Director, Special Initiatives, Computing & Data Sciences
Boston, MA

Boston University seeks a collaborative and entrepreneurial Director, Special Initiatives (DSI) to build donor relationships resulting in increased philanthropic giving in support of a new academic unit that brings together students and faculty from across disciplines with a shared passion for societal impact through computing and data science. Interdisciplinary research has always been core to the BU ethos. Members of the Faculty of Computing & Data Sciences come from 23 departments in 11 of BU's schools & colleges, bringing data science expertise in everything from theology to public health to engineering. In its first year as a major, Data Science has more than 150 declared majors and is on track for course enrollment to grow by 370 percent. This is an excellent opportunity for an enterprising development professional to work in partnership with Dr. Azer Bestavros, Associate Provost for Computing and Data Sciences, at a critical time of momentum and investment.

The Special Initiatives (SI) team, led by Associate Vice President, Special Initiatives Ron Gray, is focused on securing leading philanthropic gifts in support of select university priorities, including the Center for Antiracist Research (CAR), Computing and Data Sciences (CDS), the Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases Policy & Research (CEID), the Institute for Global Sustainability (IGS), and the National Emerging Infectious Disease Laboratories (NEIDL). This team works in close coordination/collaboration with Development & Alumni Relations (DAR) colleagues, center directors, the Associate Provost for the Faculty of Computing & Data Sciences, and affiliated faculty. The team's work centers on identifying prospects through discovery and in partnership with DAR's research team to develop tactical engagement strategies. These prospect activities require collaboration with the development teams at BU's 17 schools and colleges, and often involve mapping out high-level cultivation and solicitation strategies, leading to philanthropic investments that create impactful and meaningful change.

This is an exciting opportunity for an enterprising leader in major gift fundraising to join an institution at the outset of a campaign that will propel ever-more ambitious achievement. In partnership with the AVP, the DSI will be responsible for leading a donor-centric fundraising program. The next DSI will use creative and sophisticated identification, cultivation, and solicitation methods for solicitation of gifts of $100,000 and above from alumni, foundations, friends, and corporations, with a focus on building sustained and growing philanthropic support for CDS.

The successful candidate will ideally bring at least eight years of fundraising experience, academic or professional experience in STEM, and a demonstrated record of accomplishment in developing successful fundraising strategies in a complex university. A proven track record of personally identifying, cultivating, and soliciting major and principal gifts is a key criterion. The next Director should have a collegial style with a demonstrated ability to cultivate productive, collaborative relationships with faculty and staff across the university. The successful candidate will be an inspiring leader and an effective advocate with all constituents. In accordance with its core values and mission, BU is especially interested in recruiting members of diverse communities and individuals with a commitment to antiracism.

Computing & Data Sciences

Drawn from traditionally relevant disciplines such as computer science and statistics as well as diverse others including law, business, and health sciences, the newly formed interdisciplinary Faculty of Computing & Data Sciences welcomes the challenges of the 21ˢᵗ century with a dual focus on education and research. Through pathbreaking joint degree, co-curricular, and research programs, Computing & Data Sciences at BU gives learners the knowledge and tools to leverage data to take on complex problems in a wide variety of fields. It is BU's tangible commitment to discovery and innovation in the evolving fields of data science, artificial intelligence, and machine learning. An iconic new building, The Center—the only carbon-free building in Boston and the largest carbon-free building in the United States—is home to the Computer Science and Mathematics & Statistics departments, as well as the Hariri Institute for Computing, BU Spark!, and state-of-the-art labs, collaborative research spaces, and classrooms. The new building is situated on BU's central campus and serves as a literal and symbolic intersection connecting the physical locations of BU's 17 schools and colleges and various centers and labs.

The future will be defined by data and shaped by how computers gather, manipulate, interpret, and use that data for evidence-based decision making. BU is at the forefront of this seismic shift, and donor support can accelerate and expand activities in research, teaching, and learning. Philanthropic support can help prepare students for excellent careers in fast-growing industries, advance research in critical areas ranging from data privacy to racial equity to AI, and further elevate BU's stature as a leader in one of the most important and exciting fields of our time. More information about the unique nature of this academic unit can be found here.

> *"Data science is critical thinking. It's communication. It's learning how to continue to learn throughout your life. It's about a way of thinking that lasts a lifetime."*
> Dr. Azer Bestavros, Associate Provost for Computing & Data Sciences

Dr. Azer Bestavros
Associate Provost for Computing and Data Sciences; William Fairfield Warren Distinguished Professor of Computer Science

Azer Bestavros is the inaugural Associate Provost for Computing and Data Sciences at Boston University and the William Fairfield Warren Distinguished Professor in the Computer Science Department, which he joined in 1991 and chaired from 2000 to 2007. Prior to his appointment in 2019 to lead the Faculty of Computing & Data Sciences, he was the founding director of the Rafik B. Hariri Institute for Computing and Computational Science & Engineering. In that capacity, he led major university initiatives, including chairing the Data Science Initiative launched in 2014, co-chairing the Data Science Task Force, co-chairing the Council on Educational Technology & Learning Innovation tasked in 2012, and leading BU's role in the conception of the Massachusetts Green High-Performance Computing Center and advancing its research, education, and outreach mission since 2010.

Specializing in networking, distributed systems, and trustworthy computing research, Azer made seminal contributions to studies of web push caching through content distribution networks, self-similar internet traffic

characterization, game-theoretic cloud resource management, and safety certification of networked systems and software. His currently active projects are focused on design, development, and real-world deployment of Scalable Secure Multi-Party Computation in support of privacy-preserving analytics.

Praised by students for his engaging teaching style and his use of memorable analogies, Azer is recognized for his signature CS-350 course, which he developed in the mid-1990s and taught for more than 25 years. A nationally unique course, CS-350 covers fundamental concepts, which underlie the design and implementation of all types of computing systems, and yet are immune to technological churn.

In 2017, Azer was named a William Fairfield Warren Distinguished Professor, the highest distinction bestowed upon senior faculty members at BU for "representing our community with distinction, enriching the academic experience for our students, and raising our stature as a major research university."

Azer held visiting appointments at Harvard University, Institut Eurecom in Sophia Antipolis (France), Deutsche Telekom in Berlin (Germany), Telefonica Research in Barcelona (Spain), KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm (Sweden), American University in Cairo (Egypt), and American University in Beirut (Lebanon). He obtained his BS and MS in Computer Science from Alexandria University, and his AM and PhD in Computer Science from Harvard University.

Ron Gray
Associate Vice President, Special Initiatives

Ron Gray joined Boston University as Associate Vice President, School Development in April 2017. Originally leading development teams for the Questrom School of Business, the School of Law, the Pardee School of Global Studies, and the College of Arts & Sciences, he began focusing on Special Initiatives with Dr. Ibram X. Kendi's arrival at the university in July 2020 and added other initiatives to become Associate Vice President, Special Initiatives.

Ron has extensive experience in major and principal gifts, foundation relations, and corporate philanthropy, both in the US and internationally. He served as Director of Global Initiatives at MIT with responsibility for principal giving in Europe and lived in the United Kingdom for more than ten years while he served as the chief development officer for the University of Warwick and then Loughborough University. He has also held development positions at Washington University in St. Louis and the University of Chicago.

Ron earned a B.A. in both English and Business Administration at Principia College and an MBA in Management from the Olin School of Business at Washington University in St. Louis.

Development & Alumni Relations at BU

With an endowment valued at approximately $3.4 billion, BU has a legacy of endowment giving in support of faculty chairs and student scholarships. The university is currently raising approximately $225 million in annual philanthropic support. There are approximately 345,000 known prospects and more than 400,000 living alumni; the alumni giving rate is approximately 10 percent.

BU's Board of Trustees and the university's executive leadership team are invested in the future of BU and are mobilizing for a comprehensive fundraising campaign, which is currently in the quiet phase. The last campaign for BU, *Choose to Be Great*, which closed in 2019, raised $1.85 billion for the university.

Development & Alumni Relations (DAR) comprises a team of 255 professionals in principal, international, and major gifts, foundation relations, annual giving, alumni engagement, talent management, and operations, including stewardship, data analytics and applications, and prospect research and management. As BU prepares for another campaign, DAR is reinvigorating its approach to prospect management and analytics. DAR has recently added a Prospect Information Strategies team that is incorporating prospect analytics and predictive modeling to the work of DAR that includes information and process flows around prospect, portfolio, and pipeline development. They have also added resources to the leadership annual giving and donor experience teams, underpinning the major gifts pipeline with growth in the breadth and depth of the donor base.

DAR harnesses the power of philanthropy to make an excellent education accessible and welcoming to all, and to advance BU's global leadership in research, scholarship, artistic creation, and professional practice. To support their work, DAR has built—and is continuing to build—an outstanding team of dynamic, mission-driven advancement professionals who constantly strive to create an environment where everyone belongs. It's not just a job, but a career and a community.

DAR values:
- **Teamwork, transparency, and mutual respect**, because we value every member's contributions and know that leadership can come from anywhere
- **Diversity, equity, inclusion**, and a commitment to ensuring that each of us knows we belong here
- **Integrity** in how we work and how we treat one another
- **Strategic thinking and curiosity** in the relentless pursuit of fresh approaches and measurable results
- **Continuous growth and improvement**, both as individuals and as a team
- **Joy and shared appreciation** for working hard toward goals that matter

To hear directly about what it's like to work in DAR at BU, visit: www.bu.edu/dar-talent/voices-of-dar.

Director, Special Initiatives, Computing & Data Sciences

Reporting to the Associate Vice President, Special Initiatives, the Director is a critical member of the SI team, managing a portfolio of at least 80 major gift ($100K+) prospects, including their cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship. In close partnership with the AVP, SI, the Director is responsible for the conceptualization and execution of a comprehensive development strategy for Computing & Data Sciences, composed of frontline gift officer activity, faculty relations, advisory boards and volunteer management, event planning, alumni relations, communications and marketing, and prospect research, among other functions.

An important measure of the Director's success is their collaboration with colleagues from across Development & Alumni Relations to advance fundraising for the SI portfolio of priorities. These collaborations include the co-development of prospect strategies and serving as a content expert on the mission, vision, and priorities of the SI portfolio in select prospect meetings. Additionally, the incumbent works with the AVP, SI and Prospect

Research colleagues to develop strategies to ensure the ongoing identification of potential prospects for the SI portfolio.

Essential Duties

- **Prospect work**: Identify, cultivate, and solicit major and principal gift prospects ($100,000+). The Director conducts a minimum of 100 prospect meetings per year and completes 10 – 12 major gift solicitations of qualified prospects. Ultimately, the Director will construct a major gift portfolio with 80 – 100 prospects. (40%)

- **Strategic coordination and leadership**: Work with the AVP to develop and coordinate strategies to engage major donors to the SI portfolio, including the coordination of stewardship, events, communications, alumni relations, and prospect research. The Director also collaborates as directed with the advisory boards and staff within the SI portfolio, as well as with other key constituents and university stakeholders. (15%)

- **Prospect research and engagement**: Engage alumni and other constituents to increase their connections to the priority areas by developing, organizing, and helping to manage advisory boards and other programming, including convenings, communications, and special projects. Collaborate closely with colleagues across DAR on these efforts to engage and communicate with donors. (30%)

- **Prospect coordination**: Support the SVP for Development & Alumni Relations, VP for Development, and other senior fundraisers in their frontline fundraising efforts by providing prospect briefings and by staffing their prospect meetings when appropriate. (5%)

- **Management**: Manage SI gift officers, interns, and student employees to ensure the alignment of their work with SI objectives and their own professional development. (10%)

Experience and Qualifications

The ideal candidate will bring many of the following professional qualities and experiences:

- A bachelor's degree is required.
- Eight or more years of directly applicable experience, including direct fundraising experience with a proven track record of soliciting and closing six-figure gifts is required.
- The successful candidate must have a successful track record of engagement with prospects and donors and the ability to develop partnerships resulting in philanthropic support at the six- and seven-figure level.
- The incumbent will have the acumen to develop and to execute strategy in partnership with the senior leaders from within DAR and across the university, including the SVP for DAR, VP for Development, AVP for Special Initiatives, and center directors.
- The successful candidate will have demonstrated success in working and understanding the varying priorities and approaches to fundraising at a complex institution, including principal gifts, corporate

and foundation relations giving, planned gifts, donor recognition and stewardship, prospect research, and alumni and other stakeholder engagement.

- Experience in a campaign setting is preferred, and experience in the design of such an effort is a distinct preference.
- The successful candidate must also successfully manage up, down, and across an organization, as well as individuals and teams. Therefore, experience in an institution of considerable organizational complexity typified by matrix relationships of power and influence is critical.
- Experience in enlisting and interacting with senior-level leadership volunteers.
- Superior communication skills—both verbal and written—and strong collaborative practices.
- The attributes of intelligence, integrity, judgment, creativity, courage of convictions, decisiveness, fairness, empathy, and a sense of humor are necessary for success.
- Exceptional reasoning, problem-solving, and analytical skills, including an ability to translate ideas and concepts into clear, actionable steps.
- Superb organizational skills and the ability to multi-task.
- Extensive travel, nights and weekends required.

Location

This is a Boston-based position. BU's campus is located in Boston's Fenway-Kenmore neighborhood. Nestled between the beautiful Charles River and historic Fenway Park (home of the Boston Red Sox), BU's location is ideal for a healthy contemporary lifestyle. Boston is a vibrant city steeped in history with diverse neighborhoods, a rich arts and culture scene, and a legacy of education, innovation, and ideas.

DAR provides a hybrid work schedule, offering employees the opportunity to work two days per week from home, if circumstances allow. More information about the university's remote work policy is available here: www.bu.edu/hr/lifebu/remote-work.

Compensation

Compensation is highly competitive and budgeted in the range of $170,000 – $180,000 annually, depending on experience. Boston University offers a comprehensive benefits package, which adds significantly to the employee's total compensation.

Interested in Learning More?

Boston University has partnered with Talent Citizen to assist in this recruitment. Please contact President Tracy D. Welsh and Senior Associate Rachel K. Partin to share your resume and cover letter via email at: bu-dsicds@talentcitizen.com.

Boston University is an equal opportunity employer and gives consideration for employment to qualified applicants without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, military service, or because of marital, parental, or veteran status or any other characteristic protected by law.

If you require a reasonable accommodation in order to complete the employment application process, please contact the Equal Opportunity Office at 617-353-6474 or druckman@bu.edu.

Please note all newly hired staff and faculty, will need to be in compliance with Boston University's COVID-19 Vaccination Policy within 30 days of date of hire. For further information on the university's response to COVID-19, please visit the Back2BU site.

About Boston University

Boston University is an international, comprehensive, private research university, committed to educating students to be reflective, resourceful individuals ready to live, adapt, and lead in an interconnected world. The university's 17 Schools and Colleges generate new knowledge to benefit society.

BU remains dedicated to its founding principles: that higher education should be accessible to all and that research, scholarship, artistic creation, and professional practice should be conducted in the service of the wider community—local and international. These principles endure in the university's insistence on the value of diversity, in its tradition and standards of excellence, and in its dynamic engagement with the City of Boston and the world.

Boston University comprises a remarkable range of undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs built on a strong foundation of the liberal arts and sciences. With the support and oversight of the Board of Trustees, the university, through its faculty, continually innovates in education and research to ensure that it meets the needs of students and an ever-changing world.