



## **Position Specification**

Rockefeller Brothers Fund

Program Director, Central America

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## Our Client

The Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF) is a private, family foundation helping to advance social change that contributes to a more just, sustainable, and peaceful world. It was created in 1940 by the sons of John D. Rockefeller, Jr.—John D. 3rd, Nelson, Winthrop, Laurance, and David—as a vehicle by which they could share advice and research on charitable activities and coordinate their philanthropic efforts to better effect. As of December 31, 2019, the market value of the Fund’s endowment was \$1.26 billion.

The Rockefeller Brothers Fund is governed by a board of 18 trustees. Approximately half the board are members of the Rockefeller family, including six from the fifth generation. Members of the board of trustees come from a variety of professional backgrounds, including the arts, education, finance, international relations, law, and social work.

Through its grantmaking, the Fund supports efforts to expand knowledge, clarify values and critical choices, nurture creative expression, and shape public policy. The Fund's programs are intended to develop leaders, strengthen institutions, engage citizens, build community, and foster partnerships that include government, business, and civil society. Respect for cultural diversity and ecological integrity pervades the Fund's activities.

As an institutional citizen of an interdependent world, the Fund is active globally, nationally, and locally in its home city of New York. Grant programs are organized around three themes: Democratic Practice; Peacebuilding; and Sustainable Development. It also has identified several specific locations on which to concentrate cross-programmatic attention. The Fund refers to these as "RBF pivotal places": sub-national areas, nation-states, or cross-border regions which have special importance with regard to the Fund's substantive concerns and whose future will have disproportionate significance for the future of a surrounding region, an ecosystem, or the world. The Fund currently works in two pivotal places: China and the Western Balkans and will be adding Central America in 2020. The Charles E. Culpeper Arts & Culture program, focused on New York, nurtures a vibrant and inclusive arts community in the Fund’s home city.

In the years since its founding in 1940, the Fund has developed a distinctive style of grantmaking that is reflected in the following characteristics:

- **Long View.** Grantmaking is primarily concerned with fundamental problems and is designed to contribute to the achievement of long-term goals and to make a lasting impact.
- **Commitment.** Extended commitments are frequently made to specific issues and geographic regions and even to particular grantees.
- **Synergy.** Rather than considering opportunities on a stand-alone basis, the Fund looks for connections among the activities it supports and the themes it pursues, both within and across program areas and in specific geographic locations.
- **Initiative.** The Fund initiates or participates in the development of many of the projects that it supports.
- **Engagement.** In addition to providing financial support, the Fund often works closely with grantee organizations to help strengthen their capacity and advance their work
- **Collaboration.** The Fund actively seeks opportunities to collaborate with other funders.
- **Convening.** The Fund devotes time and resources, including the use of its Pocantico Center, to convening groups of diverse stakeholders and encouraging collaboration among government agencies, corporations, and nongovernmental organizations.

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**The Central America Program**

Starting in 2020, the RBF will establish a pivotal place program in Central America focused on supporting efforts related to the Fund's thematic interests in democratic practice, sustainable development/climate change, and peacebuilding. The program's grantmaking budget is projected to grow to approximately \$3.5 million over the next several years. The overall goal in adding a pivotal place program is to expand the Fund's ability to contribute to building the knowledge, capacity, and partnerships over a sustained period time required for impact on the ground; expecting that pivotal place programs, in turn, will inform and advance regional and global efforts to support social change that contributes to a more just, sustainable development, and peaceful world.

Central America is a diverse and dynamic region however recent trends towards democratization, rule of law, economic growth, and peace, are currently facing challenges, including inequality, corruption, violence and crime, impunity, vulnerable populations, adverse climate effects, and resurgent populism/authoritarianism. Despite these difficulties, there are promising actors and movements in the region striving for more effective policies and institutional arrangements to advance social change. The region's cultural, commercial, and community ties to the United States, and the extensive history of U.S. government engagement, suggest the importance of improving relations and of seeking opportunities to build durable partnerships across sectors to advance local, regional, and global problem solving.

The Fund's trustees and staff believe that RBF engagement in Central America would provide vital support to civil society and other partners at a crucial time, improve our understanding of a key region, and enrich our global engagements with Central American perspectives. In addition, there is a vibrant civil society and growing U.S. and indigenous philanthropic sectors with which to partner in most Central American countries.

***For more information on the RBF please refer to:***

<https://www.rbf.org/>

**The Role**

Reporting to the Executive Vice President, Programs and Communications, the Program Director is responsible for leading the Central America program by developing program strategies and managing grantmaking activities in identified program areas. The Program Director is deeply engaged in the field, monitoring developments and representing the RBF in the funding community and with other partners to advance the Fund's mission and program goals. The Program Director works with the support of a Program Associate and contributes to the RBF's overall organizational effectiveness.

The Central America program will support efforts to strengthen democratic practice, advance sustainable development/address climate change, and create the conditions for enduring peace. The grantmaking will be focused in **El Salvador**, **Guatemala**, and **Honduras** with selected initiatives that take a regional perspective and/or relate to U.S. foreign policy toward the region.

This is a new program for the RBF, so the initial years of work will focus on developing program guidelines and launching a grantmaking program that reflects careful relationship building and mapping of funding opportunities aligned with the Fund's thematic interests. A successful program will resonate with local needs, have the potential to contribute to regional and global debates and processes, and leverage the Fund's comparative advantages. The position is based in New York City with frequent travel to the region and other places where partners are based, including Washington, D.C.

***Duties and Responsibilities include:***

Grantmaking (45%)

- Develop and modify program strategies in consultation with trustees, senior staff, and experts in fields of the RBF interest, and implement strategies by actively seeking suitable funding opportunities.
- Solicit, review, evaluate, and develop proposals for funding.
- Collaborate with other foundations and partners to advance program goals.
- Review and prepare dockets and other materials to present grant recommendations for approval by the president/executive vice president, programs and communications or the RBF trustees.
- Monitor the progress of organizations and projects receiving grant support through site visits and ongoing communication; periodically conduct program reviews and assessments to discern program impact and to inform future strategy development.
- Support grantee visibility, resource development, capacity building, and impact, and advance the Fund's strategic objectives, by organizing convenings, meetings, performances, and other activities.
- Provide technical assistance and advice to grantees as necessary or requested.
- Support the RBF grantmaking activities by coordinating assigned program work with other program staff, and contributing to the Fund's overall program activities.
- Undertake special assignments related to other areas of the RBF grantmaking.

Monitor Developments in the Field (45%)

- Maintain a wide breadth and depth of knowledge about trends, practices, and issues relevant to the program.
- Keep abreast of developments in the field and implement strategies by seeking opportunities for advancing program goals.
- Monitor activities or projects of interest to the RBF.
- Represent the Fund at meetings and conferences related to the RBF areas of interest.
- Participate in special initiatives and committees that advance the field and reflect the Fund's interests.

Organizational and Administrative Duties (10%)

- Represent the RBF with national and regional officials to cultivate support for the Fund's presence in Central America.
- Establish and provide oversight for RBF operations in Central America to ensure compliance with local laws and regulations, in collaboration with the Fund's program, legal, and finance/operations divisions.
- Participate in team-building and program definition work at the RBF for overall organizational development and institutional strengthening.
- Work with, manage, develop, and coordinate the efforts of program and administrative staff in program area.
- Manage program and administrative expense budgets for program area.
- All other duties as assigned by the Executive Vice President, Programs and Communications.

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## Candidate Profile

The successful candidate will be a thoughtful and dynamic individual with a strong appreciation for the socio-economic, political and cultural dynamics of Central America as well as for the distinct national identities and priorities of the RBF's three main countries of focus. S/he must be able to demonstrate, through insights, networks, and achievements, the ability to navigate the complexities of the region effectively and to promote thoughtful, innovative, and pragmatic approaches to programs and initiatives that foster cooperation to advance democratic practice, sustainable development, and peacebuilding.

The Program Director will be recognized for his/her experience working in the region. Above all, s/he must have strong interpersonal abilities that include an inclination to listen with an open, empathetic mind. S/he must be able to demonstrate the ability to engage civil society, governments, international agencies, and other partners in constructive debates and initiatives regarding the economic, social, and political imperatives of Central America.

In addition, the successful candidate will be skilled in building constructive dialogues and establishing collaborative relationships across thematic programs within the RBF. S/he must be at ease operating independently, while guided by a strong sense of personal and collective accountability to the RBF, grantees, and other partners.

### Skills and Abilities

- Sound understanding of and passion for contemporary issues related to the program area.
- Intellectual curiosity and willingness to explore new ideas and areas.
- Strategic thinker guided by multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary approaches.
- Ability to see the big picture and its component parts and an interest in connecting the dots.
- Ability to develop program ideas and strategies and to communicate conceptual frameworks effectively to grantseekers, colleagues, trustees, and other partners.
- Excellent writing and oral presentation skills in English and Spanish.
- Understanding of an array of potential tools useful for advancing public policy and/or institutional reform objectives, including research and report writing, convening, advocacy, media, grassroots organizing, market-based instruments, and strategic planning.
- Familiarity with the operations of nonprofit organizations; ability to provide leadership that is responsive and sensitive to the needs and current capacity of grantees.
- Ability to embody and pursue the Fund's approach to grantmaking that is highly engaged yet characterized by humility and modesty; an active and empathetic listener able to respond in a timely manner to ideas and needs of grantees and other partners.
- Strong interpersonal skills with a collegial and collaborative work style and effective team-building and mediation skills.
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and manage multiple projects simultaneously.
- Ease in applying information technologies to efficiently accomplish work.
- Supervisory experience including coaching and mentorship of direct reports and other emerging organizational leaders.

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- Able to travel as needed; the Program Director will be expected to visit the region regularly and to travel to locations in Central America and to Washington, DC to support grantee organizations and advance program goals.

#### Education and Experience

- Bachelors degree in a relevant field with 10 years of related work experience, or Masters degree with at least 7 years of relevant experience.
- Experience with program management, policy development/advocacy, and/or business related to program areas.
- Leadership, facilitation, and project implementation experience that includes analysis, problem solving, convening, writing, and oral presentation.
- Prior grantmaking experience is desirable.

#### Expectation of All RBF Employees

*Each employee is expected to:*

- Understand and support the philanthropic mission of the RBF.
- Respect and value those who partner with or request assistance from the RBF.
- Manage the resources of the RBF in a manner that maximizes the funds available for charitable activity.
- Appreciate the value of diversity and equal opportunity in all work relationships.
- Respect the contribution of each employee of the RBF and support colleagues in fulfilling their individual responsibilities.
- Appreciate differences in perspectives and point of view and work collaboratively with colleagues toward shared goals and objectives.
- Commit time to RBF activities and conversations that strengthen the Fund's culture and improve its effectiveness.

To submit an application, please contact Russell Reynolds Associates at the email address below.

All inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential.

[RBFCentral-America@russellreynolds.com](mailto:RBFCentral-America@russellreynolds.com)