

## LELAND FIKES FOUNDATION

Dallas, Texas

### Director of Philanthropy

#### **The Organization**

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The Leland Fikes Foundation (LFF) is a private, non-profit corporation in Dallas. It was founded in 1954 and named for Leland Fikes, a prominent oil and gas executive, real estate owner, and philanthropist. During its early decades, the Foundation funded a broad array of causes in the arts and culture, science, and education. More recently, LFF has intentionally narrowed its focus and supports organizations concentrated primarily in four major fields: reproductive rights, progressive values, Dallas-area human services and activities of community benefit, and medical research.

The Foundation is led by the founder's son, Lee Fikes. A small staff provides support to the Foundation's daily operations, and a dedicated Board of Trustees provides overall guidance to ensure that grants are awarded in a manner consistent with the organization's mission. Most gifts are made to Dallas institutions and are typically anonymous. As of June 30, 2019, the Foundation's asset value was close to \$110 million. Funding by category (to date) over the past five years is as follows:

Health and Medical Grants: \$5,607,500

Education Grants: \$910,993

Arts, Culture, and Enrichment: \$1,602,250

Reproductive Rights and Population: \$10,512,840

Human Services: \$3,282,400

Promoting Progressive Values: \$5,935,000

Other Grants: \$323,500

With grants totaling over \$28 million since 2015 and a desire to continue its robust funding of compelling social and community causes, the Leland Fikes Foundation seeks a Director of Philanthropy who will oversee its funding and operations under the general direction of its President, both now and during the future transition of leadership to the next generation.

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## Responsibilities

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Reporting to the President of the Leland Fikes Foundation, the Director of Philanthropy will be responsible for the overall management of the Foundation's philanthropic giving and will serve as a key interface between the Foundation and the publics that are served through its charitable efforts. He or she will have responsibilities in five principal areas: day-to-day grant administration and oversight; evaluating grant applications and both making decisions about funding and advising the trustees on grants, as appropriate; ongoing strategic reflection and planning with the President and Trustees; staying abreast of local, state, and national trends and researching new potential areas of interest for future grants; and participating in conferences, events, and select community activities, and otherwise maintaining relations with organizations and individuals with similar philanthropic goals. Among this person's duties will be the following:

- Managing day-to-day operations of the Foundation, including grant-making, budgeting, and record-keeping activities, as well as ensuring beneficiary accountability.
- Serving as an objective and informed thought partner with the President and Trustees of the Foundation to understand their core beliefs and principles, as well as to explore with them how those values can be expressed philanthropically in innovative and creative ways.
- Researching and analyzing potential new organizations that are aligned with LFF's areas of interest toward which the Foundation might wish to dedicate its funds.
- Identifying, evaluating, and recommending to the Trustees those funding opportunities that may fall within one of the LFF's prioritized categories, and handling with discretion and timeliness those that do not fit the criteria.
- Consulting with and advising grant applicants and recipients regarding their projects, monitoring adherence to grant terms, and providing progress reports to the Trustees of the Foundation.
- Acting as the principal representative of the Foundation to the Dallas community at various events and activities.

In summary, the Director of Philanthropy will be responsible for ensuring that the Foundation is run in an effective and businesslike way, that it appropriately furthers the

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values and philanthropic goals of the Trustees, and that new opportunities and initiatives are identified and funded consistent with the interests and guiding policies of the Foundation.

## **Candidate Qualities**

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### **Leadership**

Notable interpersonal characteristics such that one leads by force of intellect, integrity, and personality; has credibility based on successful performance; and garners support because of a genuine team player attitude.

A “servant leader” whose sincerity, energy level, enthusiasm, passion, and commitment inspire others.

Collegial and comfortable engaging others by process instead of mandate and by collaboration rather than imperative.

Executive presence predicated more on a sense of humility and service than on self-aggrandizement or career advancement.

A catalyst who engenders a sense of creativity, innovation and willingness to explore new areas and to take prudent risks.

### **Experience**

At least five years of philanthropic or nonprofit experience, ideally working in an environment in which dealing with funders and stakeholders has been part of his or her remit.

A track record that demonstrates expertise working in informal settings in which objectives are achieved more through persuading and influencing than by manipulating an organization or policy.

Experience working in a small office environment and, in many instances, on one’s own.

Background in roles requiring analysis, planning, and advising decision makers.

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### **Skills and Knowledge**

Able to think deeply, to write clearly and succinctly, and to present ideas well verbally.

A person with good business sense who is well-organized, able to multitask effectively and independently, and follows through on commitments.

Excellent interpersonal skills marked by the ability to listen carefully and to understand constituent needs.

A quick study with substantial intellectual curiosity and a willingness to learn.

Exceptional consultative skills that lead this individual to understand key issues, to assemble and process a wide range of data, to condense them into practical plans, to articulate recommendations to decision makers, and to implement them accordingly.

Strategic-minded, thoughtful, broad-gauged, knowledgeable and insightful, with the ability to translate vision into practical outcomes.

Well-developed diplomatic and communication skills that allow this individual to articulate the activities of the Foundation both one-on-one and to large civic groups.

A self-starter who is flexible in response to changing priorities and multiple demands on his or her time and energies.

### **Personal Traits**

A person of unquestioned integrity who has an impeccable reputation, who honors commitments, and who deals with people in a straightforward and personable fashion.

An unpretentious and service-oriented individual who projects a compelling presence based on credibility, communication, and shared values.

A person who excels in a role that relies more on the ability to influence than to exercise direct power.

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One who sees the larger strategic picture while being attentive to appropriate detail and following up on key action items.

Very intelligent and well educated, curious about a broad range of issues, and possessing a strong mission orientation.

An individual who thinks independently and has the courage of conviction within the context of established policies and Foundation goals.

Approachable, accessible, engaging, and personable, with an even temperament and a good sense of humor.

Comfortable meeting the public and acting as the spokesperson for a significant community institution.

## Other Considerations

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**Compensation:** Competitive with comparable private family foundations in the Dallas area.

**Travel:** Minimal.

**Education:** Bachelor's degree required; advanced degrees a plus.

**Location:** Dallas, Texas

**Website:** [www.fikesfoundation.org](http://www.fikesfoundation.org)

### Candidates

**May Now Be:** An individual in a foundation or family office whose personal values and objectives are similar to those of the Leland Fikes Foundation.

A fundraising professional whose experience in development could be applied successfully in a foundation setting.

A person who has worked with grants review and administration for a similar non-profit organization.

**BRIGHAM HILL**  
**CONSULTANCY**

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