



**Senior Director, West & Midwest Regions, Major Gifts**  
*Boston, MA or California*

Boston University (BU) seeks a collaborative and entrepreneurial Senior Director, West & Midwest Regions (Senior Director) to lead a seasoned team of major gift fundraisers working with a vast swath of the University's alumni and an abundant number of engaged and committed families and friends. 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.

The BU community is alive with excitement as President Melissa Gilliam, a medical doctor, MacArthur-grant winning researcher, and adolescent health advocate assumed the university presidency on July 1, 2024. One of the largest nonprofit universities in the country, Boston University comprises 17 Schools and Colleges. Founded in 1839, BU has always been a hub for innovation. It was the first university to open all divisions to female students in 1872. BU created one of the first study abroad programs, and, today, about one third of the University's 37,557 students come from countries outside the United States. This inclusivity is one of the greatest institutional strengths of the University, underpinned by the University's commitment to making BU affordable for all qualified students through initiatives like the [Century Challenge](#). This unique philanthropic tool greatly increases scholarship support and provides access to the best and brightest students around the world. By participating in the Century Challenge, a donor establishes an endowed scholarship fund of \$100,000 or more, and the University matches the income distributed from that fund for scholarship purposes for 100 years.

Reporting to the Assistant Vice President of Major Gifts, the Senior Director will be responsible for leading a donor-centric fundraising program and ensuring their team collectively surpasses ambitious annual fundraising goals and activity benchmarks. This position functions as a thought leader of the major gifts fundraising effort for the University and provides oversight, direction, and advice for the West and Midwest regions. Working closely with University leaders, the Senior Director will spearhead fundraising strategies for several of the most critical markets for the University nationally. Leading by example, the Senior Director will manage a portfolio of major and principal gift prospects.

The ideal candidate will possess a minimum of ten years of development experience, a keen understanding of best practices in fundraising, at least five years of managerial experience, and a demonstrated record of accomplishment in developing successful fundraising strategies in a complex university. The successful candidate will have a proven track record of personally identifying, cultivating, and soliciting major and principal gifts. The successful candidate must have extraordinary communication skills with a collegial, team-building style and a demonstrated ability to motivate staff as well as to cultivate productive, collaborative relationships across campus. The next Senior Director will foster a professional work environment that rewards individual and collective success, builds confidence, and promotes diversity in all its forms. In accordance with its core values and mission, BU is especially interested in recruiting members of diverse communities and individuals who will promote and uphold the values embodied within the University's [Diversity Statement](#).

## 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. Boston University is committed to generating 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.

### Dr. Melissa L. Gilliam President, Boston University

BU’s President, [Dr. Melissa L. Gilliam](#), is a national leader in faculty recruitment and student success and a champion of diversity and inclusion. Dr. Gilliam is a professor of obstetrics, gynecology, and pediatrics; her scholarship focuses on developing interventions to promote adolescent health and well-being. Dr. Gilliam graduated from Harvard Medical School and earned a Master of Public Health from the University of Illinois Chicago. In addition to her deep background in the sciences and medicine, she studied English literature at Yale University and earned her Master of Arts in philosophy and politics from the University of Oxford.

Before her appointment as BU President, Dr. Gilliam served as the executive vice president and provost of The Ohio State University, overseeing 15 colleges and six campuses and the Office of Academic Affairs, including undergraduate education, graduate education, international affairs, diversity and inclusion, external engagement, online learning, and information technology.

## Development & Alumni Relations at BU

With an endowment valued at approximately \$3.5 billion, BU has a legacy of endowment giving in support of faculty chairs and student scholarships. In FY2024, the University raised \$349 million in annual philanthropic support. There are approximately 350,000 known prospects and more than 455,000 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](#), closed in 2019 and raised \$1.85 billion for the University.

Development & Alumni Relations (DAR) comprises a team of 273 professionals in principal, international, and major gifts, foundation relations, annual giving, alumni engagement, stewardship, talent management, and advancement information systems, including database management and prospect research. As BU prepares for another campaign, DAR is reinvigorating its approach to prospect management and analytics. DAR has

added a Prospect Information Strategies team that is incorporating prospect analytics and predictive modeling, which 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. These are just a few of the exciting areas of investment in staff and resources aimed at supporting the ramp up into the next campaign.

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 learn more about the DAR team please visit [www.bu.edu/dar-talent](http://www.bu.edu/dar-talent).

## Senior Director, West & Midwest Regions, Major Gifts

The Senior Director, West & Midwest Regions, Major Gifts is a senior member of the Major Gifts team, a cohort of fundraisers focused on securing gifts of \$100,000+ from Boston University alumni, parents, and other individuals. In addition to fundraising across six regions nationally, the Major Gifts team comprises colleagues leading the University's Athletics and Parents & Family philanthropy programs. The Major Gifts team plays a key role in fundraising for University initiatives such as the [Newbury Center](#) for first-generation student success, the [BU Arts Initiative](#), the [Student Wellbeing](#) initiative, and [Innovate@BU](#), among other priorities.

Reporting to the Assistant Vice President of Major Gifts, the Senior Director is a key leader of regions that are critical to Boston University's overall fundraising success. In addition to leading a team of fundraisers, the Senior Director also must collaborate with and convene other Development & Alumni Relations stakeholders in the West and Midwest regions to ensure a coordinated and thoughtful approach to all activities meant to engage BU's leading prospects and donors. These stakeholders include but are not limited to Principal Giving, Alumni Relations, and School/College-affiliated colleagues.

The Senior Director will be responsible for developing a regular cadence of strategic opportunities focused on engaging existing and prospective major donors with the end goal of qualifying, soliciting, and closing major gifts. This role will serve as the primary strategist and staff person for the Southern and Northern California Regional Leadership Councils. The Senior Director will also be responsible for setting appropriately ambitious goals for prospect discovery, solicitations, and gift closures for members of their team and managing each to success against those goals.

Additionally, the Senior Director carries a portfolio of approximately 80 major gift prospects of their own. This position will oversee various special projects in the region as assigned by their supervisor.

## Essential Duties

- Direct solicitation of major gifts at the \$100,000-plus level, involving all phases of engagement and cultivation processes, including significant travel. Target goal of 10-15 visits a month and annual dollar goal as determined by the AVP. Opportunity to cultivate prospects toward principal-level gifts.
- Direct management of experienced gift officers to ensure significant fundraising productivity in service to the University's strategic goals. Responsible for the recruitment, training, oversight, evaluation, and management of a total staff of three or more professionals.
- Establish and maintain Regional Leadership Councils and other effective, high-level volunteer structures designed to provide counsel, to identify prospects, and to assist with specific solicitations and other programmatic initiatives as necessary.
- Collaborate with Development & Alumni Relations colleagues to devise specific strategies and timetables for the successful solicitation of individuals with a goal of maximizing their philanthropy to Boston University. Remain informed on University and school/college content generally, and in greater detail where necessary for prospect cases. Integrate Alumni Relations activities as an essential component of overall development strategy.
- Coordinate and orchestrate prospect strategies with appropriate deans and school-affiliated development colleagues and work in tandem to ensure the highest and best use of time, budget, and personnel.
- Establish long-range goals and objectives for development programs and activities in assigned regions that reflect University priorities. Prepare regional operating plans and prospect pipelines designed to facilitate achievement of these goals and objectives as a component of the University-wide major gifts plan.

## Experience and Qualifications

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

- A Bachelor's degree is required; advanced degree preferred
- At least ten years of directly related experience, with at least five years of management experience
- Outstanding and successful experience as a fundraiser, including comprehensive management of major gifts prospects
- Strong development credentials; including proven track record of building and developing a high-level portfolio
- Successful track record of managing a fundraising team
- Effective experience in enlisting and interacting with senior-level leadership volunteers and committees
- Excellent written and oral communication and presentation skills
- Superb judgment and the sensibility to adjudicate wisely among competing priorities
- A disposition to listen and circulate widely

- Outstanding interpersonal skills
- 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
- Ability to work independently as well as collaboratively with team members
- Energy and stamina, self-confidence and humility, a strong sense of purpose, a tolerance for ambiguity and a sense of humor
- Familiarity with the West Coast preferred, ideally as a successful major gifts fundraiser
- Extensive travel, nights and weekends required.

## Location and Schedule

The Senior Director can be based in Boston, or—with approval from senior DAR leaders—work remotely from a major market within the state of California.

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](#).

## Compensation

Compensation is highly competitive and budgeted in the range of \$200,000 - \$210,000 annually, depending on experience. Boston University offers a comprehensive [benefits package](#), which adds significantly to the employee's total compensation package.

## Interested in Learning More?

Boston University has partnered with Talent Citizen to assist in this recruitment. Please contact President Tracy D. Welsh, Managing Associate Rachel K. Partin, and Associate José Cisneros to share your resume and cover letter via email at: [bu-sdwmmg@talentcitizen.com](mailto:bu-sdwmmg@talentcitizen.com).

*Boston University is an equal opportunity employer, and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, natural or protective hairstyle, religion, sex, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, military service, pregnancy or pregnancy-related condition, or because of marital, parental, or veteran status. Boston University is a VEVRAA Federal Contractor.*