

THE KRESGE FOUNDATION

Strategic Learning & Evaluation Officer

Troy, MI

The Kresge Foundation, a private national philanthropy based in Greater Detroit that is committed to expanding opportunities in America's underinvested cities, seeks a new Strategic Learning & Evaluation Officer to advance its foundation-wide and field-building efforts around learning, research, evaluation, and racial equity.

COVID impacts, racial justice uprisings, and the broader movement for racial justice we've experienced this year, has exposed the prevalence and depth of the inequities faced by vulnerable communities. In this paradigm shifting moment for our country and philanthropy, The Kresge Foundation (Kresge) recognizes the importance of investing in how it more responsively learns from, and partners with, the communities it funds. The Strategic Learning & Evaluation Officer will provide critical leadership and perspective to these efforts by helping to cultivate a culture of curiosity, connect learning with action, facilitate equity-centered future visioning, and cross-team collaboration.

Launched as a cross-cutting-practice in 2015, the Strategic Learning, Research, and Evaluation (commonly referred to as "L&E") team connects learning with action to enliven the Foundation's values and mission. L&E advances a culture of learning within the Foundation by: drawing insights from grants and administrative data to set baselines and advance equity; co-creating framework/s that help Kresge live out its equity commitments; bridging and synthesizing insights within and outside of the Foundation; supporting and facilitating ongoing strategy refinement in partnership with Program teams; and shepherding third party evaluations rooted in [Equitable Evaluation](#) principles.

From its cross-cutting perch and co-creative relationships with Kresge's seven grantmaking areas as well as social investments, L&E is uniquely positioned to identify new program area opportunities, inform investment strategies, and foster collaborations by serving as idea and network weavers. In this sense, the work of the team as a whole can be described as a catalyst for reflective and transformative practice. In its support of learning and actionable insights, L&E helps information flow better between the organizations and individuals doing the work on the ground and program staff/leadership. The Strategic Learning and Evaluation (L&E) Officer will be charged in helping to facilitate these learning loops by taking an approach that values appreciative inquiry and asset-based strategies, recognizing that local wisdom and the power of communities drive social change.

Ideal candidates will have a strong understanding of community and systems level change and evaluative practices that drive learning and reflection. 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, Kresge program and investment areas do tend to have elements of equitable community development, so a background in understanding the social determinants of community development (housing, education, public health, etc.) is favored. 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 L&E team, including the understanding of how one's own identity and lived experiences inform their work.

The Kresge Foundation

The Kresge Foundation was founded in 1924 to promote human progress. Today, Kresge fulfills that mission by building and strengthening pathways to opportunity for low-income people in America's cities, seeking to dismantle structural and systemic barriers to equality and justice. Using a full array of grant, loan, and other investment tools, Kresge invests more than \$160 million annually to foster economic and social change through its seven grantmaking programs: Arts & Culture, American Cities, Detroit, Education, Environment, Health, and Human Services; as well as its Social Investments Practice.

The Foundation's state-of-the-art headquarters is located in Troy, MI. The modern LEED Platinum facility is anchored by a 19th century farmhouse and a new expansion that houses both a servery and a convening center. Kresge also operates an office in Detroit's Midtown district. For more information visit www.kresge.org

Strategic Learning & Evaluation Officer

Reporting directly to Strategic Learning and Evaluation, Managing Director but working collaboratively with staff from all departments, the L&E Officer will foster learning communities in and among Foundation staff and grantee groups; manage contracts with learning and evaluation partners, including consulting firms and individual consultants; track, analyze, and endorse insights from community partners, including understanding the power of and limitations to data analytics; serve as a key facilitator for program/practice team strategy and learning conversations; and, generally be an ambassador for a culture of learning across the Foundation and its partners.

In its field-building efforts, L&E seeks to advance new practices across the social sector by embedding Equitable Evaluation principles throughout its work and partnering with ecosystem partners such as CEI's Evaluation Roundtable and the Equitable Evaluation Initiative. While L&E has continued to play an important and growing role for the Foundation's program areas, there is also great opportunity for L&E to contribute to operational and administrative synergies with internal partners in Grants Management and Communications. The L&E Officer will serve as a thought partner on the L&E team and a close thought partner to Foundation leaders, connecting conversations and feedback to drive more expansive and comprehensive collaboration at the Foundation.

As this is a growing team the Strategic Learning and Evaluation Officer will play a role in refining the shape and build out L&E's work at the Foundation.

Role and Responsibilities

- Assess program strategies and learning activities and develop insights from evaluative activities.
- Assist program teams in refining their theories of change, reassessing their priorities, and refreshing their goals and objectives based on what is being learned.
- Build and maintain relationships with skilled, diverse external consultants who support commissioned evaluation, ensuring that efforts meet or exceed standards for accountability and learning.
- Support accountability, learning, and decision-making by collaborating with Grants Management staff to draw on the full suite of data analytics tools available.
- Support ongoing multidisciplinary strategic learning efforts and training that fosters evaluative thinking.
- Contribute thought partnership as foundation builds out its growing learning and evaluation function.
- Support writing and dissemination efforts as the Foundation communicates what it is learning to respective fields.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree required; Master's degree preferred, although equivalent expertise and/or lived experience will also be considered.
- Minimum of five years of experience in community development, community change, urban planning, or a related field.
- Experience working collaboratively across the nonprofit, private, and public sectors.
- Experience working with foundations, knowledge of or experience with one or more of the foundation's Program areas desired.
- Excellent facilitation skills, with strong working approaches rooted in team learning and design thinking.
- Demonstrated awareness of and appreciation for the different ways in which knowledge manifests in group design, adult learning, and evaluative practice.
- Experience using qualitative, quantitative, and/or emerging methods.
- Excellent analytical and writing skills.
- Strong interpersonal skills, including the ability to build relationships and to work effectively as a member of a team.
- Excellent project management skills and the ability to chart one's own direction collaboratively.
- Effective time management skills, with demonstrated ability to manage a diverse and demanding workload in a fast-paced environment.

Values

- Commitment to the Foundation's vision and its six values (stewardship, respect, creativity, equity, partnership and opportunity) with the ability to demonstrate that commitment in daily interactions.
- Commitment to expanding opportunity to low-income people.
- Takes a learning stance and appreciates radical imagination.
- An appreciation for shared power and an understanding for how change happens and how racism and bias impacts everything we do. (Note: We are not necessarily looking for someone with a track record of diversity, inclusion and equity work but someone who understands how racism has influenced all that we do, see and believe.)
- Curiosity, adaptability, and the understanding that we are all humans in the work together.

Location, Salary, and Benefits

While the entire staff is currently working remotely, there will be a time when this person has to be located at Kresge's headquarters in Greater Detroit, MI. The timeline for this will be dependent on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic, state and local health policies, and decisions by Kresge leaders.

The Kresge Foundation offers a competitive salary and total compensation package including health, employer-paid dental and vision, basic life insurance, short- and long-term disability, generous paid time off, and an attractive 401k plan with an employer-matched contribution. There are also robust professional development opportunities and tuition reimbursement. When normal on-site activities resume, Kresge will resume the provision of breakfast, lunch, and snacks daily for a nominal charge. Kresge promotes and supports a healthy and green work environment and encourages intellectual curiosity as they embrace and live out their values of creativity, respect, equity, opportunity, partnership, and stewardship.

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 Kresge 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 Kresge-SLE@talentcitizen.com.

Kresge is proud to be an Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action employer and strongly encourages applications from people of color, persons with disabilities, women, and LGBT applicants. We do not discriminate based upon race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, status as a protected veteran, status as an individual with a disability or other applicable legally protected characteristics.

Please note: Due to the coronavirus pandemic, all Kresge staff are working remotely, and our Troy and Detroit offices remain closed until further notice. Kresge staff will not be traveling or attending in-person meetings during this time. Thank you for your understanding.