

May & Stanley Smith Charitable Trust Executive Director

The board seeks a leader with strong experience in grantmaking, grant solicitation and philanthropic planning, and a background in one or more of the Trust's areas of focus (disability, older adults, foster youth and veterans and military families), to evolve the Trust's leadership, governance and programmatic strategies.

Founded in 1989 and located in Corte Madera in the San Francisco Bay Area, [May and Stanley Smith Charitable Trust](#) ("Trust") is a private foundation that stewards the charitable intentions of Mr. and Mrs. Smith beyond their lifetimes, and aims to focus, deepen and enhance efforts to achieve significant, lasting, positive changes that promote well-being for individuals and communities. The Trust supports organizations that offer opportunities to [Adults and Transitioning Youth with Disabilities](#), [Elders](#), [Foster Youth](#), and [Veterans and Military Families](#), and provides some discretionary grants, primarily in the 14 Western states and British Columbia. The Executive Director and some staff also provide administrative services and board support to the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust. The board, Executive Director and staff are guided in all activities and grantmaking by the values and beliefs of Respect, Humility, Interdependence, Stewardship and the Dignity and Potential of every individual.

BACKGROUND

In 1951, Stanley Smith was a successful Australian businessman with interests in mining and international trade when he married May, a Chinese national working as a translator in Hong Kong. During their lifetimes they practiced quiet, modest generosity with interests ranging from education to horticulture. Mr. Smith passed away in 1968 and Mrs. Smith in 2006. The Trust was founded in 1989 and gives the trustees broad powers to determine the funding interests of the Trust. Over the years, the trustees have used the Smiths' personal examples of individual achievement given opportunity and effort, along with Mrs. Smith's own suggestions for grants when the Trust was established, to define the scope of the Trust's activities.

The Trust has awarded over \$340 million in grants since inception, including 165 grants in 2019 totaling \$21 million. The financial assets of the Trust are valued at approximately \$430 million. In 2018 the Trust refined and confirmed its grantmaking strategies within each program area for the 2019-2023 period; staff prioritizes thorough due diligence in evaluating requests and being open and responsive to inquiries. Most grants provide direct operating support for services that develop the capacity of individuals to realize their potential and improve their quality of life; however, the Trust also supports organizations striving to bring about changes in systems, policies, and/or behaviors that contribute to improved well-being and opportunity for its focus populations. The Trust was able to pivot quickly to provide emergency support to nonprofits during the COVID-19 pandemic, and is viewed by grantees as being a supportive, engaged, respectful partner. Modeled on the Smiths' giving style, the Trust does not seek publicity or recognition for its work, thereby respecting and acknowledging the expertise of its grantees and emphasizing their efforts and success.

The Trust employs eight experienced and accomplished program officers and staff who work in a professional, informal, team-oriented environment that strives to faithfully interpret the wishes of the Smiths and the trustees to see their intent realized. The Trust is governed by a three-person board. The outgoing CEO is a trustee and has administered the Trust since 2006. She will continue in her trustee position and understanding the boundaries of a governance role, fully intends to leave the operating and executive functions to her successor. To ensure continuity in process and culture, the trustees are being thoughtful and intentional in planning for a smooth transition, and the Executive Director will work in partnership with trustees and staff to internalize the Trust's history and culture, strategic plan and funding areas, operations and

processes.

THE POSITION

The Executive Director has the ultimate responsibility for the grantmaking process and all administrative and financial operations. The ED serves as a link between staff, applicants, professional advisors, the broader philanthropic field and the board, and supervises staff in providing grant reports and funding recommendations, financial reports, and support to trustees in their governance role. Directly reporting to the ED are the Director of Grants Management who oversees the Grants Associate, and the Director of Programs who oversees the four Senior Program Officers; all staff ultimately report to the ED.

The Executive Director will be both strategic and operational and support the development of and improvements to grantmaking, and within the context of the strategic plan, will offer guidance on the types of grants made. The ED will embrace the culture of the trust which includes, among other things, its rigorous grantmaking process and the value of humility. Ongoing responsibilities include:

- Understand and monitor the 2019-2023 strategic plan; work with trustees and staff to define, communicate, and implement the Trust's vision and mission; support trustees in the development of grantmaking strategies and governance policies, maintaining frequent and open communication.
- Recruit, develop and retain a high-performing team whose experience and sensibilities align to Trust's values and mission; ensure HR policies and procedures are current and serve the needs of employees; provide for staff development and opportunities to interact with other subject matter experts.
- Ensure operational workflow consistency within and across program areas, and support team toward achieving operating and grantmaking goals.
- Monitor day-to-day financial, accounting and investment activities with support from outsourced providers, including maintenance of general ledger, cash management, reconciliations, accounts payable, payroll and benefits, and grant payments; prepare quarterly financial reports for Trustees; provide information to outside lawyers and accountants to assist in preparation of policies, tax returns, audits and annual financial statements; maintain productive relationships with professional advisors.
- Evaluate grant recommendations to be presented to Trustees; on an ongoing basis, keep Trustees apprised of significant issues concerning the Trust.
- Increase the Trust's knowledge and networks within its geographic and program areas; engage in formal and informal partnerships, networks, and collaborations to leverage its own and others' knowledge, experience, resources, and impact.
 - Ensure that all externally-facing materials and communications are reflective of the Trust's mission and values.
 - Remain current in issues and trends in philanthropy and in specific program areas of interest to the Trust.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

The Executive Director should have the following types of experiences and qualifications:

- A mission-driven individual with a belief in and commitment to the Trust's mission, values, areas of focus and grantees.
- Seven or more years' experience as a grantmaker or grantee in one or more of the Trust's interest areas (or similar interest area) and equivalent financial and administrative experience; ability to address and analyze financial issues.

- Demonstrated ability to effectively motivate and manage a high-performing team of subject matter experts; commitment to continuous improvement of self and organization.
- In-depth knowledge of grantmaking best practices, legal, accounting and regulatory requirements; understanding of IRS nonprofit regulations; one who is sought for expertise and breadth of experience; strong planning, administrative and organizational skills.
- Data-driven; an appreciation for measurement, evaluation, and grantee feedback to ensure the continuous improvement in effective philanthropy.
- Excellent written, verbal, analytical and interpersonal skills. Computer proficiency in Word, Excel and QuickBooks. Ability to learn and utilize Fluxx grants management software.
- Graduate degree in public policy, social policy, public health, nonprofit management, or a relevant area.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate should be:

- An individual who respects the knowledge and talents of a skilled team, cultivates trust, and encourages creative thinking, and who understands the subtleties of motivating and directing a diverse group with different work styles; a professional demeanor demonstrating respect, integrity, discretion, judgment, maturity and flexibility.
- A well-organized individual with a keen eye for details, accuracy, and deadlines, and the ability to set realistic goals and objectives, and balance multiple priorities; a “doer” with a willingness to work hands-on in developing and executing a variety of process and grantmaking activities.
- A champion for innovation within the Trust’s program areas, with the diplomacy and sensitivity to negotiate or ameliorate fears or limitations.
- Intrepid yet tactful; determined yet respectful of others’ concerns; someone with the flexibility and creativity needed to find alternative ways to reach objectives when barriers arise; a skilled negotiator who does not drive self or others into a corner.
- A good listener and strategist; comfortable receiving input from many sources, and able to analyze and formulate disparate information into a sound, well-organized plan.
- Reflective, with strong conceptual, critical, and creative thinking abilities.
- Committed to professional development for the team, self and the organization.
- Emotionally mature with a sense of humor; able to maintain balance and perspective.

For more information please contact:

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