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# THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

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WASHINGTON, DC

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESEARCH AND RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT**

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**Washington, D.C.**

#### **THE SEARCH**

The George Washington University (GW) seeks a proactive, collaborative, creative, and strategic advancement services and operations professional to serve as the executive director, research and relationship management (executive director). Reporting to and partnering closely with GW's assistant vice president (AVP) of strategic advancement solutions, the executive director will lead the research and relationship management (RRM) cohort, creating and implementing a strategic vision for development and alumni relations' proactive and reactive research services and relationship management system. Critically, the executive director will serve as a key leader in establishing the strategic plan for the RRM programs in the context of a two-year CRM conversion and the planning and implementation of the most ambitious comprehensive campaign in GW history.

The executive director is responsible for the vision, strategy, and leadership of GW's development and alumni relations (DAR) RRM programs and will create and implement a formal vision for prospect development. Acting as a critical partner and trusted advisor, the executive director will collaborate closely with leadership and staff across DAR and will build and enhance key relationships with team members and internal clients. The executive director will proactively identify and implement creative solutions to complex challenges while developing and providing best-in-class services. They will lead the development of best practices, policies, procedures, and protocols for all research and relationship management activities to orchestrate success and realize DAR's ambitious goals and aspirations. The executive director will establish the strategic vision and direction for the RRM cohort, build and hone each program, and effectively manage, empower, and inspire RRM staff in the pursuit of a world-class prospect development program.

The ideal candidate will possess at least 10 years of relevant professional experience, preferably in a complex research university environment. The executive director must have a comprehensive understanding of the development cycle and a depth of expertise in best-practice prospect development

and research. Working knowledge of all major advancement functions is preferred, including how prospect development supports these areas. The ideal candidate will be an effective, confident manager who will empower team members, break down silos, build and maintain a cohesive, positive environment, and lead with high emotional intelligence. GW seeks a candidate with superior project management skills, the ability to work in a dynamic and demanding environment, and the ability to triage competing priorities.

The executive director must be solutions-oriented and have experience identifying, evaluating, and recommending strategies for complex problems. The ideal candidate must demonstrate the credibility, maturity, and sophistication to effectively engage with executive leaders across DAR and diverse groups of internal clients, including gift officers, provosts, the president's office, and the vice president for DAR. The executive director must possess proficiency in Apra's Body of Knowledge and AASP's Best Practices and the ability to manage highly sensitive information with a high degree of judgment and discretion. Extraordinary communication and negotiation skills, political savvy, flexibility, and cultural agility to navigate a complex academic community will be essential to success. In addition, candidates must demonstrate a deep appreciation for, and an ability to articulate, the educational mission and aspirations of GW. A bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree is preferred.

The George Washington University has retained the services of Jack Gorman of Isaacson, Miller, the national executive search firm, to conduct the search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications may be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

## **THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY**

The George Washington University is a dynamic, diverse, and student-centered research university committed to educating the next generation of citizen leaders. Chartered by Congress in 1821, the university is the largest private institution located in the nation's capital. Nationally ranked and competing with some of the finest research universities in the nation, GW's commitment to academic excellence, forefront research and scholarship, and cultural and intellectual diversity is built upon its founding values of integrity, creativity, and openness to the exploration of new ideas. For over two centuries, the university has produced well-informed, ethically grounded citizens, an extraordinary number of whom have gone on to seek and find creative solutions to society's most complex problems.

GW's undergraduate programs include seven undergraduate schools and colleges, and over 75 majors. The university offers more than 240 master's, doctoral, and certificate programs and enrolls a diverse graduate student body across 14 graduate and professional schools and colleges. The University's enrollment totals approximately 25,500 students, of which around 10,800 are undergraduate students, 14,100 are graduate and professional students, and 600 are non-degree students. GW has 1,295 regular full-time faculty, 1,330 part-time faculty, and 97 specialized research and teaching staff.

Advancing GW's research agenda has been one of the university's top priorities. In June 2023, GW joined the Association of American Universities (AAU); founded in 1900, the AAU comprises America's premier research universities working to address challenging problems through research while educating and training the next generation of leaders. GW attributes its rise among premier research institutions to its emphasis on cross-disciplinary collaboration, recruitment of top talent across all disciplines, and investment in research administration. For more information on GW and its leaders, please visit [www.gwu.edu](http://www.gwu.edu) and the addendum of this document.

### **Development and Alumni Relations (DAR)**

Through a combination of focused and broad-based fundraising, engagement, and communication strategies that are both metrics-driven and aligned, DAR builds and strengthens relationships with the GW community to encourage investment, advocacy, and support of the university's mission and priorities. DAR's 160 staff are led by Vice President Donna Arbide and the [Executive Leadership Council](#). In Fiscal Year 2023, GW DAR raised over \$132 million. The institution's last comprehensive campaign, *Making History*, closed in June 2017, surpassing its \$1 billion goal 18 months ahead of schedule.

In 2021, GW launched [Open Doors: The Centuries Initiative for Scholarships & Fellowships](#), a university-wide effort to raise funds for undergraduate scholarships and graduate student fellowships and to spark conversations across the GW community about the pressing need for greater financial support to attract and retain talented students. *Open Doors* is the fundraising priority for DAR and the start of an ambitious new chapter for GW. Looking ahead to the university's third century, GW is preparing for the next comprehensive campaign, which will take an investment in a sustainable culture of philanthropy.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESEARCH AND RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT**

The executive director, research and relationship management leads and oversees the research and relationship management cohort, including proactive and reactive research services and a robust relationship management system. The executive director will develop and implement a formal strategic vision for prospect development in the context of a major CRM conversation and the most ambitious comprehensive campaign in GW's history. The executive director will guide each RRM program toward best-in-class services in the pursuit of a world-class prospect development program.

#### **Duties & Responsibilities**

- Lead and oversee a staff of 12, including three direct reports. Develop and implement the strategic vision and direction for relationship management, prospect research, and leadership research.
- Understand current and future priorities, opportunities, challenges, and constraints that influence decision-making and program direction; coordinate with GW and DAR leadership to develop strategic fundraising plans that yield improved results and build organizational capacity.

- Individually and in collaboration with other DAR staff, perform complex data analyses at both the micro and macro levels and complete special projects to advance the prospect research and relationship management programs.
- Support divisional efforts to set and refine appropriate performance metrics for frontline staff across the enterprise and enhance fundraising managers' coaching of frontline staff by providing actionable intelligence and analyses on progress toward goals.
- Intentionally and proactively build and maintain collaborative relationships with all RRM clients, modeling and establishing behavior, communication, and protocol for all RRM staff for interactions. Acts as the default "face" and "voice" of the department, while actively sharing credit and developing those capabilities among other RRM staff.
- Build, maintain, and thoughtfully develop a team viewed as a hallmark prospect development shop across the fundraising industry where highly skilled prospect development experts want to work and grow.
- Inspire, empower, and motivate staff through active communication and delegation. Creatively develop ways to mentor staff members at all levels; provide frequent opportunities for professional learning and growth; emphasize retention as a means to increase the capacity and expertise of the team.
- Ensure the highest quality of prospect development deliverables and support for clients from the team by providing quality assurance, training on best practices and creative techniques, guiding strategies, and coaching and supporting staff in their daily work.
- Manage team budget/spending, including evaluating existing and new prospect development tools and managing vendor relationships.

### **Qualifications & Experience**

- Ten or more years of relevant professional experience with a bachelor's degree or eight or more years of relevant professional experience with an advanced degree. Professional experience in a complex research university environment is preferred.
- Comprehensive understanding of the development cycle, with particular knowledge of the role of prospect development within the cycle. Superlative proficiency in Apra's Body of Knowledge and AASP's Best Practices. Working knowledge of organizational fundraising, annual giving, and/or alumni relations is preferred, including how prospect development supports these areas.

- Demonstrated solutions orientation with experience in identifying, evaluating, and recommending solutions and strategies. Skill in developing and overseeing the execution of plans with clear vision, goals, strategies, and tactics. Ability to secure buy-in from colleagues across the enterprise.
- Exceptional project management skills; demonstrated ability to work in a demanding, dynamic environment while maintaining healthy boundaries. Proficiency in negotiating and prioritizing work. Ability to manage multiple and competing priorities, meet deadlines, and take responsibility for outcomes.
- Prior management experience with a focus on building and maintaining a cohesive, positive environment; aptitude in delegating work appropriately and providing actionable feedback. Skill in using data to inform strategy, planning, resource allocation, execution, and measurement of activity and performance. Demonstrated initiative to drive self-development and accept constructive feedback; motivates teams to do the same.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including the diplomacy required to bring requests/projects of all sizes to completion. Demonstrated ability to develop strategic partnerships with all levels of staff to influence for results. Ability to convey information to multiple audiences in a clear and concise manner.
- Proficient technical skills. Experience working with a relational database (preferably Ellucian Advance), as well as the Microsoft Office and Google suite of products. Demonstrated skill in deciding which technology will drive efficiency and communicate messages/findings most effectively.
- Ability to manage highly sensitive information and maintain confidentiality with a high degree of judgment and discretion. Ability to apply themes from ethics statements by Apra, CASE, and other related associations.
- Deep appreciation for, and an ability to articulate eloquently, the educational mission and aspirations of GW.
- Bachelor's degree is required; advanced degree preferred.

## COMPENSATION

The annual salary range for this position is \$104,536-\$151,518. The salary of the finalist selected for this role will be set based on a variety of factors, including but not limited to departmental budgets, qualifications, expertise, education, licenses, specialty, and training. The stated hiring range represents GW's good faith and reasonable estimate of the range of possible compensation at the time of posting.

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

As a comprehensive, research university, GW has the special advantage of location in the nation's capital and a storied history of influencing public policy. GW's main campus is located on 43 acres in the historic Foggy Bottom section of Washington, D.C. The university's remarkable setting is just blocks from the White House, the U.S. State Department, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, embassies, and the National Mall. Also nearby are the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the U.S. Institute of Peace as well as other prominent national and international organizations.

In addition to the Foggy Bottom campus, the university has two other campuses. Its Mount Vernon campus is located on Foxhall Road in Northwest D.C. and includes residential housing, a library, and academic and athletic space. Spanning 122 acres in Ashburn, Va., the Virginia Science and Technology Campus serves as GW's hub for discovery through research and academic programs.

The Washington, D.C., campuses serve as a "learning laboratory" and afford students and faculty extraordinary opportunities to engage with the vast number of government agencies, elected officials, nonprofits, advocacy groups, foreign diplomats, and leading medical/scientific laboratories and hospitals located within and around the beltway.

This position is based on-site at the Foggy Bottom campus in Washington, D.C. Development and Alumni Relations works in a hybrid schedule.

## TO APPLY

The George Washington University has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this search. Jack Gorman is leading the search with Bryce Ervin and Ryan Cheung. For more information, to make a nomination, or to apply for this role, please visit:

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/george-washington-university/executive-director-research-and-relationship-management>

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## ADDENDUM

### Leadership

#### **Ellen M. Granberg** **President**

Ellen M. Granberg is the 19th President of the George Washington University. She is an accomplished academic leader who has a record of strengthening teaching and research excellence across disciplines, supporting a diverse and inclusive community of students, faculty, and staff, and collaborating with all stakeholders to drive transformative change and increase institutional prominence. President Granberg became the first woman to serve as GW's President on July 1, 2023.

Previously, President Granberg served as Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) and was a professor and senior leader at Clemson University.

As RIT's chief academic officer, President Granberg oversaw nine colleges, two degree-granting units, and international campuses in Croatia, Dubai, Kosovo, and China. In this role, she oversaw key initiatives, including increasing undergraduate student success, expanding doctoral education, improving facilities for instruction and research, and leveraging RIT's strengths in innovation, creativity, and cross-disciplinary collaboration to advance the university's academic mission.

At Clemson, President Granberg was the Senior Associate Provost and Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs. She chaired the development and implementation of the institution's strategic plan, which spurred growth in research, graduate studies, and inclusive excellence. In addition, President Granberg developed a university-wide strategy for faculty recruitment, retention, compensation, and development.

A nationally recognized scholar in the sociology of self, identity, and mental health, President Granberg began her career in academia as a Professor of Sociology.

Prior to pursuing graduate studies, she spent eleven years in the telecommunications industry, leading large integrated software development teams that replaced aging billing and customer service systems. President Granberg holds a B.A. in history from the University of California at Davis and an M.A. and Ph.D. in sociology from Vanderbilt University.

#### **Donna Arbide** **Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations**

Donna Arbide joined GW on March 1, 2018, after more than 30 years at the University of Miami, including serving as interim senior vice president for development and alumni relations. During her tenure at the University of Miami, Donna oversaw the university's alumni relations, annual giving, and parent programs, as well as fundraising efforts of the school and college development programs.

As interim senior vice president for development and alumni relations, she worked closely with the university's board of trustees and the institutional leadership to implement the University of Miami strategic plan and development efforts for its three campuses. She helped greatly expand alumni and parent giving, led several award-winning programs to establish a vibrant national and international network of University of Miami alumni and parents, and was the lead visionary and fundraiser for a new alumni center on the university's Coral Gables campus.

Donna has served as a board member for the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), where she chaired the Commission on Alumni Relations, helping to launch the international initiative, creating standards of practice and alumni engagement metrics for the profession. She chaired the 2018 CASE Summit for Leaders in Advancement. Donna has a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Alabama in Huntsville and a master's degree from the University of Miami.

**Anne Dean**  
**Assistant Vice President, Strategic Advancement Solutions**

A 20-year veteran in the higher education nonprofit fundraising industry, Anne joined GW in 2012 with prior tenures in frontline fundraising, alumni engagement, and prospect development at UC San Diego, Hood College, and Vanderbilt University.

As the assistant vice president of strategic advancement solutions, Anne oversees the campaign, donor relations, philanthropic proposal development, and research & relationship management and liaises with central communications and marketing and university events on large scale projects like GW's Bicentennial and *Open Doors: The Centuries Initiative for Scholarships & Fellowships*.

An industry volunteer, speaker, and writer, Anne was named an EverTrue 40 under 40 in 2019 and Apra Professional of the Year in 2020. Anne earned her BA in economics, magna cum laude, from Vanderbilt University and completed a certificate in Work Leadership from UC San Diego.