



Director, Evaluation, Learning, & Impact Stories

Kansas City, MO

The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation (Kauffman Foundation) seeks a strategic, thoughtful, and equity-centered evaluation and learning professional to serve as Director of Evaluation, Learning & Impact Stories (ELIS). Working closely with senior leaders, institutional partners, and grantees, the Director will help lead efforts to break down barriers and identify through-lines of impact to ensure that the Kauffman Foundation's pursuit of its mission, inclusive prosperity for all, also means it is a true learning organization. This is a wonderful opportunity for an accomplished learning and evaluation professional who centers equity and community in their work to help take the Kauffman's Foundation's learning agenda to the next level.

Headquartered in Kansas City, MO but with national reach, the Kauffman Foundation invests almost \$200M annually across three thematic areas. Known for its entrepreneurial spirit, affordability, and barbecue, Kansas City is the largest city in Missouri and is one of the most diverse cities in the Midwest, and the Kauffman Foundation has a strong commitment to supporting its home. Through its Kansas City Civic efforts, the Kauffman Foundation works alongside its community and invests in programs and initiatives that create supportive learning environments for youth and families as well as key institutions and organizations that eliminate barriers for all people to drive cultural, social, and economic impact in Kansas City. This is also reflected in its Education portfolio, which seeks to close academic performance gaps between Kansas City and the state, including kindergarten readiness, K-12 proficiency, and postsecondary completion rates. In addition, the Education program is leading a regional effort with high schools and businesses to redesign the high school experience, placing real world learning at the center of education. The Entrepreneurship program works with entrepreneurs, empowers them with tools and resources, and works to break down barriers that stand in the way of starting and growing their business via entrepreneurial ecosystems, learning, support organizations, policy change, and impactful research. The three programs work with the Public Affairs program team to extend reach beyond the Kansas City region for national impact.

At an exciting moment of reinvestment in the Kauffman Foundation's impact and learning efforts, the new Director of Evaluation, Learning, and Impact Stories (Director) will be a critical partner to leaders, both internal and external, in helping to look across the program areas and investments to identify opportunities for collaboration, uplift new ideas for growth and strategy refinement, and advocate for grantee and community learning in more comprehensive and strategic ways. Reporting to the Senior Director of Evaluation, Learning, and Impact Stories [Jessica Mindnich](#) and working closely with the full ELIS team, the Director will work across all areas of the Kauffman Foundation to ensure Kauffman Foundation associates and collaborators understand the needs of the communities it serves, use numbers and narratives to measure impact, and leverage data to maximize strategic learning so that all people are economically secure and have a good quality of life.



The Director will manage relationships with program directors, develop accessible yet meaningful grant measures, lead strategic learning (across programs, processes, and events), manage third-party evaluation partners and contracts, and develop/manage project timelines and deliverables. They will serve as a critical thought and strategy partner to the Senior Director, providing counsel and facilitating conversations with key leaders across the Kauffman Foundation, from program teams to technology/operations and from Talent & Culture to Board members. Working closely with the evaluation/learning team and programmatic leaders, the Director works to elevate the data story of Kauffman Foundation and its grantee partners, and to enable responsive, data-informed decision-making at every level of Kauffman Foundation.

Ideal candidates will have a strong understanding of organizational and systems-level change management and evaluative practices that drive learning and reflection. They will also bring at least ten years of experience in applied social science activities, including data science, analytics, and data visualization across complex organizations. Compelling candidates for this position must be highly motivated, capable of self-directed work, detail-oriented and able to work collaboratively across teams and departments. Incumbents must exhibit a keen sense of responsibility and enjoy working with multiple demands, shifting priorities and constant change. An understanding of current evaluation and learning concepts, norms, and practices is important, but formal education in evaluation or experience as a professional evaluator is not required. While no individual content or lived experience is strongly preferred, it would be helpful if candidates possess some level of knowledge around one of the Kauffman Foundation's three core investment areas (Entrepreneurship, Education, and Kansas City Civic). Candidates must have experience facilitating convenings, workshops, and peer learning across issues, a history of working with an explicit focus on anti-racism, equity, and inclusion, and proficiency in developing learning materials and/or agendas. An understanding of the principles, strategies, and mindsets required to organize individuals to influence institutions and a broader field is critical.

Previous experience working in a complex organization is highly desired, as is the ability to hold space for others, understand multi-directional power flow and experience working in collaboration with a kaleidoscope of organizations, consultants, and sector leaders with different missions. The successful candidate will be a strong relationship builder. Excellent organizational and interpersonal skills are necessary. Strong verbal and written communications skills are absolute musts. Most importantly, a personal and professional commitment to anti-racism, equity and inclusiveness is vital to advancing the work and contributing to the learning and evaluation team, including the understanding of how one's own identity and lived experiences inform their work.

CORE RESPONSIBILITIES of the DIRECTOR, EVALUATION, LEARNING, and IMPACT STORIES

Embedded throughout the Kauffman Foundation is a commitment to continual learning and partnership between program staff and grantee partners, and the new Director position is intended to advance the Kauffman Foundation's efforts to best support its key decision-makers, grantee partners, and the broader philanthropic field in new and creative ways.

Evaluation, Learning, and Storytelling Strategy

- In partnership with the Senior Director, develop and refine the vision, principles, strategy, frameworks, and structures for learning and evaluation across the Kauffman Foundation;
- Stay abreast of and contribute to effective learning and evaluation practices in the broader field;

- Partner with Public Affairs, Research, Technology, program staff, and grantees to identify, strategize, and seize targeted opportunities to share learning and evaluation findings publicly, for the benefit of Kauffman Foundation partners and the broader fields in which Kauffman Foundation works, with a particular lens toward uplifting compelling human-focused stories.

Learning and Evaluation Approaches

- Provide consultation to program teams to develop hypotheses, learning questions, and indicators and metrics for strategies and initiatives;
- Facilitate learning conversations and sessions, including the development of strategic as well as tactical learning agendas;
- Manage third-party evaluation consulting partners to help program teams identify priorities for in-depth learning and evaluation at the grant, field, or Kauffman Foundation level; partner on the development of strategies, approaches, and plans for learning/evaluation;
- Support program teams to ensure that learning and evaluation results are considered and integrated into ongoing efforts as well as future strategy and program planning;
- Identify and cultivate partnerships with external evaluators and resources that are situationally tailored to Kauffman Foundation's program areas and the level of rigor required.

Systems and Capacity Building

- Build the capacity of the Kauffman Foundation's program teams and grantees through a range of approaches, which may include individual and group training, outside workshops, consultants, etc.;
- Partner with the Public Affairs, Technology and Grants Management team to create and support internal structures and systems for cross-program sharing; and work with the technology to implement tools and supports that anchor a culture of learning, both organizationally and within each program.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

- Ten or more years of experience within high impact, data-driven social sector or philanthropic organizations; understands multiple approaches to develop social-sector evidence.
- An organizational learning and effectiveness orientation, with a track record of developing and implementing processes that advance rigor and learning across an organization or team.
- Experience working collaboratively with others across an organization.
- Demonstrated capacity of translating ideas into action.
- Strong project management experience; able to simultaneously facilitate the work of multiple teams.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills; ability to distill and explain complex concepts.
- A personal style characterized by humility, self-awareness, accessibility, intellectual curiosity and a genuine team orientation; must be a self-starter.

The Kauffman Foundation offers competitive compensation and exceptional benefits (medical, dental, vision) for this position, including relocation support and ongoing professional development resources (including tuition reimbursement). This role will be based in Kansas City, MO at the Kauffman Foundation's [headquarters](#). While the Kauffman Foundation staff are still largely working remotely, there is an

expectation that in-person operations will resume in a hybrid format - Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday in-person at the Kauffman Foundation campus; Monday and Friday online - when it is determined safe to do so.

How to Apply

Talent Citizen, a national executive search and consulting firm focused on the pursuit of positive social impact with equity at its center, is partnering with the Kauffman Foundation on this search. President Tracy Welsh and Senior Associate Connor Daley are leading this engagement. Additional questions and nominations should be directed to Connor (cdaley@talentcitizen.com).

Interested parties should please send an updated resume, cover letter, and how you learned of the position to EMKF-DELIS@talentcitizen.com.