EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With an exceptional ten-year grantmaking history and mission of improving the health of all New Yorkers, the New York State Health Foundation (NYSHealth) is seeking applications and nominations for a new Director of Policy and Research. As New York’s only state-wide health foundation, NYSHealth offers a unique platform for change and impact spanning urban, suburban, and rural health challenges. The new Director of Policy and Research will work in close partnership with the President and CEO and Vice President of Programs to undergird the Foundation’s work with the analysis and evidence base necessary to develop a proactive policy agenda that supports, advances, and magnifies outcomes in the Foundation’s key programmatic areas of Consumer Empowerment and Healthy Communities.

Reporting to the President and CEO, the new Director of Policy and Research will create and execute the Foundation’s policy and research agenda serving as an in house expert and resource to program staff on a wide variety of state and federal policy issues of interest to the Foundation. S/he will collaborate across the Foundation by supporting the development of the framework, identification, and selection of policy, research, and evaluation projects performed internally and by grantees, and the communication and dissemination of policy relevant messages and findings. The Director will lead evaluation activities to assess the effectiveness of the Foundation’s grantmaking and programmatic activities including developing and managing the Foundation’s scorecard and capturing and sharing lessons for internal and external use.

The successful candidate will have a sophisticated understanding of how research and policy analysis can support and enhance philanthropic initiatives especially in the health sector. S/he will bring a collegial and collaborative style that draws upon the creativity, expertise, and knowledge of the Foundation’s diverse staff. S/he will be proactive and nimble in responding to policy developments by providing thorough and timely analysis and coordinating with communications and programmatic staff. S/he will be an exceptional communicator and prolific writer who can analyze and distill the key policy issues and research findings and shape the salient points for targeted audiences. This is an exciting opportunity to develop and strengthen the Foundation’s policy and research strategy and functions in support of its mission to improve the health of all New Yorkers.

This search is being conducted by Carolyn Ho and Cara Pearsall of Nonprofit Professionals Advisory Group. Please find more information and application instructions at the end of this document.
ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

The New York State Health Foundation (NYSHealth) was established with five percent of the proceeds from the conversion of Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield from nonprofit to for-profit ownership. When Empire’s conversion was announced, New York’s health community recognized the opportunity for a strategic, private foundation to foster systemic change and have a statewide impact on New Yorkers’ health. Since 2006, the Foundation has focused on improving the health of all New Yorkers, especially the most vulnerable. With approximately $290 million in assets, a $15 million annual grants and operations budget, and a staff of 20, the Foundation is committed to making a difference beyond its dollars, informing health care policy and practice, spreading effective programs to improve New Yorkers’ health and the health care system, serving as a convener of health leaders across the state, and providing technical assistance to its grantees and partners. Nine Board members, with three members appointed by each branch of the New York State government, work together to govern the Foundation. NYSHealth also receives guidance from a Community Advisory Committee whose members provide advice to the staff and act as ambassadors for the Foundation across the state.

With an emphasis on statewide grantmaking, approximately half of the Foundation’s grantees are New York City organizations and half are organizations outside of New York City, a strategy that is driven by an understanding that most of the public health and health care service delivery problems in the state have common roots and often common potential solutions both upstate and downstate.

GRANTMAKING PRIORITIES

After evaluation and careful reflection, the Foundation decided it will focus on two core areas of programming beginning in 2016: Consumer Empowerment and Healthy Communities. The Consumer Empowerment initiative seeks to increase choice, control, and convenience for health care consumers. The Healthy Communities initiative aims to increase the rates of New Yorkers of all ages eating healthy foods, being physically active, and having access to a range of programs that encourage healthy lifestyle choices. These initiatives are grounded in the Foundation’s earlier work and represent exciting opportunities in the field, positioning NYSHealth to continue be a leader and innovator in the health and health care space.

NYSHealth also maintains a special commitment to two areas of focus outside of its primary programmatic areas. The Special Projects Fund is a responsive grantmaking program supporting projects that are aligned with the Foundation’s overall mission but outside of the current priority areas. Finally, the Foundation also pays special attention to the health and wellbeing of returning veterans and their families.

Under the leadership of new President and CEO David Sandman and a strong and dedicated staff, the Foundation looks ahead to its second decade of improving the health of all New Yorkers. Having solidified its position as a leader not only among peer foundations but also with a diverse array of constituent groups across the state who value both the Foundation’s grantmaking program and its role as a trusted convener, the Foundation looks to capitalize on its position and take a more activist and change-maker approach. The new Director of Policy and Research will play a central and critical role in grounding future policy and programmatic initiatives with the evidence base and policy analysis to support replication and policy development that maximizes the Foundation’s impact.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPACT

The Director of Policy and Research will play a central role in building the capacity of the Foundation to shape, align, and respond to public policy developments and strengthening its capacity in research and evaluation. In this inherently cross-cutting and collaborative role, the Director will use his/her broad
experience and expertise to inform efforts throughout the Foundation. S/he will work closely with program and communications staff to build the Foundation’s internal analytic capabilities, generate policy and research ideas and publications for external distribution, and guide the Foundation’s research and evaluation efforts related to its own performance and that of its grantees.

The Director of Policy and Research will be a creative and entrepreneurial thinker, a prolific writer and producer of analytic products, a rigorous and sensitive reviewer of other people’s work, and a natural collaborator. S/he will work in close partnership with the leadership of the Foundation’s programmatic and communications departments. Reporting to the President and CEO, the new Director of Policy and Research can expect to engage in the following areas:

**Creating and Executing a Policy and Research Agenda for the Foundation**

The Director of Policy and Research will track key New York State and federal policy initiatives that are relevant to the Foundation’s work. S/he will develop in-depth knowledge of key and emerging issues, serve as an in-house resource to staff, and identify ways in which the Foundation can align with or respond to those policy developments.

The Director of Policy and Research will conceive of and implement potential quantitative or qualitative research projects to be conducted internally by the Director or in collaboration with other Foundation staff. S/he will analyze data and other materials and author issue briefs, data briefs, white papers, or other publications relevant to the Foundation’s priorities.

**Supporting the Foundation’s Grantmaking and Communications Efforts**

The Director of Policy and Research will collaborate with other staff to support key functions such as grantmaking and communications. S/he will contribute to specifications for policy work and research/evaluation performed by grantees for the Foundation, and assist with identifying and selecting qualified grantees to carry out such work. S/he will consult with program staff and participate in evaluating projects undertaken by the Foundation and its grantees.

The Director of Policy and Research will also collaborate closely with the Foundation’s communications staff to identify policy-relevant messages and findings, and shape them for public dissemination. S/he will serve as a quality control officer for Foundation reports and publications, ensuring that the information is accurate and timely and that the key issues are communicated properly.

**Measuring Organizational Effectiveness**

The Director of Policy and Research will participate in and lead evaluation activities to assess the effectiveness of the Foundation’s grantmaking and programmatic initiatives and help capture and share lessons for internal and external use. S/he will develop and manage the Foundation’s organizational scorecard, including developing reasonable metrics, in collaboration with the Vice President for Programs and other staff, to assess the Foundation’s programmatic work, identifying or generating data sources for those metrics, and ensuring that progress toward metrics is regularly updated.

**QUALIFICATIONS OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE**

While no one candidate will embody all the qualifications enumerated below, the ideal candidate will possess many of the following professional and personal abilities, attributes, and experiences:
Strategic policy and research analyst with an innovative approach to identifying and advancing health policies; Proven ability to highlight opportunities for impact through policy paired with a rigorous approach to policy analysis and research that supports evidence based change;

Ten years’ experience in a leadership position, preferably in the research, philanthropic, policy, advocacy, or nonprofit sector; Doctoral degree in a relevant field is preferred, advanced degree is required;

Strong collaborator who can work in close partnership with program staff and grantees to develop a policy agenda and identify emerging opportunities;

A prolific writer and producer of analytic materials, with a track record of publication;

Exceptional communication skills, both written and oral, and the ability to translate research into policy-relevant and actionable messages;

Experience with and understanding of the policymaking processes at the state and local levels;

Demonstrated ability to implement and manage multiple priorities effectively; Judgment, integrity, and the ability to listen with sensitivity to others;

A healthy sense of humor and appreciation for the personal creativity and inspiration that can come from work that is in service to those in need; The ability to carry that inspiration, creativity, and fun into work with fellow staff members and grantees; and,

Ability and willingness to travel occasionally to Albany, other regions of New York State, and/or Washington, D.C.

TO APPLY

More information about the New York State Health Foundation may be found at: http://nyshealthfoundation.org/

Due to the pace of this search, candidates are strongly encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Applications including a cover letter describing your interest and qualifications, your resume (in Word format), salary history and where you learned of the position should be sent to: nysh-drp@nonprofitprofessionals.com. In order to expedite the internal sorting and reviewing process, please type your name (Last, First) as the only contents in the subject line of your e-mail.

The New York State Health Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and values having a diverse staff. Employment opportunities are based upon individual capabilities and qualifications without regard to race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability, veteran status, or any other protected characteristic as established under law.