



ROLE: Specialist, Foundation Relations

LOCATION: Flexible

START DATE: Immediate

REPORTS TO: Development Director

ROLE OVERVIEW

DFER is seeking a Specialist, Foundation Relations to manage a growing portfolio of institutional and family foundations, working collaboratively with both the Development Director and President to achieve ambitious foundation revenue goals year over year. This includes:

- Leveraging a proven track record with foundation funders to strategically build out DFER's foundation funding stream.
- Actively building and strengthening relationships with funders and securing an increasing level of support for DFER priorities as a frontline fundraiser.
- Devising a strategic plan to steward current foundation donors to renew and increase support, as well as bring significant new revenue in from both national and local foundation sources.
- Cultivating and soliciting major gifts from foundation funders, leading the comprehensive process, including arranging strategic meetings with external and internal stakeholders—e.g. national department and state chapter leads—and developing best-in-class development collateral including LOIs, proposals, and reports to close and steward foundation donors.

WHO WE ARE

Democrats for Education Reform (DFER) is a national political organization that supports elected Democrats and candidates for office who seek to expand policies and practices that work well for America's students and confront those that do not. We are education progressives who prioritize students and families, especially low-income students and students of color who should be better served by our country's public education system.

DFER partner **Education Reform Now Advocacy (ERNA)** is an advocacy group that advances education reform measures through empowering community leaders to support our legislative and political advocacy work. ERNA keeps constant pressure on legislators to champion high-quality public education.

DFER partner **Education Reform Now (ERN)** is a nonpartisan think tank that promotes increased resources and innovative reforms in K-16 public education, particularly for students of color and students from low-income families.

WHAT WE DO

1. **Support for Progressive Education Leaders** — In an approach that is markedly different from our peers and partners in the field, DFER engages directly with candidates and elected officials to empower them to advocate for education policies that focus foremost on serving students. Our partner organization, Education Reform Now, does work that involves policy research, analysis and education that helps policy makers at all levels understand complex education issues and make informed decisions.

2. **Informing the Education Debate** — Our coalition work reflects the breadth of our policy priorities. We work collaboratively with organizations and our community networks to create an education system that is held accountable to all kids and families.
3. **Targeted Interventions and Rapid Response** — DFER’s reach from the most local district relationships to state and federal policymakers, enables us to respond quickly to the changing landscape and policy trends. Activities vary significantly from project to project and may include training, policy analysis, public engagement, electoral and issue advocacy, and policy guidance for elected officials and local advocates.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Specialist, Foundation Relations will:

- manage and grow a portfolio of institutional and family foundations;
- cultivate and solicit six- and seven-figure gifts from foundation funders, leading the comprehensive process, including arranging strategic meetings with external and internal stakeholders—e.g. national department and State Directors—to close and steward foundation donors;
- take donor meetings and secure additional high-level cultivation and outreach meetings at priority foundations for President, Development Director, State Directors, and additional senior leaders, as appropriate;
- engage new grant makers and generate new money from current funders;
- foster long-term institutional relationships with foundation funders;
- prepare briefings and presentation materials for meetings with prospective foundation donors and staff these meetings as appropriate;
- maintain an effective stewardship program with foundation partners, including timely and compelling reporting on aligned organizational priorities and status of all grant metrics;
- advise senior organizational leaders and staff on foundation areas of interest; identify significant funding opportunities that align with DFER’s strategic priorities; execute strategic plans, and respond to queries as an expert on foundation funding priorities;
- develop and refine compelling cases for support for foundation funders that are aligned with National and State Chapter priorities, programming, and impact goals supported by program data and landscape analysis;
- develop best-in-class pitch decks, proposals, one-pagers, talking points, and other collateral materials for institutional funding in collaboration with development and other national and state chapter staff;
- oversee all proposal development, submission, and donor solicitations for foundation funding within your portfolio of funders and prospects;
- identify best practices across the nonprofit fundraising sector, recommend and implement ways to strengthen operations, find innovative ways of engaging foundation donors, and foster collaborations with fellow development staff members; and
- understand project budgets and may build proposal budgets utilizing this knowledge.

WHO WE’RE LOOKING FOR

The ideal candidate will possess the following qualifications and skills:

- Bachelor's Degree
- Minimum of five years of direct fundraising experience in sophisticated and complex organizations; eight years of fundraising experience is preferred. They will have demonstrated success in raising six and seven figure gifts, show evidence of setting and achieving goals, and will have a successful track record of working with internal and external constituents. Experience in education fundraising a plus.

- Leadership experience- leadership and management experience within the non-profit education and/or political campaign/advocacy sectors; record of achieving ambitious results in these roles
- Proficient in Microsoft Office products

General Skills:

- A strong interest in the advancement of DFER’s mission to ensure educational equity, and demonstrated experience operating with a DEI lens;
- Experience in the successful discovery, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of six- and seven-figure foundation donors;
- Knowledge of leading education, social justice, and equity-minded grantmakers;
- Exemplary verbal and written communication skills including the ability to clearly present strategic plans and funding priorities to myriad audiences, both internal and external;
- An ability to thrive in a collaborative, accountable, and high achieving environment;
- Strong organizational and time management skills, the ability to prioritize tasks, meet deadlines, and manage multiple projects;
- A track record of building long-term relationships with donors, organizational leadership, and external constituents;
- Drive and persuasiveness- a self-starter who leads by example and measures success by results; and
- Outstanding judgment, discretion, ethical standards and commitment to responsible stewardship.

COMPENSATION

The salary range for this position is \$100k-130k, commensurate with experience. DFER is proud to offer excellent benefits: health and dental coverage; life insurance; short- and long-term disability; 401K with a match plan; flexible spending/benefits plan; holidays and paid vacation.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Democrats for Education Reform welcomes applications from all, and strongly encourages women, people of color, people with disabilities, immigrants, refugees & LGBTQ people to apply for this position. We are committed to maximizing the diversity of our organization and recruiting a team that reflects the diversity of students living in communities we serve.

HOW TO APPLY

Please apply as soon as possible, even if you are not available to start immediately. All applications are held in strict confidence. Interested applicants should send resume and cover letter to democrats-for-education-reform@jobs.workablemail.com. References will be requested in a later stage of the selection process.