



**WOODS
FUND**
CHICAGO

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Opportunity Profile

President

Woods Fund Chicago
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Prepared By:



Mortén Group

The Opportunity

Woods Fund Chicago, a bold grantmaking foundation, seeks candidates for the position of president. The president manages \$65 million in assets and leads the foundation to support community organizing and public policy advocacy that advances racial equity and economic justice.

About the Organization

Woods Fund seeks to help create a society where people of all racial and ethnic groups across all levels of social and economic status are empowered and have a voice to influence policies that impact their lives and where all communities are free of poverty and racism.

Woods Fund is a grantmaking foundation committed to the promotion of social, economic, and racial justice through the support of community organizing and public policy advocacy that engages people that are most impacted.

History

Woods Fund Chicago is an outgrowth of the Woods Charitable Fund, established in 1941 by Frank Woods and his immediate family. Woods, an attorney and nationally prominent telephone company executive, made grants for more than 50 years in Lincoln, Nebraska and Chicago, Illinois. In 1993, Woods Charitable Fund restructured and formed two separate entities in Chicago and Lincoln. Since that time, Woods Fund has made more than \$70 million in grants. In 2018, the foundation granted \$2.73 million.

A core principle of Woods Fund is to ensure people most impacted by structural racism and economic injustice lead the process of defining problems and developing solutions. Building upon this core principle, in 2009, the Woods Fund board of directors approved racial equity as a priority.

Woods Fund has since been intentionally learning and implementing strategies to ensure the foundation fulfills this commitment. The foundation developed a diversity requirement for the board and senior staff, provides capacity-building grants and trainings to seed and support racial equity work, convenes grantees and foundation colleagues to advance learning, has increased funding for campaigns and coalitions working explicitly to reform and/or dismantle structurally racist policies and institutions, and uses a racial equity framework to guide foundation operations.

Approach

Woods Fund leverages grants and thought leadership to grow opportunities for people most impacted by structural racism and economic injustice. As a funding partner and collaborator with nonprofit organizations, policy groups, and civic organizations, the foundation advances racial equity and economic justice through the support of community organizing and public policy advocacy. Woods Fund believes in the value of shared learning—with grantees, partnering organizations and others—who are committed to the vision of Woods Fund Chicago. Staff and members of the board of directors engage in an ongoing process of planning, reflection, and refinement.

Position Qualifications

The next president of Woods Fund will be a proven leader of the highest personal and professional integrity and demonstrate an enthusiastic commitment to the vision and mission of the foundation. The position demands exceptional written and verbal communications skills, seasoned political instincts, and superior leadership and management skills. The president will be thoughtful, visionary and confident, with authentic empathy and humility.

The next president will have demonstrated experience working and collaborating with disinvested (or communities most impacted by structural racism and economic injustice) communities and people of color, as well as a strong track record advancing racial equity and economic justice.

The successful candidate will be experienced in working closely with a board of directors, staff, outside consultants and others, along with a proven ability to motivate and lead. Knowledge of the Chicago metropolitan region is highly desirable as is an in-depth understanding of the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors. A demonstrated track record in budgeting, financial and investment management, along with a working knowledge of related laws and regulations, is required. A creative, organized, focused and goal-oriented personality, coupled with a high level of initiative and energy, is preferred.

A bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree is preferred. The next president must have at least 8-10 years of professional management experience.

Essential Responsibilities and Functions

The president will oversee the business and operations of Woods Fund. The president serves as an officer of the foundation's board of directors and is charged with upholding and executing the foundation's mission, working closely with directors, staff, grantees, and community stakeholders.

Specifically, the president is responsible for the following:

Management and Governance

- Develop, present, and manage the implementation of strategic plans to advance the interest of Woods Fund Chicago;
- Advise and support the board and its committees regarding financial, programmatic, and governance issues;
- Establish and direct implementation of organizational plans, policies, and procedures;
- Develop, maintain, update, and enforce operational and personnel policies;
- Supervise professional staff and maintain equitable and progressive practices and policies to attract and retain talent;
- Oversee professional development; and
- Lead and inspire staff, encouraging creativity, initiative, and collaboration.

Financial and Legal

- Ensure the Fund's compliance with local, state, and federal laws;
- Support the Fund's goals and objectives in asset development;
- Oversee financial management, investment strategies (ensuring the continued incorporation of racial equity in investments), and report quarterly on the status of investments to the board; and
- Develop, present, and manage the Fund's annual budget.

Leadership and Strategic Communications

- Communicate effectively with grantees and members of the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors;
- Leverage philanthropic resources through the development of partnerships and collaborations;
- Build awareness and visibility around community organizing and public policy advocacy issues;
- Develop a communications strategy to advance clear, compelling and consistent messages across all communication platforms – print, radio/TV, social media, and direct outreach;
- Serve as an articulate and knowledgeable spokesperson for the foundation with confidence and savvy;
- Solicit input and ideas from a broad cross-section of partnering organizations, elected officials, agencies, other funders and stakeholders;
- Build and maintain relationships with a variety of community constituencies that share Woods Fund Chicago's mission, vision, and values;
- Coalesce and lead external collaborations; and
- Serve as a high-value thought leader of the philanthropic sector.

Grantmaking and Program Management

- Oversee staff in the solicitation, review and recommendation of proposals submitted to the Fund;
- Stay current on issues affecting communities most impacted by structural racism and economic injustice and seek opportunities to advance Woods Fund interests through effective leadership, creative grantmaking and program management;
- Develop a process to facilitate review and evaluation for ongoing analyses of the grant portfolio relative to programmatic priorities and improvement and the foundation's commitment to racial equity and economic justice;
- Review proposals in concert with program officers; and
- Oversee a discretionary fund, with thoughtful and thorough review and action consistent with Woods Fund Chicago's priorities.

Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation Initiative

The next president will also oversee the Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation (TRHT) initiative. Since June 2017, Woods Fund Chicago has served as the administrative and lead organization for TRHT, a comprehensive, national and community-based process to “unearth and jettison the deeply held, and often unconscious beliefs created by racism.” Support is provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Compensation

The position offers a competitive salary and benefits including medical, dental and vision insurance, as well as a retirement plan commensurate with experience.

How to Apply

Woods Fund has retained Morten Group, LLC to conduct this search. Applicants should email a cover letter and resume in PDF format to **executivesearch@mortengroup.com** with the subject line “Woods Fund Chicago – President Search.” Cover letters will be evaluated as a writing sample and should include the applicant’s salary requirements. Application materials must be directed to the email address above. No phone calls, please. Due to the anticipated number of applications, Morten Group will respond only to those applicants selected for interviews.

Woods Fund is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, gender identity and/or expression, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, membership in an employee organization, retaliation, parental status, military service or other non-merit factors. **For best consideration, please submit application materials by May 1st.** Applicants from historically underrepresented communities, including people of color, are strongly encouraged to apply.