

Position Description

Assistant to the Executive Director/Special Project Manager The Patrick J. McGovern Foundation

The Opportunity

The Patrick J. McGovern Foundation is seeking a high-level Assistant to support its founding Executive Director as she builds this exciting new organization. Reporting to the Executive Director (ED), the new assistant will provide administrative support to the ED, and project management for a series of complex and fast-moving endeavors that establish the platform and systems needed to manage a major grant-making entity.

The Foundation is still in its infancy. Because it is a startup, this is an evolving position that requires flexibility and a range of skills. The successful candidate will be a secure utility player who is comfortable in unstructured settings and playing many roles. Business acumen, curiosity, an appetite for startups, and a flexible mindset are musts, as are commitment to responsible stewardship, integrity, and discretion. The ideal candidate will love creating systems that serve end users and advance the organization's mission. S/he will have a front row seat on the design of a new grant-making foundation and learn a lot about philanthropy.

Organization Overview: A New Philanthropic Foundation

The Patrick J. McGovern Foundation is dedicated to improving lives and societies across the globe by supporting advancements in information technology and neuroscience research that benefit humanity.

The Foundation is the legacy of Patrick McGovern (1937-2014), an enterprising business leader, and tireless advocate for science. McGovern was the founder of International Data Group (IDG), a global research, investment, and publishing company that created nearly 300 information technology publications such as PCWorld, MacWorld and the Dummies guides. IDG chronicled the rise of digital technology and made it intelligible to millions, then moved beyond publishing to research and venture investing worldwide.

From his early childhood, McGovern was fascinated by information technology and neuro science. He dedicated his early life to these pursuits, eventually receiving a full scholarship to MIT, where he graduated with a degree in biophysics. Recognizing a need for applicable research on the emerging field of computers, McGovern founded IDG in 1964 and grew the company to span 97 countries across the globe. Throughout his career McGovern was a trail-blazer and forward thinker. He was incredibly hard-working, a risk taker and an optimist who often told his employees "the best is yet to come."

More on Patrick McGovern's approach to leadership and the company's history can be found in Future Forward: leadership Lessons from Patrick McGovern, the Visionary Who Circled the Globe and Built a Technology Empire, by Glenn Rifkin, McGraw Hill Education, 2019.

Inspired by his deep belief in the potential for information technology and neuroscience research to do good, McGovern left almost the entirety of his estate to fund the Patrick J. McGovern Foundation. The Foundation's endowment is approximately \$1.2 billion, and the Foundation will ramp up its giving over the next five years to make \$50 million or more in annual grants.

The Foundation's work is guided by six core values drawn from Patrick McGovern's life and leadership:

- Remain dedicated to mission
- Respect human dignity
- Invest in people
- Strive for excellence
- Be responsive to change
- Always keep a "let's try it" attitude.

The Foundation is governed by an active and deeply-engaged board that includes family members and independent trustees. This board has led the Foundation through its formation, setting the mission, managing the sale of the company that funded the Foundation, and making initial grants. Recently they hired the Foundation's first employee, Executive Director Melinda Marble.

More information about the Foundation can be found on its website: mcgovern.org

Summary of the Role

The Assistant will be the second employee of the Foundation, reporting to and working in partnership with the ED to assist in growing the organization from the ground up. The Assistant's responsibilities will span administration, board relations and special projects. The ED is looking for a versatile self-starter who is highly organized, administratively detailed, with strong writing skills, creativity and the ability to play many roles. S/he should be excited by the opportunity to work in an entrepreneurial environment and contribute to creating structures, systems and a culture of what promises to be an impactful foundation with local, national and global reach.

Responsibilities:

- Within the first 6-12 months, the priority will be to get the Foundation up and running, and to support the ED as needed including:
 - manage the ED's calendar and scheduling, identifying priorities and preparing her to meet schedule demands, including travel logistics
 - prepare a range of written collateral such as reports, presentations, meeting minutes, strategy updates and other related materials
 - coordinate meetings and event logistics for board meetings, trustee gatherings, or meetings with grantees (this includes scheduling, invitations, meeting preparation and note taking)

- Assist in the move to a permanent office space
- Serve as key point of contact for internal and external partners
- Support recruiting, hiring, and orienting a staff that will grow to a team of XX-XX over the next couple of years
- Play an important role in establishing a kind and productive office culture that reflect the values of the organization
- Conduct background research on issue areas pertinent to the Foundation and coordinate field trips and conference attendance
- Engage in special projects when needed to advance goals of the foundation
- Support grantmaking as needed, and maintain knowledge surrounding current trends and policies pertinent to practice areas of focus
- Provide general office support and other administrative assistance as needed
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Qualifications

- Skilled administrator used to working in a fast-paced environment with multi-faceted responsibilities
- Demonstrated effectiveness at project and/or event management
- Bachelor's degree or higher

Skills and Attributes

- Superior organizational skills, with attention to detail, commitment to follow through, precision, and accuracy
 - Skilled writer, copyeditor, proofreader and note-taker
 - A motivated, proactive work ethic, with a strong focus on customer/client service internally and externally
 - Excellent interpersonal skills and diplomatic acumen
 - Comfortable in multi-cultural settings and able to work across organizations including with grantees, high-level executives and board members
 - Interest in working for a mission-driven organization at the intersection of philanthropy, information technology and the sciences (or neuroscience)
 - Enjoys troubleshooting and problem solving
 - A team player who is comfortable both supporting others and taking the lead on projects
 - Able to multi-task and juggle multiple projects
 - Invigorated by challenges; optimistic yet realistic
 - Sense of humor
 - Efficient with standard office software programs (Microsoft Office Suite, Google Docs)
 - Open, collaborative, and adaptable, yet appropriately discreet when confidentiality is required
- Must be willing to travel on occasion

Applications

Applications will be held in the strictest confidence. Due to the pace of this search, candidates are strongly encouraged to apply as soon as possible. To apply, please forward a resume and cover letter to E. Catlin Donnelly & Associates at mcgovernassistant@ecdonnelly.com

The Patrick J. McGovern foundation is an equal opportunity employer.

The Patrick J. McGovern Foundation does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression, military status, or disability, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring and firing of staff, selection of volunteers and vendors, and grant-making.