COMPETENCIES FOR

Chief Executive Officers of
Private Foundations

COUNCIL on FOUNDATIONS
VISON
The Council's vision for the field is of

A vibrant, growing and responsible philanthropic sector that advances the common good.

We see ourselves as part of a broad philanthropic community that will contribute to this vision. We aim to be an important leader in reaching the vision.

MISSION
The Council on Foundations provides the opportunity, leadership and tools needed by philanthropic organizations to expand, enhance and sustain their ability to advance the common good.

To carry out this mission, we will be a membership organization with effective and diverse leadership that helps the field be larger, more effective, more responsible and more cooperative.

By common good we mean the sum total of conditions that enable community members to thrive. These achievements have a shared nature that goes beyond individual benefits.

By philanthropic organizations we mean any vehicle that brings people together to enhance the effectiveness, impact and leverage of their philanthropy. This includes private and community foundations, corporate foundations and giving programs, operating foundations, and public foundations, as well as emerging giving and grantmaking mechanisms involving collective participation.

STATEMENT OF INCLUSIVENESS
The Council on Foundations was formed to promote responsible and effective philanthropy. The mission requires a commitment to inclusiveness as a fundamental operating principle and calls for an active and ongoing process that affirms human diversity in its many forms, encompassing but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, economic circumstance, disability and philosophy.

We seek inclusiveness in order to ensure that a range of perspectives, opinions and experiences are recognized and acted upon in achieving the Council's mission. The Council also asks members to make a similar commitment to inclusiveness in order to better enhance their abilities to contribute to the common good of our changing society.

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Forward

Today, more than 64,000 U.S. private philanthropic foundations play a constructive role in promoting social, cultural, economic and environmental innovation and in building and sustaining valuable institutions and organizations that benefit society at home and abroad.

PRIVATE FOUNDATION CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS (CEOs), in partnership with their boards, have a pivotal role in the fiscal and program success of their foundation’s goals. At the same time, they help to shape public issues, enliven and inform public debate, and convene community leaders on matters of public concern.

THOSE LOFTY CEO RESPONSIBILITIES, however, have only been loosely defined. For example, CEOs are often expected to creatively expand ways to leverage their foundation’s resources with nonprofit sector know-how, be strategic in their funding choices, demonstrate deep understanding of the foundation’s programmatic areas, evaluate the impact of their funding and make very difficult decisions about priorities, investment strategies, program architecture and sector alignment. Yet these expectations, with all their contradictions and high aims, are more akin to an anthology of hope than to a definition of role. They do not make up a coherent and realistic position profile.

RECOGNIZING THIS NEED TO BETTER DEFINE THE CEO’s ROLE and other needs related to CEO leadership development, the board of directors of the Council on Foundations charged the Advisory Committee for Executive Programs (ACEP), made up of current and former foundation senior executives, to help support Private Foundation CEO leadership development. Research by ACEP in 2003 and 2004 confirmed that there is a lack of clarity regarding the role of the foundation CEO that creates a structural impediment to effective leadership.

THIS PILOT DOCUMENT ATTEMPTS TO CODIFY THE JOB FUNCTIONS OF THE PRIVATE FOUNDATION CEO (functions) and the skills and knowledge needed to perform these functions, referred to as competencies. ACEP developed this document with input from foundation staff, board members, academics and others.
**Explanation of the Functions**

**THE PRIVATE FOUNDATION CEO** job functions in this document are meant to describe the customary charges of private foundation CEOs. ACEP recognizes that every foundation is unique and that any standard listing of functions, including the functions contained in this document, will not fully describe the job of every private foundation CEO. Instead, it is hoped that these functions describe the preponderance of job responsibilities for most private foundation CEOs. To fully and accurately describe a particular private foundation CEO job, the functions may need to be adjusted to fit that foundation's particular context, including the foundation's size, style, culture and stage in its organizational life cycle.

For example, some functions may not apply to certain foundations. Small or highly specialized foundations may choose not to have their CEOs perform certain external leadership functions. CEOs of larger foundations may delegate the bulk of the staff management functions to another executive. Still, the functions (in figure 2) represent the key leadership-level responsibilities that help ensure foundation effectiveness. If a foundation chooses not to include certain functions in the CEO's job description, it should base this choice on solid reasoning and ensure that this omission does not undermine the foundation's effectiveness. Even if a foundation decides to delegate one of the CEO's functions to another staff member, it is still the CEO's responsibility to ensure that that function is performed well. Thus, the CEO must at least perform meaningful oversight relative to that function.

Similarly, some foundations may find that this list of functions does not represent everything that is expected of their CEO. For example, the founders may have charged the foundation with specific expectations that imply additional CEO functions. Furthermore, many CEOs have operational as well as executive responsibilities. For example, some CEOs may also be program officers or chief financial officers. By definition, however, these functions relate only to the executive responsibilities of the CEO. CEOs who have operational responsibilities will need to add these to the pertinent CEO functions to complete their particular job description.

To make the Private Foundation CEO Functions a more useful executive development tool, ACEP decided to identify the skills and knowledge, or competencies, needed to perform each function. These are presented later in this document.

As with the functions, the unique mission of each foundation will influence the ways the competencies are applied. For example, it might be appropriate for CEOs of large foundations to expect other executive staff to possess the necessary competencies. Similarly, smaller foundations may use external consultants to ensure that key skills and knowledge are reflected at the executive level. Furthermore, some CEOs may need to perform operational functions in addition to their executive functions. Thus, they need to have operational competencies in addition to these CEO-level competencies. In sum, adjust the competencies to the context of your foundation.

At this time, the private foundation job functions do not address additional family-related demands of CEOs of family foundations. ACEP plans to modify the functions and competencies to better include these additional demands in the future.
Explanation of the Competencies

**THE COMPETENCIES CONSIST OF** the key skills and knowledge that private foundation CEOs need to perform their job functions well. A skill is the personal capacity or capability to do something, such as speak in public or think strategically. Skills can be observed. Knowledge is defined as the information and understanding one needs to be effective, such as the principal laws governing foundations or the principles behind adult learning.

There are two types of competencies. Core Competencies cover the essential professional skills and knowledge that any CEO, regardless of field, needs to master. Each is essential to the performance of many Private Foundation CEO Functions. Functional Competencies are the skills and knowledge needed either to perform specific Private Foundation CEO Functions or to perform functions other sectors have but are substantively different in the philanthropic sector. Functional Competencies build on the Core Competencies. As the name implies, Functional Competencies are grouped by function.

By definition, the Functional Competencies represent the level of personal and professional development necessary for individuals to perform the functions well. Achieving this level does not, however, guarantee actual performance of the functions. An individual may possess all of the necessary competencies to perform a function and still lack the time, resources or interest to do so.

It is perhaps impossible for any single individual to master every one of these skills. Thus, readers should interpret the competencies as an ideal, and not as minimum job requirements.

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**Figure 1. Competencies Structure**

**Functional Competencies**

Skills and knowledge a foundation CEO needs in order to specifically perform the Private Foundation CEO Functions.

Specific to each of the 13 functions.

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**Core Competencies**

Essential skills and knowledge a CEO from any field needs. Critical building blocks for the development of Functional Competencies.

Areas: collaboration/partnership, communication, decisionmaking, governance, management, organizational development, personal and professional development, planning and vision setting.
Using the Functions and Competencies

Academies and practitioners can use the functions and competencies in the following ways:

✔ Help private foundation CEOs self-assess or arrange for an external or 360-degree feedback assessment of their own performance (vis-à-vis the functions).

✔ Help foundation boards arrange for an assessment of their CEO’s performance (vis-à-vis the functions).

✔ Help private foundation CEOs identify the knowledge and skills they need in order to develop and strengthen their performance overall or on any given function (by reviewing the competencies).

✔ Help providers of foundation executive education offer effective programs and clearly communicate program content and benefits (by basing them on the functions and competencies).

✔ Help foundation boards and senior executives define the job of CEO and create CEO job descriptions.

✔ Help executive recruiters define the ideal candidate.

Conduct a careful review of your own organization and make any necessary adjustments before applying the functions and competencies to your foundation.
Figure 2. **Job Functions of the Private Foundation CEO**

### Internal (Organizational) Leadership

Provide the vision, direction, inspiration and motivation necessary to ensure the foundation’s success.

1. **Mission Stewardship:** Work with the board and staff to define the foundation’s mission, communicate it continuously within the foundation, ensure that it serves as an inspiration and guide and execute it.

2. **Board Relations:** Work with the board to help ensure that it is properly constituted and trained to conduct effective governance.

### Internal (Organizational) Management

Make decisions that result in efficient and effective foundation functioning.

3. **Values and Ethical Standards Management:** Work with the board and staff to ensure adoption of and adherence to appropriate values and ethical standards in all foundation business.

4. **Identity Management:** Work with the board and staff to ensure proper care and development of the foundation’s history, culture, reputation and image.

### External Leadership

Contribute to the dialogue, vision and direction of the pertinent global, national or local communities; for the fields of the foundation’s focus areas; and to the field of philanthropy.

5. **Visionary Leadership:** Contribute to the vision and thought leadership of the field of philanthropy and communicate this vision.

6. **Partnership Management:** Work collaboratively with other private and/or public funders and grantees for greater social impact.

### Staff Management:

Ensure that staff are properly selected, supported and guided and that their professional development is nurtured.

### Financial Management:

Work with the board and staff to develop asset investment management and financial administration strategies and systems that are effective and aligned with the foundation’s vision/mission and ensure that such strategies and systems are implemented well.

### Programmatic Management:

Work with the board and staff to develop programming, grantmaking and grant management strategies and systems that are effective and aligned with the foundation’s vision/mission.

### Legal Issues Management:

Work with the board and staff to develop legal strategies and systems that are effective and aligned with the foundation’s vision/mission.

### Accountability and Evaluation Management:

Work with the board and staff to establish accountability standards and systems that track the foundation’s effectiveness and impact.

8. **Visionary Leadership:** Contribute to the vision and thought leadership of the field of philanthropy and communicate this vision.

9. **Partnership Management:** Work collaboratively with other private and/or public funders and grantees for greater social impact.

10. **Visionary Leadership:** Contribute to the vision and thought leadership of the field of philanthropy and communicate this vision.

11. **Partnership Management:** Work collaboratively with other private and/or public funders and grantees for greater social impact.

12. **Education and Public Engagement:** Help shape the agenda and decisionmaking of government and other external stakeholders.

13. **Issue-Area Visionary Leadership:** Contribute to the vision and thought leadership in the foundation’s focus area(s) and communicate this vision.
Core Competencies

Core competencies ensure that CEOs have a solid basis from which to perform all of their executive functions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand the basics of:</th>
<th>Know:</th>
<th>Be able to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Collaboration/Partnership** | - The organization’s history of collaboration  
- Successful personal approach(es) to collaboration | - Guide cross-team and cross-organizational collaboration  
- Relate well to a diversity of individuals  
- Convene and manage groups  
- Work well as a team player |
| **Communication** | - Priority elements of the organization’s vision, values and mission  
- The public context in which the organization operates | - Constructively challenge those with power and authority  
- Speak effectively and compellingly  
- Write effectively and compellingly  
- Resolve communication problems  
- Manage competing interests |
| **Decisionmaking** | - Personal decisionmaking style | - Delegate appropriate decisions and responsibilities  
- Ask staff for the amount of information that is appropriate for leadership-level decisionmaking  
- Make clear and timely decisions |
| **Governance** | - The board’s style, operations, concerns and aspirations  
- The principles of laws applicable to governance | - Work well with the board, regardless of its composition  
- Contribute to board building  
- Adhere to clear lines of responsibility and accountability |

1 The content areas of the Core Competencies, shown in the left hand column, are presented in alphabetical order.
Core Competencies (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand the basics of:</th>
<th>Know:</th>
<th>Be able to:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>The culture of the organization, including the degree and type of teamwork among staff, and breakdowns in teamwork</td>
<td>Create a positive and productive work environment</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Model proper staff behavior and promote inclusive practices</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Create a sense of shared responsibility/credit for accomplishments and shared responsibility for challenges or failures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lead an efficient and effective organizational operation according to best practices, ethical guidelines and fiduciary requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Manage competing requirements and interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Use external consultants and experts effectively</td>
</tr>
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</table>

| Organizational Development | Under what circumstances it is productive to use consultants | Create a work environment in which learning is continuous and staff feel comfortable taking risks to help the foundation meet its mission |
|                           | A personal approach to change management                     | Encourage staff to go outside of their professional duties and into nonprofit life as volunteers, grantees and donors |
|                           |                                                                  | Detect changes in the organization’s functioning, culture, or dynamics |
|                           |                                                                  | Create and maintain organizational culture                                |
|                           |                                                                  | Manage change                                                              |

| Personal and Professional Development | The Private Foundation CEO Functions and Competencies | Arrange for a personal assessment of performance of the Private Foundation CEO Functions |
|                                        | Where and how executives in and out of the field of philanthropy obtain effective executive education | Make and express to the board the connection between professional development and foundation effectiveness |
|                                        |                                                      | Conduct ongoing personal and professional development                     |
Core Competencies (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand the basics of:</th>
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<th>Be able to:</th>
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</table>
| **Planning**              | ■ The organization’s previous planning initiatives  
■ The organization’s future needs | ■ Think strategically  
■ Lead strategic thinking and planning efforts |  |

| **Vision Setting** | ■ What can excite the imaginations of staff, the board and pertinent external groups  
■ Founding documents of the organization | ■ Lead the creation of a shared vision for staff, the board and pertinent external groups that is aligned with the organization  
■ Educate others on the future direction and inspire them to be supporters and advocates  
■ Incorporate the organization’s vision into its programs and operations  
■ Embody the organization’s vision in all work |  |
### Functional Competencies

#### Competencies for Mission Stewardship

1. Work with the board and staff to define the foundation’s mission, communicate it effectively within the foundation, ensure that it serves continuously as an inspiration and guide, and execute it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand the basics of:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Foundation's External Context</strong></td>
<td>- The context, strengths and challenges of the communities the foundation funds and supports</td>
<td>- Relate well to all key stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Foundation's Organizational History and Culture</strong></td>
<td>- The basic content of the documents that created the foundation</td>
<td>- Incorporate the foundation’s culture and history in exploring the existing organizational mission and vision, and how these relate to the current work of the foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The history of the foundation’s past grantmaking and program activities</td>
<td>- Relate the experience of the foundation and its present-day realities (e.g., changing demographics in regions where the foundation operates) back to the vision/mission and history of the foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Current organization imperatives, priorities and initiatives</td>
<td>- Detect and overcome weaknesses in the alignment of the foundation’s vision and mission to its current context and future trends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Motivate staff and the board around the mission of the foundation</td>
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</table>

#### Critical Core Competencies

Communication, Collaboration/Partnership, Decisionmaking, Management and Vision Setting

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2 The content areas of the Functional Competencies, shown in the left hand column, are presented in alphabetical order.
Competencies for Board Relations

2. Work with the board to help ensure that it is properly constituted and trained to conduct effective governance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand the basics of:</th>
<th>Know:</th>
<th>Be able to:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Board Development</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The history of the foundation's board</td>
<td>Facilitate the board's awareness of its development needs and identification of appropriate orientation and training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The biographies and skills of current and past board members</td>
<td>Facilitate the board's development of board terms of service and transition policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The board's recent and current programmatic and governance directions</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Governance</strong></th>
<th>Know:</th>
<th>Be able to:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The history of the foundation's governance, grantmaking and program activities</td>
<td>Work with the board to develop effective written bylaws and processes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The strengths and weaknesses of the governance models employed by the current board (consensus, Roberts Rules, etc.)</td>
<td>Support and encourage appropriate board functioning and involvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public policy and trends that could effect foundation governance</td>
<td>Encourage and work well within a system of organizational units (e.g., committees, task forces)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Critical Core Competencies**
Communication, Collaboration/Partnership, Decisionmaking, Personal and Professional Development, Organizational Development, Management and Vision Setting
## Competencies for Values and Ethical Standards Management

3. Work with the board and staff to ensure adoption of and adherence to appropriate values and ethical standards in all foundation business.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand the basics of:</th>
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<th>Be able to:</th>
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</table>
| **Ethics Management**     | - Laws, regulations and guidance for foundations that relate to ethics | - Work with the board to lead a process to develop the foundation’s ethical standards  
- Create awareness of ethical issues and encourage a transparent culture in which ethical policies are understood and lived out at all organizational levels  
- Prevent and manage ethical breaches as they arise  
- Prevent conflict of interest problems  
- Welcome and manage public interest in the foundation |
| **The Foundation’s Organizational Values, History and Culture** | - The basic content of the documents that created the foundation  
- The history of the foundation’s past grantmaking and program activities | - Relate the experience of the foundation and its present-day realities back to the values of the foundation  
- Employ foundation values in everyday operations, such as staff reviews and orientation of new board and staff members  
- Work with the board to lead a change management process to develop the foundation’s values statement and bring to life such values throughout the foundation |

### Critical Core Competencies

Communication, Decisionmaking, Management and Vision Setting
Competencies for Identity Management

4. Work with the board and staff to ensure proper care and development of the foundation’s history, culture, reputation and image.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand the basics of:</th>
<th>Know:</th>
<th>Be able to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The Foundation’s Organizational History and Culture | ☐ The basic content of the documents that created the foundation  
☐ The history of the foundation’s past grantmaking and program activities | ☐ Institute and manage a communication plan and system for expressing a powerful and clear image of the foundation in all its work that is consistent with its mission, history and culture  
☐ Lead organizational change |

| Public Relations | | |
| Sector positions on emerging issues in philanthropy and in the field(s) in which the foundation focuses | ☐ Represent the foundation effectively  
☐ Develop a work culture and implement processes to ensure that staff represent the foundation effectively  
☐ Manage criticism and controversy effectively  
☐ Work effectively with the media |

Critical Core Competencies
Communication, Organizational Development, Planning and Vision Setting
Competencies for Staff Management

5. Ensure that staff are properly selected, supported and guided and that their professional development is nurtured.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand the basics of:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult Learning</td>
<td>The principal tools and resources for identifying personal and professional training programs for foundation staff</td>
<td>Create staff self-assessment or other assessment options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing</td>
<td>The principal state and federal laws and regulations affecting staffing</td>
<td>Make effective and law- and regulation-abiding decisions in hiring, firing, placement, promotion, termination and compensation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Critical Core Competencies
Communication, Decisionmaking, Management, Organizational Development, and Personal and Professional Development
## Competencies for Financial Management

6. Work with the board and staff to develop asset investment management and financial administration strategies and systems that are effective and aligned with the foundation’s vision/mission, and ensure that such strategies and systems are implemented well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand the basics of:</th>
<th>Know:</th>
<th>Be able to:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Federal and State Laws that Relate to Foundation Finances</strong></td>
<td>The fundamentals in the laws relating to foundation financial systems, such as UMIFA</td>
<td>Ensure that board and staff know and adhere to all relevant state and federal laws and regulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Accounting</strong></td>
<td>The fundamental concepts of systems and standards for sound accounting, such as GAAP</td>
<td>Critically read financial statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The role of internal controls and audits in foundations</td>
<td>Create and recommend an annual budget that supports the foundation’s vision and/or mission</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure and manage periodic external financial reviews and audits</td>
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Competencies for Financial Management (continued)

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<tr>
<th>Understand the basics of:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investment and Financial Planning</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ Principles and concepts of portfolio management for foundations, including the management of endowments, trusts and institutional investments</td>
<td>❑ Establish an investment model appropriate to the type and nature of assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ Staffing/management models for portfolio management</td>
<td>❑ Gather credible advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ The roles and fiduciary responsibilities of the CEO, the board, the investment committee and financial advisors</td>
<td>❑ Work effectively with the investment committee and financial advisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ The major restrictions imposed by the Internal Revenue Code, with implications on how these restrictions affect the operations of the foundation</td>
<td>❑ Implement the instructions of the board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ The principal components of relevant tax laws, such as the Tax Reform Act of 1969</td>
<td>❑ Manage financial systems and issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ The current thinking, trends and benchmark data on appropriate uses of administrative expenses for like-sized foundations</td>
<td>❑ Ensure appropriate review, including compliance with reporting requirements in accordance with laws and regulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>❑ Articulate the strengths and limitations of the latest products with respect to the foundation and the board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>❑ Work effectively with the board, the investment committee, and financial advisors</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>❑ Assess accounting and investment performance</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Critical Core Competencies**
Decisionmaking, Management and Planning
Competencies for Programmatic Management

7. Work with the board and staff to develop programming, grantmaking and grant management strategies and systems that are effective and aligned with the foundation’s vision/mission and ensure that such strategies and systems are implemented well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand the basics of:</th>
<th>Know:</th>
<th>Be able to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grantmaking</strong></td>
<td>☐ The foundation’s past grantmaking practices and history</td>
<td>☐ Understand, communicate with and work well with representatives from grant recipient organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ How the grantmaking program reflects the mission, vision and values and goals of the foundation</td>
<td>☐ Identify and advocate for the best grantmaking or social investment strategy to meet foundation goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ The fiduciary and legal responsibilities for making qualified grants</td>
<td>☐ Develop transparent processes for grants management and records management, including due diligence and oversight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Types of grants that are disallowed by the tax laws, such as the Tax Reform Act of 1969</td>
<td>☐ Make information technology decisions and manage information technology in a way that supports an efficient and effective grantmaking strategy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Critical Core Competencies**

Decisionmaking, Management, Organizational Development and Planning
Competencies for Legal Issues Management

8. Work with the board and staff to develop legal strategies and systems that are effective and aligned with the foundation’s vision/mission, and ensure that such strategies and systems are implemented well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand the basics of:</th>
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<th>Be able to:</th>
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</table>
| **Federal and State Laws and Regulations Relating to Foundations** | ☐ Sector benchmarks from authoritative sources on the application of state and federal laws | ☐ Translate federal and state laws and regulations into foundation systems, policies, and procedures  
☐ Work with legal counsel and the board to identify and manage legal issues  
☐ Assess and manage and/or refer to legal counsel potential conflicts with state and federal laws and regulations |
| **Foundation Guidance and Regulations** | ☐ Donor’s intent in establishing the foundation  
☐ The legal charter of the foundation | ☐ Convert foundation guidance and bylaws into systems, policies and procedures  
☐ Prevent, identify and manage breaches in foundation guidance and bylaws, including conflicts of interest |

**Critical Core Competencies**

Decisionmaking and Management
Competencies for Accountability and Evaluation Management

9. Work with the board and staff to establish accountability standards and systems that track the foundation’s effectiveness and impact.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand the basics of:</th>
<th>Know:</th>
<th>Be able to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accountability/Program Monitoring</td>
<td>□ The history and current political climate of issues concerning foundation accountability</td>
<td>□ Work with the board to institute accountability/program monitoring approaches that are most appropriate for the foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ The foundation’s past practices in accountability/program monitoring</td>
<td>□ Use feedback from accountability/program monitoring systems to improve operations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Performance Measurement and Evaluation     | □ The foundation’s past practices in performance measurement and evaluation | □ Institute the performance measurement practices that are best suited to analyze and adjust grant policies to help carry out the foundation’s goals and that are best aligned with its mission |
|                                           |                                                                        | □ Ensure that grants and programs are evaluated |
|                                           |                                                                        | □ Use feedback from performance measurement and evaluation systems to improve grantmaking and operations |
|                                           |                                                                        | □ Ensure that the foundation actively seeks to monitor change in the environment and adapt and learn from the change, i.e., become a “learning organization” |

Critical Core Competencies
Communication, Collaboration/Partnership, Decisionmaking, Management and Vision Setting
Competencies for Visionary Leadership

10. Contribute to the vision and thought leadership of the field of philanthropy and communicate this vision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand the basics of:</th>
<th>Know:</th>
<th>Be able to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>☐ The influentials, allies and subject matter experts on philanthropy</td>
<td>☐ Advocate with influentials and the public for philanthropy as an important sector of society that promotes the social good and is vital for a civil society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Which state and federal government institutions govern or influence foundations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Emerging sector issues and the major challenges of the independent sector</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The History and Culture of Philanthropy</th>
<th>☐ The values, challenges and benefits of philanthropy to society</th>
<th>☐ Place the foundation in the context of the history and growth of philanthropy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ The history and culture of the philanthropic field</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Critical Core Competencies**
Communication, Collaboration/Partnership, Planning and Vision Setting
## Competencies for Partnership Management

11. Work collaboratively with other private and/or public funder and non profit organizations for greater social impact.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand the basics of:</th>
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<th>Be able to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Partnership Development** | - The foundation's recent partnership history  
- The priorities and concerns of funding colleagues  
- The relevant issues to be addressed potentially in the partnership | - Identify the potential win–win benefits of the partnership  
- Assess strengths and weaknesses of potential partners, including organizational, financial and political constraints  
- Reach out to connect with colleagues to explore potential collaborations  
- Lead a partnership development process | |
| **Partnership Management** | - The foundation's capacities, limitations and culture  
- The funding colleagues’ capacities, limitations and cultures | - Manage relationships  
- Elicit in others the commitment, passion and patience needed to sustain a collaborative enterprise  
- Create consensus | |

**Critical Core Competencies**  
Communication, Collaboration/Partnership, Organizational Development and Planning
## Competencies for Education and Advocacy

12. Help shape the agenda and decisionmaking of government and other external stakeholders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Be able to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advocacy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The influentials, allies and subject matter experts on philanthropy</td>
<td>Identify, generate (or find), package and share the data that government and other sectors need on the field of philanthropy or in the foundation’s issue area(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The context and positions of the principal stakeholders</td>
<td>Promote strategic cooperation with governmental and other sectors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shepherd nonpartisan public policies through governmental systems that are supportive of philanthropy or the foundation’s issue area(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promote actions in other sectors that support the goals of philanthropy, such as corporate citizenship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Policy Analysis**       |       |             |
| The climate in which public policies are shaped and how they are developed and executed | Analyze the political marketplace and public policies |
| The roles of the public, private and independent sectors and how they effect public life |  |
| The local, regional and national political landscapes related to the foundation’s focus area(s) |  |

| **Critical Core Competencies** |       |             |
| Communication and Collaboration/Partnership |       |             |
## Competencies for Issue-Area Visionary Leadership

13 Contribute to the vision and thought leadership in the foundation’s focus area(s) and communicate this vision.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Be able to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advocacy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ The influencers, allies and subject matter experts in the foundation's focus area(s)</td>
<td>☐ Bring the issue(s) in the foundation's focus area(s) to the forefront of the minds of the public and other stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ The issues and trends in the foundation's focus area(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **The Foundation Focus Areas** | ☐ The issue area(s) that the foundation funds | ☐ Distill issues and solutions in the foundation's focus area(s) into a coherent vision and a compelling message |
|                               | ☐ Where to find the most effective resources for more information and new thinking |         |

**Critical Core Competencies**
Communication, Collaboration/Partnership, Planning and Vision Setting
Advisory Committee for Executive Programs (ACEP)

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President  
McGregor Fund  
Detroit, MI

Richard L. Moore  
President  
Weaver Foundation  
Greensboro, NC

Council Staff:  
Joanne Scanlan  
Senior Vice President, Philanthropic Leadership

Reatha Clark King  
Former President and Board Chair  
General Mills Foundation  
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Jack Kent Cooke Foundation  
Lansdowne, VA

Jennifer Hollahan  
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Rockefeller Brothers Fund  
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Elizabeth B. Smith  
Executive Director  
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President  
VeraWorks, Inc.  
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Shawnee, KS

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