

HOUSTON ENDOWMENT

A PHILANTHROPY ENDOWED BY JESSE H. AND MARY GIBBS JONES

DIRECTOR OF LEARNING AND EVALUATION

Mission and Vision: *Inspired by the vision of a vibrant community where all people have the opportunity to thrive, Houston Endowment advances equity of opportunity for the people of greater Houston and enhances the vibrancy of our city.*

SEARCH SUMMARY

Houston Endowment (“the Foundation” or “the Endowment”), a private philanthropic institution, seeks an outcomes-driven professional of deep intellect and passion experienced in learning, strategy and evaluation. The Foundation deeply values the importance of listening, learning and collaboration; the Director of Learning and Evaluation will represent these values and help build a culture for an effective learning organization.

This newly created and exciting position reflects the commitment of the Foundation to build an organization devoted to learning from its work and improving its effectiveness in addressing issues of inequity across greater Houston. The Foundation is currently building this function and the person who takes on the role will have the opportunity to create the culture, structures and capacities to realize the vision for a learning organization in a multidisciplinary environment. He/she will assist the Foundation in assessing impact and its pursuit of impact at scale.

Using knowledge, a pragmatic sense of entrepreneurship, strategic and creative judgment coupled with finesse and focus, the Director will adeptly promote learning and adaptive programming grounded in solid research and data for diverse audiences, including the Endowment staff and a wide array of grantees and stakeholders. Reporting to the President, the Director will have a unique role on the leadership team, supporting program planning and overseeing evaluation to ensure that the Foundation’s work leads to positive measurable results in the community.

THE FOUNDATION

Houston Endowment is a private philanthropic institution that works across the community to create change that benefits the people of greater Houston. The Foundation makes grants to nonprofit organizations in five areas: Arts and Culture, Education, Environment, Health and Human Services.



Houston Endowment

Director of Learning and Evaluation

Page 2.

Established by Jesse H. and Mary Gibbs Jones in 1937, Houston Endowment has a rich legacy of addressing Houston's most compelling needs.

Houston Endowment invests in the future of Houston by strengthening the city's key assets and capitalizing on opportunities to remove barriers to opportunity. The Foundation strategically deploys its assets and fosters connections among people, institutions and ideas to address the city's most important challenges. The Foundation's guiding principles – commitment to continuous learning, clarity of goals, exemplary stewardship and an external focus – drive its work. The Endowment's efforts in the community are grounded by its strong set of values: integrity, respect, collaboration, discipline and excellence.

Houston Endowment is governed by its Board of Directors and managed by its professional staff, who join with nonprofit agencies to advance the Foundation's vision of creating a vibrant community where the opportunity to thrive is available to all.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND PRIORITIES

- *Learning* – Develop an overall approach to learning and evaluation for the Foundation and design the structures and processes to support the work throughout the organization. Identify opportunities for learning to improve practice and highlight innovation. Build the learning processes that will assist program officers in review of their strategies. Assure that the learning system functions well and produces useful information to inform grantmaking strategy. Identify the lessons/information that can be aggregated and synthesized for the Foundation's staff. Develop materials for learning and work with the Communications Team to design and deliver learning opportunities.
- *Evaluation* – Develop the processes and criteria for periodic systematic review of strategies, quality and effectiveness on all levels. Act as an internal advisor to staff involved with any major programmatic or strategic evaluation. Help organize convenings to enhance productivity and effectiveness. Present evaluations and learning cases to the Board in cooperation with Foundation leadership.
- *Collaborative Leadership and Management* – Propose the goals for Learning and Evaluation and specific approaches for its work in consultation with leadership and the program officers. Review and recommend the best vehicles for data collection to improve Foundation performance. Help manage and promote a collaborative working environment. Build strong cross-disciplinary connections.
- *Internal and External Communications* – Work closely with the President and with support of the Communications Team to develop external communications strategies to advance understanding of the Foundation's commitment to evidence-based learning to reduce inequities throughout



Houston Endowment

Director of Learning and Evaluation

Page 3.

greater Houston. With executive leadership, represent the Foundation and its Learning and Evaluation work to the region and beyond.

- *Fiscal and Administrative Leadership* – Develop an annual management budget for the administrative costs of the Learning and Evaluation activities for review and approval by the President. Ensure the stewardship of Foundation resources through timely and diligent oversight. Manage administrative support.

EXPERIENCE AND DESIRED QUALITIES

The Director should have the following experience and qualifications:

- A commitment to the Foundation’s mission and core values with an unwavering commitment to promoting equity. A passion for improving the quality of life for the people of greater Houston. Respect for diversity and knowledge of the region’s demographics.
- Passion for learning, problem-solving, distilling lessons and turning them into action. A commitment to creating a true learning and transformational organization with a demonstrated understanding of how to foster active and meaningful learning in an organization.
- A proven track record of experience with facilitating a team of peers toward successful delivery of goals. Demonstrated record of building and facilitating high-performing, diverse, collaborative teams. Experience creating and reinforcing a transparent, open and mutually respectful work environment built on strong teams with a commitment to a shared purpose.
- A pragmatic, action-oriented, entrepreneurial person who is a self-starter but can work well in teams. Demonstrates high tolerance for ambiguity and an ability to thrive in an environment of growth and change.
- Strong convening and facilitation skills, and the ability to listen and learn from diverse perspectives.
- Excellent public speaking ability. Exemplary writing and conceptual skills with impeccable attention to detail. A strong sense of creativity, energy and nimbleness. Demonstrated ability to think independently, strategically, analytically and critically, with agility to translate ideas and insights into action through coherent and viable approaches. Adept in problem-solving and launching of complex strategies.
- Persuasive use of evidence in work. Comfortable with qualitative and quantitative evaluations and able to switch between strategic and practical thinking with exceptional analytical skills.



Houston Endowment

Director of Learning and Evaluation

Page 4.

Experience conducting evaluation research. Ability to clearly communicate concepts, research findings and data interpretations, and to draw the implications of these analyses for program strategy.

- Strong time-management skills to prioritize projects and meet deadlines with the ability to manage multiple tasks simultaneously. Capacity to sort through and negotiate priorities and seek creative solutions. Well organized but not rigid.
- Can build systems and work systematically. Ability to work effectively and collaboratively in a multidisciplinary environment.
- Ability to supervise and develop staff effectively, potentially including consultants. Fiscal prudence. Familiarity with appropriate technology.
- Sound thinker with mature judgment; integrity and respect for others.
- Sense of humor; emotional intelligence; capacity for self-reflection and humility.
- BA required, advanced degree preferred, or equivalent professional qualifications demonstrating knowledge of multiple approaches to learning and evaluation.

Houston Endowment is an equal opportunity employer and considers all applications without regard to race, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, age, disability, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected status.

For additional information on the organization, please visit their website at www.houstonendowment.org.

Please send applications and nominations to Paul Spivey at:
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