to secondary education.
- Advancing system conditions that support innovative school and program models.

(2) A deliberate Boston strategy seeks to expand K-12 quality throughout Boston, building upon a strong and long-standing commitment to Barr's home city. Efforts focus on increasing the number of seats in existing high-quality schools and replicating high-performing public school models. We also seek to facilitate partnerships where high-capacity organizations—both local and national—can work with teachers, principals, and administrators to develop and implement high-quality programs in support of Boston schools.

Our work in the Education Program is governance-agnostic. We actively seek partnership with both traditional district schools and public charter school operators.

Senior Program Officer Position

The Senior Program Officer will play a significant role at an exciting time of growth for the Education Program, helping to continue to refine the strategy and to shape its full implementation.

This Senior Program Officer will focus on implementing the Boston strategy, and collaborate with the Senior Program Officer leading the Regional strategy.

Key Responsibilities

Planning and Strategy

- Serve as a thought partner on the team by continually assessing the environment and bringing new knowledge and insights to guide ongoing refinements to the Boston strategy and specific implementation priorities.
- Maintain a wide breadth and depth of knowledge about current local and national trends, professional practices, and policy pertinent to the program.
- Work with Barr's director of learning and evaluation to develop and implement approaches for assessing the impact of initiatives and grants, and to incorporate and share learnings.
- Under guidance of the director of education, develop an annual budget and work plan showing the activities and resources that will support the key initiatives under the Boston strategy.

Grantmaking

- Scout and identify potential grantees and field-building opportunities, and conduct preliminary due diligence to ascertain fit and potential risks.
- Work with potential grantees in proposal development to help design requests that are strategic and aligned to the Education Program's goals; improve the quality of proposals; and evaluate and provide feedback on the feasibility and clarity of proposal budgets, staffing, work plans, and anticipated project outcomes as related to proposal goals and institutional capability.
- Evaluate proposals, conduct site visits, monitor and manage active grants, assess their progress (including financial and programmatic reports), and communicate actively with grantees. Work with Foundation's grants management team to administer grants from start to finish.
- Develop and present quality grant write-ups, written analyses, and reports for Foundation leadership, reflective of rigorous evaluations of grant recommendations, including context for proposed projects, organizational assessments, strategy alignment, how recommendations advance the Program's agenda, risk assessments, and as appropriate, external expert commentary.
- Manage the evaluation of grants or grant clusters, in collaboration with Barr's director of education and director of learning and evaluation.

Field Leadership and Foundation Support

- Cultivate strong working relationships with grantees, outside advisors, experts in the field, public sector partners, and colleagues in philanthropy.
- Lead or support convenings, workshops, or other opportunities for learning and collaborative work among grantees and other thought leaders to share best practices, encourage collaboration, and explore opportunities for partnership.
- Provide leadership in the professional field through public speaking engagements, writing, panel discussions, and use of social media, etc.
- Commission papers and program-related reports that broadly contribute to the Foundation's understanding of new approaches, best practices, and issues in Education relevant to the program's interests.
- Collaborate with Barr's communications team to disseminate information with the goal of advancing field knowledge.

Qualifications

- A commitment to education excellence and equity issues as demonstrated through a strong record of achievement with a minimum of 5-7 years of relevant leadership experience working in nonprofit, public, or private sector in positions related to the Barr Foundation's Education Program.
- Subject matter expertise relevant to the program's strategies including knowledge of both evidenced-based best practices and emerging innovation in program, school and system design to support all students to achieve college and career readiness.
- The ability to analyze complex organizational and community conditions; understanding of policy, political and community dynamics; knowledge of organizational development, and ability to assist in the creation of comprehensive approaches.
- Demonstrated ability to think strategically, take initiative, and execute strategies, including the ability to define program objectives, evaluate progress, and independently manage projects through a complete lifecycle.
- Exceptional quantitative and qualitative analytical skills necessary for identifying investment opportunities, assessing organizational health and capacity, designing initiatives, and evaluating proposals and outcomes.
- Commitment to strive for excellence, act with humility, adopt a long-term perspective, and embrace risk – which are a reflection of Barr values.
- A collegial spirit in sharing ideas and receiving feedback.
- Experience building strong, positive, collaborative relationships with diverse constituencies, by listening to new ideas, encouraging open dialogue, and inspiring people to work towards common goals.
- Knowledge of the culture, neighborhoods, schools, institutions and leadership of Boston would be an asset.
- Excellent writing and presentation skills, particularly in communicating with diverse constituencies in a variety of settings.
- Bachelor's degree required. Graduate degree in a field relevant to management, policy or education is preferred.

To Apply

The position is open. The Foundation seeks to identify qualified candidates as soon as possible, so applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Please visit <http://bit.ly/2k1um8l> to apply for this position. Only applications submitted via this link will be considered.

Questions may be directed in confidence to Denise Gillespie, Director of Human Resources, via email at: barrjobs@barrfoundation.org.

This position offers a competitive salary with excellent benefits.

The Barr Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes a diverse pool of candidates.