

Request for Proposal  
Search for President & CEO

Board of Trustees Search Committee

Issue Date: October 2, 2020  
Response Deadline: October 23, 2020

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President Search for The Winston-Salem Foundation

**I. Purpose**

The Winston-Salem Foundation ("Foundation") is currently accepting proposals from Executive Search firms regarding consultation services for The Winston-Salem Foundation President Search.

An appointed Search Committee will interview select search firms based upon their responses to this Request for Proposal. The Committee will then work with the chosen firm to develop a job description, create recruitment strategies, identify potential candidates, conduct interviews, and bring one final candidate for recommendation to The Winston-Salem Foundation Board. The selected search firm will be relied upon to assist the Search Committee with defining required and desired qualifications, source and screen candidates, coordinating interviews, negotiate compensation package and terms of employment.

The Search Committee intends to select a qualified search firm and commence the search by the week of November 23, 2020.

**II. About the Foundation**

The Winston-Salem Foundation was established on October 14, 1919 with a gift of \$1,000 from Colonel Francis H. Fries, president of Wachovia Bank, following a model developed in Cleveland, Ohio five years earlier. We were the first foundation of any type to be established in North Carolina, and we're the 16th oldest community foundation in the United States. Today, the Foundation manages \$606.5 million in assets and has over 1,550 charitable funds that positively impact communities in Winston-Salem, Forsyth County, and beyond.

The Foundation engages in activity in four primary areas, including:

**Community Leadership:** We collaborate with nonprofits, funders, and community leaders to build a more equitable community for all.

**Community Grants:** We support charitable organizations and programs that benefit Forsyth County in many program areas.

**Philanthropic Services:** We educate and assist individuals and organizations in their charitable giving.

**Student Aid:** We provide scholarships to local students in their quest for higher education.

In 2017, the Foundation announced two new broad focus areas—**Building an Inclusive Economy** and **Advancing Equity in Education**. We arrived at the decision to focus much of our programmatic work in these two areas after extensive discussion with our partners and reviewing data showing significant racial, economic, and residential disparities among communities of color.

Our priority around **Building an Inclusive Economy** focuses on access to efficient and affordable transportation, reduction in the racial wealth gap, and inclusive pathways to family-sustaining careers.

The Foundation's priority work around **Advancing Equity in Education** includes efforts around anti-bias culture and practices in educational settings (pre-K to post-secondary), positive behavior intervention strategies (pre-K to 12), and racially and economically diverse public schools (K to 12).

For more information, visit [www.wsfoundation.org](http://www.wsfoundation.org), or connect with the Foundation via Facebook or Twitter.

### **III. Eligibility**

To be eligible to respond to this RFP, the proposing firm must demonstrate that they or their principals assigned to the project have successfully completed services substantially similar to those specified in the Scope of Work section for institutions comparable in size and complexity to the Foundation.

### **IV. Scope of Work**

The selected search firm will be engaged to provide the following services:

1. Assist in developing a position description that is aligned with its mission, vision, values, and key focus areas.
2. Assist in developing strategies for carrying out an effective recruitment process, including outreach to encourage applicants from diverse backgrounds to apply.
3. Identify potential contacts and conduct personal outreach recruiting to recognized, highly qualified individuals.
4. Receive and review candidate CVs and resumes for appropriate background and required qualifications; conduct interviews to clarify each applicant's experience and interest; and prepare a written summary of screened candidates with a goal of identifying highly-qualified candidates to move forward in the search process.
5. Finalize a process to coordinate qualified candidates' participation in interviews; assist with candidate evaluation.
6. Conduct in depth reference checks with individuals who are or have been in a position to evaluate the candidate's performance on the job. Through these reference checks, ascertain the candidate's strength in personal dimensions identified by the position description. Verify selected candidates' educational background, and conduct criminal, financial, media, and civil litigation checks.
7. Debrief following interviews and reference checks.
8. Assist in preparing materials on the finalist to be used for the final selection and recommendation to the Board.
9. Contact candidates removed from further consideration at appropriate juncture(s).
10. Assist in crafting an appropriate compensation and benefits package and preparing and negotiating an employment agreement with the finalist.

11. Stay in close, regular contact with the Search Committee consistently throughout the process.

## **V. Proposal Requirements**

Qualified and interested firms should submit the following information:

1. History of the search firm and types of clients served.
2. Suggested Search Process that should include:
  - Overall approach and methodology;
  - Specific tactics the firm uses to source a diverse slate of candidates;
  - Search coordination and communication process between the search firm and the Foundation's Search Committee; and
  - Suggested timeline with specific steps identified to reach the targeted selection date.
3. Proposed search fee and any additional costs or expenses. Please provide a suitable breakdown by fee type if applicable and include a payment schedule.
4. Description of the firm's diversity at the ownership, leadership, and staff levels;
5. Background of proposed key firm personnel who will be directly involved in working with the Foundation, identifying the team leader (e.g., brief professional biography, including years employed by the executive search firm and specific search processes similar to the Foundation's that the individual has been involved with that have resulted in successful employment).
6. Five recent successful searches by the firm for President/CEOs with comparable client organizations (foundations or large nonprofit organizations). Please indicate which proposed team members were involved in completed searches if different from the individuals identified above.
7. A list of clients that the firm will not recruit from as a result of prior agreements.
8. A draft Engagement Letter reflecting the firm's proposed terms and conditions regarding its participation in this executive search process. Please include how your firm would propose to address a situation in which the finalist candidate were to leave the Foundation within three to twelve months. Please discuss under what terms a suitable replacement candidate would be selected either from previously identified candidates or newly identified candidates.
9. Key Questions to be answered via the proposal:
  - What makes your firm stand out from others;
  - What is your experience in searches for organizations with a deep focus on equity and inclusion;
  - What kind of expectations does the firm have with respect to the Foundation's Board, approved committees, and staff;

- How will the firm engage staff and key stakeholders, and
- How will search costs be budgeted, monitored, and managed.

All proposals and related materials become the property of The Winston-Salem Foundation.

## **VI. Our Selection of the Finalist Firm**

Our selection of a search firm finalist will be based on a comparison of the responses received from the invited search firms and the results of an in-person presentation as further discussed below. Applicant firms must demonstrate a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion in its search processes, and possess a strong ethical and professional approach to providing search services that we believe to be compatible with our culture. Although the cost of the service and related engagement terms will be important factors, other factors, as previously outlined in this RFP, will be considered.

## **VII. Submission Instructions:**

Proposals should be sent electronically in PDF format to **wsfsearchcommittee@gmail.com**.

The proposal must include a cover sheet signed by an official of the firm who has the authority to submit the RFP and conduct negotiations with the Foundation regarding being retained as the executive search firm.

Proposals must be received by the Search Committee no later than **noon, EST, on October 23, 2020**. It is the responsibility of the search firm to confirm that its proposal was received.

Under no circumstances should members of the search firm attempt to directly contact Foundation Board members, donors to the Foundation or other Foundation personnel regarding this search firm selection process.

The Foundation reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and bears no responsibility for any costs of preparing any proposal. Each received RFP will be treated confidentially.

The Search Committee will conduct finalist interviews on **Tuesday, November 18, 2020** and choose the finalist search firm by **Monday, November 23, 2020**.

Questions pertaining to the RFP should be directed to Alison Ashe-Card and Jeff Lindsay, Search Committee Co-Chairs, by email at [wsfsearchcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:wsfsearchcommittee@gmail.com) and, depending upon the nature of the question, you should expect a response in less than 24 hours.