



***Search for Vice President of Program Impact
Boston, Massachusetts***

SEARCH SUMMARY

The Fidelity Foundations seek a Vice President of Program Impact to play a pivotal role in shaping the next chapter of the organization's grantmaking and strategic leadership. Reporting to the President, the Vice President will bring judgment, analytical depth, and constructive challenge to the Foundations' most consequential questions, helping Program Directors assess what is working, where assumptions should be revisited, and where new approaches may be needed to increase impact.

Positioned at the intersection of strategy, learning, and innovation, the Vice President will lead structured strategy reviews across portfolios; synthesize insights, risks, and opportunities across program areas; and ensure that evaluation and learning inform strategic adaptation and resource allocation. The Vice President will also serve as an innovation and R&D partner to Program Directors, helping identify, develop, and test promising new grantmaking approaches before transitioning strong opportunities into long-term program ownership. For a candidate energized by institutional influence, complex problem-solving, and the opportunity to shape a distinctive philanthropic platform, this role offers an unusual combination of strategic reach, intellectual substance, and leadership impact.

The Fidelity Foundations have retained the search firm Isaacson, Miller to assist with this important recruitment. Instructions for applying, nominating, and inquiring about the position can be found at the conclusion of this document.

ABOUT THE FIDELITY FOUNDATIONS

For over sixty years, the Fidelity Foundations have quietly become one of the most influential philanthropic institutions in the region. With a focus on capacity-building and long-term sustainability, the Foundations support nonprofit organizations across four strategic areas:

- ***Economic Opportunity***: Improve the ability of individuals to achieve upward mobility and live with agency and dignity, regardless of the circumstances into which they are born.
- ***Arts and Culture***: Support a vibrant cultural ecosystem by helping organizations learn, grow, innovate, and strengthen operational and financial capabilities.
- ***Conservation***: Restore and conserve the natural world to ensure that both people and wildlife can thrive.

- **Medical Science:** Improve prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of Alzheimer’s Disease by accelerating research and leveraging institutional assets to promote regional advantage.

The Foundations’ primary geographic focus is Boston and Greater New England, with a regional program that extends their strategies to more than ten regions nationwide.

POSITION OVERVIEW

Reporting directly to the President, the Vice President of Program Impact is a senior strategic leader responsible for strengthening the coherence, rigor, and evolution of Fidelity Foundations’ program strategies. Bringing a disciplined yet entrepreneurial approach, the Vice President will generate ideas, pressure-test assumptions, diagnose what is and is not working, navigate complex tradeoffs, and translate emerging opportunities into actionable pathways for impact. The Vice President will advance organization-wide priorities, lead strategy reviews, and synthesize insights across programs to identify patterns, gaps, and opportunities that provide the President and Trustees with clear, decision-relevant analysis. This is a role for a leader who is motivated by influence, ideas, and institutional impact—and who is prepared to help shape the Foundation’s strategic direction at the highest level.

The Vice President expands the Foundations’ capacity for innovation by identifying, developing, and testing new grantmaking opportunities aligned with mission and strategic goals. Working closely with Program Directors and the President, the Vice President guides initiatives from early exploration through piloting and evaluation, applying creativity and sound judgment to refine promising ideas into sustainable strategies.

Evaluation and learning are central to the Foundations’ effectiveness. The Vice President oversees a Foundations-wide learning agenda that informs strategic adaptation and organizational decision-making, integrating insights from implementation and cross-portfolio experience into future planning and grantmaking. In this role, learning is not an end in itself, but a mechanism for improving strategic judgment, strengthening accountability, and helping leadership determine when strategies should be refined, expanded, or reconsidered.

Leading the Insights & Impact team, the Vice President aligns the Foundations’ research, evaluation, and learning capabilities with the needs of program teams, leadership, and Trustees. The Vice President provides strategic direction to a high-performing team while fostering collaboration across the Foundations’ enterprise to strengthen its ability to generate, synthesize, and apply knowledge in ways that elevate both its near-term effectiveness and long-term influence.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The success of the next Vice President of Program Impact will be determined by how well they meet the following leadership opportunities and challenges:

Build Clarity, Credibility, and Trust Across Programmatic Work: Success in this role will depend on building strong working relationships with Program Directors, executive leadership, and Trustees through sound judgment, strategic value, and credibility. The Vice President must influence through partnership rather than positional authority, while bringing clarity to decisions, surfacing difficult questions, and helping others navigate ambiguity and tradeoffs.

Strengthen Strategic Rigor Without Adding Unnecessary Bureaucracy: The Vice President will introduce greater discipline into strategy review, evaluation, and learning processes in ways that improve decision quality without slowing progress. This will require practical judgment, sensitivity to program context, and the ability to embed stronger frameworks, learning cycles, and strategic pressure-testing into ongoing work.

Assess What Is Working and What Is Not: The Vice President must help the Foundations move beyond well-framed strategies to a more rigorous understanding of what is producing traction, where assumptions are weak, where execution is limiting progress, and where strategic adaptation is required. This will require intellectual honesty, comfort with ambiguity, and the ability to translate analysis into sharper choices for executive leadership and Trustees.

Serve as a Trusted and Independent Strategic Partner to the President: The Vice President will work in close partnership with the President on high-stakes strategic questions, providing analysis, synthesis, and constructive challenge. This leader must be able to distinguish between moments that call for deference, pushback, exploration, or execution, and translate complex strategic realities into clear choices that strengthen leadership decision-making. For the right candidate, this partnership offers the opportunity to shape the agenda, sharpen institutional judgment, and influence the Foundation's long-term trajectory.

Identify, Test, and Transition New Initiatives Thoughtfully: The Vice President will help the Foundations explore new grantmaking approaches without compromising focus or execution quality. This includes leading early-stage work with discipline, designing pilots that generate meaningful learning, and partnering with Program Directors to determine which ideas should be refined, scaled, or discontinued and when they are ready for transition into sustained program ownership.

Lead and Evolve the Insights and Impact Function: The Vice President will lead and further develop the Foundations' Insights and Impact function so that research, evaluation, and learning are integrated, actionable, and responsive to program needs. This includes shaping team priorities, strengthening collaboration with Program Directors and Grants Management, and ensuring the function operates as a practical source of insight and strategic value across the Foundations.

QUALIFICATIONS & CHARACTERISTICS

- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree in a relevant analytical, policy, social science or related discipline preferred;

- 15-20 years of progressive leadership experience in philanthropy, strategy, public policy, evaluation, research, or related sectors, with responsibility for shaping and leading complex strategies, portfolios, or initiatives across multiple issue areas; candidates should bring strong familiarity with the societal challenges, field dynamics, and change pathways relevant to the Foundations' work;
- Proven track record serving as a trusted advisor to senior leaders, executive teams, Boards, or Trustees, with the credibility and judgment to translate complex tradeoffs into clear choices and constructive challenge;
- Demonstrated experience developing, testing, and adapting multi-year strategies informed by evidence, learning, innovation, and implementation realities;
- Demonstrated ability to assess strategy effectiveness over time, including identifying weak assumptions, implementation barriers, tradeoffs, and opportunities for adaptation, and translating those insights into sharper choices;
- Experience leading or overseeing learning, evaluation, research, innovation, or strategy functions that meaningfully inform organizational and leadership decision-making;
- Strong systems-thinking, analytical, and problem-solving capabilities, including the ability to synthesize across issue areas, evaluate tradeoffs and risks, and identify high-leverage opportunities for impact;
- Strong interpersonal judgment and emotional intelligence, with the ability to build trust, influence senior stakeholders, and navigate complex organizational dynamics;
- Exceptional written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to distill complexity into clear frameworks and recommendations for high-stakes decision-making;
- Intellectual range and curiosity to engage both enterprise-level strategic questions and the substantive content, evidence, and field realities underlying the Foundations' portfolios;
- Strong grounding in philanthropic practice and the evolving landscape of strategic philanthropy, including the opportunities and limitations of evaluation, learning, and adaptive strategy in complex social change efforts; candidates should bring real grantmaking fluency, not simply adjacent strategy or advisory experience;
- High ethical standards, humility, sound judgment, and a genuine passion for the Foundations' mission and values.

LOCATION & COMPENSATION

This position is based in Boston, MA. The successful candidate is expected to reside in the Greater Boston area and to work on-site at least three days a week. The anticipated base salary range for this position is \$300,000 to \$400,000.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLYING, NOMINATING & INQUIRING

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Applications must include a statement of interest and resume. Completed applications can be

sent to: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/fidelity-foundations/vice-president-program-impact>
Nominations and inquiries about the position can be sent through the same website. All correspondence regarding the search can be made to the Isaacson, Miller representatives noted below.

Andy Lee, Managing Partner
Damla Williams, Senior Associate
Madeline Fitzpatrick, Managing Search Coordinator

The Fidelity Foundations are an Equal Opportunity Employer that welcomes and encourages a diverse pool of candidates in this search.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by The Fidelity Foundations. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by The Fidelity Foundations would supersede any conflicting information in this document.