

Why FOUNDATIONS Should Hire YOUNG PEOPLE

Perspectives from Senior Foundation Executives on Hiring Young Leaders and Establishing Apprenticeships

Emerging Practitioners in Philanthropy (EPIP) asked esteemed senior philanthropy leaders why they feel it's valuable to hire and cultivate young nonprofit leaders and activists as foundation professionals, and why it is important to have fellowships and internships to help young adults enter the foundation world. Here is what they believe...



STEVE GUNDERSON
President and CEO
Council on Foundations

"We are at a unique moment in time. We are transferring the leadership of philanthropy to a new generation. Yet, we are doing so amidst the greatest pressure ever for impact, effectiveness, and good governance. We need to prepare the next generation to excel in ways we never before imagined. Diversity is essential to effective philanthropy. One of the key components is new ideas, new

perspectives, and new understandings of how best to serve the evolving needs of society's many challenges. Without young activists at the table, we simply won't know how to best address today's problems in ways that creates tomorrow's solutions."

"Our Multicultural Fellowship Program provides us with a unique opportunity to powerfully impact the future of the philanthropic, nonprofit, and public sectors. Programs like ours cultivate the next generation of passionate community leaders who not only reflect the diversity of the communities we serve, but also are fulfilling a calling to strengthen those communities. These young leaders push all of us to live up to their highest expectations, thereby keeping us at our best. They bring a wealth of new ideas, new perspectives, and cutting-edge practices from their personal and academic experiences, and from their rich community backgrounds."

SANDRA HERNÁNDEZ, M.D.
Chief Executive Officer
San Francisco Foundation



GARA LAMARCHE
President and CEO
The Atlantic Philanthropies

"Because unlike some fields, it is nearly impossible to get into philanthropy at an entry level otherwise, and creating these opportunities opens up more spaces.

"Because younger people have a huge amount to contribute, and in many other talent-based fields, from technology to the arts to politics, age is not as much of a barrier to leadership and responsibility. Why not philanthropy, then?"

"As a result of thirty years of internship programs across the country, a rich new generation of foundation and nonprofit executives exist today. Their talents, skills and insights are integral to work in so many fields. Young people continue to be both an untapped present resource and our link to the future."

MICHAEL SELTZER
Philanthropic Consultant



"In my own case, by the time that I turned 22, I had lived in Cameroon in West Africa as a participant in Operation Crossroads Africa and served as a VISTA Worker in West Virginia and Hawaii. Those experiences shaped my world view and served me well in my first foundation job in 1969, and each of my subsequent foundation and nonprofit assignments.

"Young people who were as privileged as I to have had such experiences or who grew up in differing social, cultural and economic environments are poised to bring much to the foundation world. Their experiences give them a unique and invaluable perspective.

"To sum it up in one phrase, they are 'awesome!'"



"When we helped launch EPIP in 2002, I wasn't sure what the response would be. It is now clear that there are hundreds and hundreds of diverse young professionals in our field – they didn't know one another, and we didn't know them. I am so pleased that today, the Ford Foundation, along with Mott and others, have helped build a network so that young people can connect, engage in peer and inter-generational learning, and lift up the voice of a new generation in our field."

LINETTA GILBERT
Senior Program Officer
Ford Foundation



MICHAEL J. BALAOING, ESQ.
Senior Vice President
Entertainment Industry Foundation
Chair of the Board
Liberty Hill Foundation

"Who grows up wanting to give away other people's money? I didn't – yet I stumbled into the foundation world 13 years ago at the age of 26. Serendipity and coincidence cannot be the best strategy for cultivating diverse, new leadership. Other sectors actively recruit young people for ideas, energy and yes, even leaders – from churches and the military to Silicon Valley and presidential campaigns. Why doesn't philanthropy create and institutionalize pipelines of fresh talent

to better connect nonprofits, foundations, academia, government and business?

"In these ivory tower castles known as the 80,000+ foundations in the US, insiders like us can build and lower the drawbridges to let in new faces and unheard voices -- or else risk becoming out of touch, irrelevant and ineffective.

"Must the next generation repeat past mistakes or struggle to find hidden career opportunities in this seemingly enigmatic field? We have the opportunity and responsibility to demystify, diversify, redefine and revitalize philanthropy as an impactful and inclusive vocation. How? By enlisting more young people through fellowships, internships, mentoring programs and new staff hires. Beyond what older grantmakers have to teach, there is just as much for veteran foundation leaders to unlearn by engaging the next generation.

"Demography is destiny, even for philanthropy and especially for the nonprofit sector. 77 million Baby Boomers (born 1946-64) will retire in the next two decades. Will 49 million Generation X'ers (born 1965-76) fill the job gap? And what about the 71 million members of the Millennial Generation (born 1977-94)? Whatever the trends, there can be no success without successors – and bridging the generational divide is in the best interests of philanthropy."

"Developing and strengthening the next generation of leaders is critical to effective philanthropy. A diverse mix of races, ages and classes in philanthropy provides the new perspectives we need to develop new solutions to community challenges.

LUZ VEGA-MARQUIS
President and CEO
Marguerite Casey Foundation



"Young activists and non-profit leaders bring valuable knowledge of the strategies being used in communities today to make change. Their experience makes them more effective grantmakers, who will lead the sector in developing the innovative methods we will need to create a more just and equitable world."



GENE WILSON
Vice President – Retired
Ewing Marion Kauffman
Foundation

"Those of us who are 'elders' in philanthropy rarely have sufficient opportunity to be exposed to the creative, new thinking that young leaders bring to the field. If we really are committed to 'diversity,' then diversity of thought must be in that mix. Those of us who have our own scar tissue based on long experience, too often fail to understand that ours is not necessarily still the way things ought to be done.

"Fresh approaches based on current circumstances and perspective might be threatening to the 'elders,' but certainly is necessary if the field is to move forward. We have always thrived on being challenged. When we look backward, we have to be impressed by what we see following us. We must find ways to engage these young leaders in our craft and provide opportunity for their essential contributions. Absent any effective career ladder in grantmaking, internships for the best and brightest should provide an entry-point for this next generation. We can learn from them, and they will learn from us."