

# SEATTLE INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION



## Executive Director

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## The Organization

The Seattle International Foundation (SIF) supports worldwide poverty alleviation efforts through grant-making and other strategic activities, with a deliberate focus on the region of Central America.

Seattle philanthropists Bill and Paula Clapp founded the Seattle International Foundation (SIF) to act upon their long-term interest in improving the prospects of marginalized and impoverished communities throughout Central America. Recognizing that the Pacific Northwest has a unique dedication to global issues, generosity of spirit and inclusiveness towards others, the Seattle International Foundation (SIF) was created as a supporting organization to the Seattle Foundation (the region's largest community foundation) to increase and enhance international philanthropy and serve as a useful resource to the local philanthropic community.

Most of the work of Seattle International Foundation is concentrated in the Central American region, primarily Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua. SIF operates under the belief that change must come from within the region and that this work cannot be accomplished without systemic change and shifts in societal attitudes and behavior. Therefore, the Foundation works with local change agents and key decision makers from across sectors (civil society, government, business, and philanthropy) to mobilize long-term change. Our key strategies and [programs](#) currently include:

- Highly compelling and strategic training programs that identify, train and connect change agents in Central America
- Organizing and curating convenings in the US and across the region to connect key decision makers and the philanthropic community, share ideas, prioritize issues facing the region, and lift up the voices of local leaders
- Conducting/funding research and using media to communicate about the needs in the region; driving action towards shared goals based on data
- Grant making to US-based policy organizations and Central American organizations working toward progressive change
- Serving as the channel for other funders to support organizations in the region, including local organizations with a focus on youth development, girls' education and women's rights in the region

SIF also supports organizations that push for legal reforms, transparency and the rule of law in the region, as well as policy organizations working to improve US policies toward the region. In these initiatives, progress is measured by citizen actions, laws passed and implemented, initiatives undertaken and increases in safety and human rights.





## The Position

This is an opportunity to lead as SIF's second Executive Director, build upon the successful foundation created over the past decade, and substantially contribute to the Foundation's goals and ideas for the future of the organization. Working with an engaged and talented staff and the Board, which includes the founders, the ED will lead efforts to expand opportunities to support systemic change in Central America to create a region that is less violent, more prosperous and equitable for all.

The new Executive Director will help develop and build programs to identify, train and connect emerging and experienced change makers throughout Central America. The ED will also work to build partnerships and engage other donors committed to investing in critical issues across the region. As the external face of the Foundation, the ED will represent SIF's work with civil society change makers, business leaders, the media, other donor partners, and at convenings locally, nationally, and internationally.

Responsible for fully developing the philanthropic initiatives of the Foundation and implementing them through grant making as well as other tactics, the ED will also establish and articulate public policy positions as a way of achieving the Foundation's goals.





## Issues & Priorities

***Team Management & Vision:*** The ED will be responsible for managing a staff of approximately six in Seattle and several staff and consultants across Mexico and Central America, working on programs, grants administration, partnerships, convenings, fundraising, finances, communications, and other operational duties. Backend support is currently provided by Seattle Foundation and/or outside providers, including Human Resources and IT. The ED will be the key leader for the teams in both Seattle and Latin America. In partnership with the founders and Board, the new ED will have the opportunity to influence the vision and strategic direction of SIF’s work in Central America.

***Leadership Development:*** Supporting local leaders in Central America has been a primary activity of SIF since its inception. The ED will work with key partners to further develop, refine, and monitor a high-quality and engaging curriculum and experience for such leaders. To read more about leadership development programs currently supported by SIF, click [here](#) and [here](#).

***Effective Philanthropy & Convening:*** The new ED will provide thought leadership around how SIF can increase philanthropy invested in the region and its effectiveness overall, including influencing multi-lateral development agencies and official development aid by donor countries. For the past several years, SIF has convened the [Central America Donor Forum](#), the key networking and learning space to advance philanthropy and development efforts in Central America. The invitation-only meeting brings together over 200 leaders from business, philanthropy, government, and civil society to discuss priority issues and successful models of development, and explore co-investment for social impact. The ED will build upon the Forum’s successful track record and utilize the event as a platform to drive investment in key areas of need based on the common agenda, as well as create a shared sense of accountability.





## Ideal Candidate

Candidates should lead with the highest standards of honesty, integrity and transparency and exhibit unquestionable character driven by a strong set of values and ethics. We seek an Executive Director who is passionate about and dedicated to challenging the status quo in the pursuit of driving social change to alleviate global poverty and inequality. A specific understanding of, experience in, and extensive network in Central America is critically important for this role. Candidates will ideally bring international development expertise and a strategic focus on systemic change, leadership development and the power of networks.

Complementing passion, the ideal candidate will be an experienced Executive Director, Managing Director, or Program Director with strong business instincts and demonstrated operational leadership skills honed in entrepreneurial, mission-driven organizations. We seek a builder of people and organizations who makes things happen and can deliver results. An effective manager and motivator of staff, the ideal candidate leads by example, setting clear expectations and establishing systems for mutual accountability. Demonstrated success growing an international grant making organization is an asset.

Candidates should be strong, bilingual communicators, cross-culture leaders, and consummate networkers with a demonstrated ability to persuade, influence and mobilize peers, potential partners and donors. An active listener and empathetic leader, the ideal candidate for the ED role has high emotional intelligence and is adept at interacting with a broad spectrum of individuals, from those we seek to help to business and government leaders and influencers.

We seek a strategic thinker who has demonstrated success in program design and implementation that aligns with the Foundation's vision and growth goals. Bringing familiarity with grants making, this individual will seek out opportunities to support organizations that effectively address systemic change and support local organizations in their efforts in a positive, collaborative manner. We seek intellectual curiosity, high emotional intelligence, and strong critical thinking skills.





## Additional Qualifications

We seek candidates with 7-10 years of organizational leadership and management experience, preferably in a philanthropic, government, or non-profit organization where grant making has been a central mechanism. Experience in multiple sectors and work in cross-sector roles is a plus; a successful track record of fundraising is highly desirable. A bachelor's degree or equivalent experience is required, and an advanced degree is preferred.

Oral and written fluency in Spanish is required, as is both domestic and international travel. The position is based in Seattle.

## To Be Considered

Seattle International Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and all qualified candidates are encouraged to apply. Please submit a resume and a cover letter addressed to Melissa Merritt at <http://candidateportal.waldronhr.com>.

*The search for a Executive Director is being assisted by a team from Waldron:*

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Waldron is honored to work with Seattle International Foundation in the search for an Executive Director. Seattle International Foundation does amazing work, and we are doing our best to recruit a talented team member who will accelerate this mission. As the consulting partner strategic leaders choose to help attract, engage, and inspire effective leaders, Waldron provides a unique combination of executive search, leadership development, and career transition services across sectors and industries. Our passion is helping people and organizations realize their full potential and increase their impact.