POSITION PROFILE

On behalf of our client, the McKnight Foundation,
Ash Talent Solutions, LLC
is conducting a retained executive search for its

DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION
THE MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION | Director of Human Resources

Position Profile

MISSION
The McKnight Foundation, a family foundation based in Minnesota, advances a more just, creative, and abundant future where people and planet thrive.

VISION
We envision a world that recognizes the dignity of every human being, a world where we celebrate the creativity of the arts and sciences, and come together to protect our one and only Earth.

VALUES
Stewardship—Our deepest responsibility is to use all of our resources for mission impact. We deploy the Foundation’s resources in a transparent manner and seek to maximize our relevance, credibility, and effectiveness.

Respect—Authentic and mutually accountable relationships matter deeply to us. We equip ourselves with the intercultural competency mindset and skills to help us bridge differences of all kinds.

Equity—We embed an equity approach across the Foundation because we see it as mission critical. We align our policies, practices, and resources so that people have genuine opportunities to thrive locally and globally.

Curiosity—We value ongoing learning, and we look outward and reflect internally to discover opportunities for greater impact. It is only when we act with humility, ask big questions, and practice deep listening that we can open ourselves to new ideas and relationships.

For more information about the McKnight Foundation’s work, impact, and values, please visit www.mcknight.org.

The McKnight Foundation, an internationally recognized family foundation based in Minnesota, advances a more just, creative, and abundant future where people and planet thrive. Established in 1953 by William and Maude McKnight, this fourth-generation family foundation is deeply committed to advancing climate solutions in the Midwest; building an equitable and inclusive Minnesota; and supporting the arts in Minnesota, neuroscience, and international crop research.

As an early leader of 3M, Mr. McKnight earned a reputation for spurring innovation and recognizing the creative potential in others—practices that live on at the Foundation. His daughter, Virginia McKnight Binger, then set the standard for the Foundation’s work with her singular compassion and spirit of generosity. The current governing board includes actively engaged fourth-generation members of the McKnight family, with soon-to-be fifth-generation involvement, as well as community members who bring diverse perspectives.

Today, the McKnight Foundation works across many disciplines, sectors, and geographical boundaries. McKnight’s work supports communities in its home state of Minnesota and beyond, spanning several continents. Its diverse programs are united in a quest to improve our shared fate. The Foundation envisions a world that recognizes the dignity of every human being, a world where we celebrate the creativity of the arts and sciences, and where we come together to protect our one and only Earth.

In 2019 the Board of Directors approved a new mission statement, a new Strategic Framework, and several shifts in programmatic investments. These changes led to the sunset of some programs, the expansion of the Midwest Climate & Energy program, and the creation of the Vibrant & Equitable Communities program focused on building an equitable and inclusive Minnesota.

McKnight is a valued philanthropist and community leader in Minnesota, the broader Midwest, nationally, and internationally. Leveraging the organization’s track record, its ability to work in partnerships, and its willingness to experiment and explore, the Foundation sees many new impact and leadership opportunities ahead. Recognized for its pragmatism, McKnight aspires to make progress on several complex, ambitious challenges facing us today, in the coming decade, and beyond.
THE ROLE

The **Director of Human Resources (HR)** is a newly created position that heads the Foundation’s HR department. This position reports to the Vice President of Finance and Operations and serves as a member of the Operations Leadership team. The ideal candidate will have a broad generalist background, working knowledge of the core HR functional areas, substantial management experience, and strong leadership skills. This is an exciting opportunity for an HR professional who thrives on variety, embraces a broad scope of responsibilities, and enjoys toggling between tactical and strategic work. The Director of HR will oversee a team of two and work closely with senior leaders and other stakeholders to assess, recommend, implement, and track the effectiveness of existing and new HR practices that span talent management, total rewards, organizational effectiveness, and strengthening culture. This scope includes recruiting and retaining a diverse and productive workforce and managing the resources to support leadership and talent development.

The Director of HR will join McKnight at a transformative moment, as the Foundation advances it’s recently adopted **Strategic Framework**. As a member of a highly collaborative leadership team, the Director of HR will play a critical role as an advocate and champion of cultural change, demonstrating the insight and sensitivity to advise, coach, and guide colleagues at all levels through periods of ambiguity, iterative learning, and growth. The ideal candidate is an adept communicator, an empathetic listener, and a proactive problem solver. This leader will model the Foundation’s **values**, advance its commitment to **diversity, equity, and inclusion** (DEI), and meaningfully contribute to building a culture of trust, transparency, respect, and results.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Director of Human Resources will report to the Vice President of Operations & Finance and have direct oversight of two staff members:

- Compensation and Benefits Manager
- HR Administrator (0.5 FTE)

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director of Human Resources is responsible for the following:

TALENT ACQUISITION

- Lead talent acquisition for the Foundation to attract, recruit, and retain a diverse, effective, and engaged workforce. Ensure recruiting efforts are in alignment with the Foundation’s values and further its commitment to DEI.

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

- **Employee relations**: Serve as a confidential resource for staff members and management to address workplace issues through active listening, proactive problem-solving, mediation, and conflict resolution techniques. Act with discretion and sound judgment, elevating critical concerns to the appropriate legal advisor and/or institutional officer.

- **Policies and guidelines**: Draft, revise, and communicate HR policies that align with the Foundation’s values and reflect its commitment to DEI. Monitor internal and external factors that impact the work environment and adapt policies accordingly. Ensure leadership support, integration, and alignment across the Foundation.
• **Talent and leadership development**: Support staff members and management to identify professional learning and growth opportunities that develop their position-specific knowledge, skills, and competencies. Manage the professional development budget and approve professional development requests.

• **Performance management**: Oversee the talent/performance lifecycle, deliver organizational training, and ensure that forms, tools, and resources are in place to facilitate timely and useful feedback, clarify job expectations, and align individual goals with the Foundation’s priorities.

**CULTURE AND ENGAGEMENT**

- Engage with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and others to plan and support Foundation-wide talent development opportunities to advance the Foundation’s internal commitment to DEI.
- Foster and build a culture of trust and transparent communication that honors differing viewpoints, finds common ground, and inspires engagement.

**TOTAL REWARDS**

- Administer the Foundation’s compensation and benefits plans, oversee payroll, and manage the HR budget. Ensure the total rewards strategy aligns with the Foundation’s values and effectively supports the recruitment and retention of talent.

**HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

- Supervise, coach, mentor, and develop a high-performing HR team with effective working relationships at all levels of the Foundation.
- Oversee, assess, optimize, and/or upgrade the existing HR systems and processes. Ensure that all HR policies and practices comply with applicable laws.

**CORE COMPETENCIES**

All leaders at McKnight are expected to display the following attributes:

- Strategic mindset
- Communicates effectively
- Instills trust
- Drives results
- Manages complexity
- Builds networks
- Collaborates effectively
- Models resiliency

These qualities are specific to the Director of HR role:

- Collaborate with stakeholders to inspire and manage high-performing teams and create a climate where people feel motivated to do their best work to help the organization achieve its objectives.
- Ability to take on new opportunities and tough challenges with a sense of urgency and enthusiasm, navigate through ambiguity, and lead others through periods of change.
- High emotional intelligence and active-listening skills, with the ability to facilitate consensus among diverse viewpoints and promote a solutions-oriented mindset. Skills and experience in leadership development and coaching, talent development, team and organizational effectiveness, change management, recruitment, and design of total rewards programs.
- Ability to work with confidential and/or sensitive information with a high degree of discretion and professionalism.
QUALIFICATIONS OF AN IDEAL CANDIDATE

- Bachelor’s degree and a minimum of 7 years of professional work experience in the field of HR in positions of progressive responsibility, including 3 or more years of management experience, or a combination of equivalent experience and training. HR certification/s is a plus.
- Broad HR generalist background and working knowledge of the primary HR practice areas (talent acquisition, organizational design, learning and development, organizational effectiveness, and total rewards).
- Proven track record of supporting a diverse, equitable, and inclusive work environment, demonstrating a high degree of cultural competency and building productive working relationships.
- Ability to quickly develop an understanding of McKnight’s programs, mission, values, strategic framework, structure, and culture and effectively represent the Foundation to internal and external stakeholders.
- Experience developing, communicating, and implementing policies and procedures that align with a high-trust/high-expectations culture.
- Current knowledge of relevant employment laws at the local, state, and federal levels.
- Ability to effectively lead and manage teams, as well as coach other managers in supervisory skills.
- Familiarity with Human Resources Information System databases and functionality.
- Budget management experience.
- Familiarity with foundations and/or the philanthropic or nonprofit sector is ideal. Experience in both small and medium-sized organizations is a plus.

For more information or to send your credentials, please email jen@ashtalentolutions.com
All inquiries will remain confidential.

The McKnight Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and proudly values diversity.
We encourage candidates of all backgrounds to apply.

Equal Opportunity Employer/Protected Veterans/Individuals with Disabilities

The contractor will not discharge or in any other manner discriminate against employees or applicants because they have inquired about, discussed, or disclosed their own pay or the pay of another employee or applicant. However, employees who have access to the compensation information of other employees or applicants as a part of their essential job functions cannot disclose the pay of other employees or applicants to individuals who do not otherwise have access to compensation information, unless the disclosure is (a) in response to a formal complaint or charge, (b) in furtherance of an investigation, proceeding, hearing, or action, including an investigation conducted by the employer, or (c) consistent with the contractor’s legal duty to furnish information.