

# Cleveland Foundation

Vice President, Marketing & Communications  
Position Specification

**SEPTEMBER 2021**



# Organization Overview



## ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW



- Organization
- Foundation Leadership
- Financials
- Overview

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Cleveland Foundation

[Leadership Team](#) and [Board of Directors](#)

[2020 Financials](#)

For more than 107 years, the Cleveland Foundation has worked with donors, nonprofit organizations, and community partners to enhance the quality of life for all Greater Cleveland residents. With a focus on Cuyahoga, Lake and Geauga counties, the foundation builds community endowment, addresses needs through grantmaking and social impact investing, and provides leadership on vital issues. The foundation supports and partners with leaders and organizations working in a variety of fields, including:

[Education](#)

[Neighborhood Revitalization & Engagement](#)

[Youth Development, Health & Social Services](#)

[Arts and Culture](#)

[Economic & Workforce Development](#)

[Environment](#)

The Cleveland Foundation is the world's first community foundation and one of the largest today, with over \$2.8 billion in assets. In 2020, the Foundation granted more than 5,550 grants, for a total value of \$131 million.

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- New Headquarters in MidTown

This is an exciting time at the foundation, as it prepares to move its headquarters into Cleveland's MidTown neighborhood. This move will usher in a new era for the Cleveland Foundation and a new way of working with the community. Its new home will provide accessible community space for the people of Greater Cleveland to come together, work together and celebrate together. Building its new home at the center of Cleveland's core will connect the foundation with the amazing work that is planned or already underway in the area, including the long-standing vision of Dunham Tavern Museum to make its campus welcoming and inviting to neighborhood residents; the creation of an innovation district that is focused on an economy that will work for everyone, with jobs of the future for all skill levels; as well as the reimagining of E. 66th Street that has been designed by residents and youth alike to connect the city north to south from Superior Avenue to Euclid Avenue.

Learn more about the building design [here](#).

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- New Strategic Direction

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- The Foundation's History

It is not just the foundation's physical space that is changing. The Cleveland Foundation is [developing a new strategic direction](#) to guide its work over the next decade. The process began before the pandemic, and the experiences of the past 18+ months have only strengthened its conviction that it must work in close partnership with the entire community to respond to immediate needs as they emerge, while also focusing on how to address the root causes of persistent issues like generational poverty and racial injustice. After months of deep listening in the community, and through partnership between the foundation's board and staff, the organization has aligned on three strategic impact areas to guide its work: **fostering inclusive economic prosperity; creating pathways to opportunity; and building and sharing power.**

This new strategic direction is about more than just grantmaking – it's an enterprise-wide strategy that seeks to coordinate its goals and impact in every facet of its work – the way it communicates, the people it hires, the investments it makes, and more. Instead of a rigid plan that sets a particular course over the next decade, the foundation wants this strategy to be evolving and continuously informed by the community. Its north star will be its values as an organization and its commitment to work with the entire community toward shared goals.

Learn about the foundation's history [here](#).

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- Social Impact Investing Program

The Cleveland Foundation is a national leader in social impact investing. In 2019, the foundation announced a commitment to allocate \$150 million in social impact investing capital by 2022, exceeding that goal two years earlier than expected. The program is among the largest community foundation social impact investing initiatives in the country. As such, it stands to influence the market and the practice of social investing in addition to its primary purpose of advancing Northeast Ohio’s economy and its place-based mission. The Cleveland Foundation defines social investments as opportunities that align social good with financial return to bring about social change. Its long-term social impact investment objective is to achieve a meaningful impact that benefits the social health of the community and preserves or recycles capital while achieving a positive real return on loans and investments.

Learn more about the social impact investing program [here](#).

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- Commitment to Racial Equity and Justice

The Cleveland Foundation has a longstanding commitment to promoting racial equity engrained in its grantmaking and community engagement initiatives, heightened by the recent national reckoning on systemic racism. The foundation wants to operate in a way that reflects the entire community and disrupts the forces of systemic racism at every turn. To do this, the foundation is looking at the ways it can promote racial justice across the organization and its work – the grants it makes, the partners with whom it works, the people hired, how it communicates, how it can invest its money, its culture, policies and practices.

In recent years, the foundation has partnered with [ThirdSpace Action Lab](#) to support access to workshops presented by the Racial Equity Institute (REI). Every Cleveland Foundation board and staff member has participated in these workshops, and more than 10,000 citizens within the community and beyond have participated in at least one of REI’s workshops. These participants represent more than 800 organizations across the region.

In 2020, the foundation launched the [Cleveland Black Futures Fund](#), which has since amassed more than \$4.3 million to invest in and strengthen Black-led and Black-serving social change organizations. It also leveraged its full investment portfolio to advocate for progress in diversity among investment managers and corporate boards, which you can learn more about [here](#).

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- Role
- Location
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- Direct Reports
- Position Summary

Vice President, Marketing and Communications

Cleveland, Ohio

[Ronald B. Richard](#), President and Chief Executive Officer *and* [Lillian A. Kuri](#), Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

Marketing and Communications Team (five direct reports; overall team of six)

The Cleveland Foundation seeks a strategic marketing leader to serve as its Vice President, Marketing and Communications to lead the foundation during an exciting time in its history as it moves into a new headquarters and launches a new strategic plan.

The Vice President serves as the foundation’s reputation and brand strategist, leading the marketing and communications function to articulate the mission, values, and strategic priorities of the organization and broaden community awareness and support. In support of the foundation’s impact in the community, the Vice President ensures the highest level of client service to, and collaboration, with internal foundation teams and external partners. In collaboration with leadership and in support of the foundation’s strategic plan, this highly-visible leader will work with a variety of stakeholders so that residents, donors, non-profit organizations, public and private officials, and other key groups in Cuyahoga, Lake, and Geauga counties know, trust, and support the Foundation and can identify ways to equitably and authentically partner with and engage with the organization.

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- Position Summary (continued)

Based on this person’s expertise in marketing and communications, s/he will play a leadership role in visibly and authentically engaging and interacting with the community as it works alongside them to learn and make changes together. The Vice President will direct the ideation, development, deployment, and measurement of an annual communications plan for the foundation, tracking measurable outcomes and providing quarterly reports to the Foundation leadership and Board of Directors on progress.

The Vice President will be supported by and manage a team of talented marketing and communications professionals.

- Social Media



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- Key Projects: Year One

- Lead the foundation’s inclusive brand refresh and integration project currently underway with a focus on environmental branding in the new MidTown headquarters building—internally and externally; new website launch; internal and external communications platforms, etc.
- Partner with staff across the foundation to steward communications and community engagement opportunities aligned with our new headquarters in MidTown; keep the community apprised of the latest developments; support the ongoing development and execution of the refreshed Cleveland Foundation visual and digital identities.
- Collaborate across the foundation to support the production, dissemination and deployment of the foundation's new strategic direction. Dedicate new content marketing efforts, virtual and in-person convenings and thought leadership to introduce the plan to the community, articulate accountability metrics, and engage partners in the implementation of the vision.
- Partner with strategic engagement cross-departmental working group to ensure the success of ongoing community listening to socialize the foundation’s new strategic direction, develop a “roadshow” process to ensure alignment with community, promote shared learning and build capacity to respond to ongoing community feedback, build cross-team capacity for authentic community engagement and power-sharing.

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- Responsibilities

- Partner with colleagues throughout the organization in the creation and execution of communications strategies that articulate new areas of impact for the foundation, including grantmaking priorities, investment portfolio, philanthropic services, etc.
- In partnership with team and colleagues across the foundation, play a leadership role in visibly and authentically engaging and interacting with residents, partners, donors, businesses and other stakeholders as we work alongside them to learn and make changes together that benefit the communities we serve.
- Direct the ideation, development, deployment and measurement of an annual communications plan for the foundation, including earned media, advertising, community engagement, social media, print publications, speeches, videos, etc. to ensure the foundation is reaching target audiences through a blend of integrated marketing channels; track measurable outcomes and provide quarterly reports to the foundation leadership and board of directors on progress.
- Design and implement Cleveland Foundation signature community engagement events, including the Annual Meeting Week, Common Ground, Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards, Cleveland Book Week and other programs that showcase the Cleveland Foundation and our partners and provide opportunities to expand the network of foundation advocates and supporters.

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- Responsibilities (continued)
- Develop community partnership and sponsorship strategies that extend the reach and influence of the foundation among key constituencies; identify and manage sponsorship opportunities for the brand that is consistent with the mission of the foundation.
- Provide audience-centric communications support to address racial equity and racial justice in Greater Cleveland; foster greater visibility of frontline non-profit organizations working to address systemic racism in the community.
- Protect and enhance the reputation of the Cleveland Foundation, its board of directors, its President and CEO, and other staff members; serve as the primary external communications strategist for foundation issues management and reputational risk assessment; collaborate with senior leadership to proactively address issues and minimize reputational impact.
- Lead and supervise an internal staff of communications professionals and consultants to ensure that the communications and marketing work of the foundation is being carried out in a way that represents the strategic direction and collaborative leadership input.
- Provide consistent developmental support and guidance to team colleagues to ensure that they have the tools, information and coaching necessary to carry out their work at the highest level in an equitable and inclusive team environment.

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- Responsibilities (continued)
  - Network with peer leaders in the field to build relationships and represent the foundation; serve as a thought leader at various industry conferences and events.
  - Maintain fiscal oversight of the department budget in partnership with the finance team, ensuring thoughtful stewardship of resources to maximize campaigns and tactics.
  - Stay ahead of the latest marketing and communications trends in the industry and identify opportunities to continuously enhance the effectiveness of the communications portfolio at the foundation.

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- Pivotal Experience & Expertise

**Communications and Marketing Experience:** 12 – 15 years of experience in a high-impact communications role, with both creative and analytical knowledge and proficiency in media relations, marketing communication, website and interactive communication, social media, community events, advertising, electronic and print publication. Experience with traditional, digital, and emerging technologies.

**Mission and Community Orientation:** An intellectual curiosity and passion for the mission of the Cleveland Foundation combined with an orientation for working alongside with and in communities whom the foundation serves.

**People Leadership and Influencing Skills:** Track record of success building and developing high-performing marketing teams from the ground up, fostering a client and team-centric culture. Proven capabilities in influencing across multiple groups of stakeholders.

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- Culture Impact

**Collaborative:** Demonstrated experience collaborating across organizations and within communities to effect change.

**Relationship Builder:** Demonstrated ability to build relationships, networks, and partnerships, both internally and externally.

**Ethics, Integrity, Humility:** Humble, low ego and transparent; open to learning and understanding existing culture and history; exercises good judgment.

# Engagement Team



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