

## Position and Candidate Specification



# RUSSELL SAGE FOUNDATION

Russell Sage Foundation

## **President**

**PREPARED BY:**

Anastasia B. Crosswhite

Michele Haertel

Michael Steck

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Established by Margaret Olivia Sage in 1907 for “the improvement of social and living conditions in the United States,” the Russell Sage Foundation (“the Foundation”) is one of the oldest American foundations. In its early years, the Foundation undertook major projects in low-income housing, urban planning, social work, and labor reform. Today, the Foundation primarily supports empirical research across the social sciences, addressing issues of inequality in the United States with a larger goal of diagnosing social problems and improving social policies. It hosts visiting scholars, funds researchers at other institutions, supports programs intended to develop new generations of social scientists, and disseminates social science research.

As part of its efforts, the Foundation:

- Invites individual scholars and collaborative groups working in areas of foundation interest to participate in the foundation's [Visiting Scholar Program](#) to pursue their research and writing projects;
- Provides support for scholars at other institutions to pursue research projects that advance the Foundation's [research programs](#);
- Ensures widespread access to the research that the foundation supports through its own [book and journal publishing program](#);
- Sponsors special seminars and working groups aimed at developing pressing and/or cutting-edge topics in social science;
- [Collaborates with other foundations](#), granting agencies, and academic institutions in studies of social problems.

## FUNDING PRIORITIES, PROGRAMS, AND PUBLISHING

The Foundation funds research projects in four principal programs—[Behavioral Science and Decision Making in Context](#); [the Future of Work](#); [Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration](#); and [Social, Political, and Economic Inequality](#)—and in a number of [special initiatives](#). RSF also hosts [working groups](#) that develop and cultivate original social science research in new or understudied fields. Further, as the principal American foundation devoted exclusively to the social sciences and as one of the few foundations with a regular publishing program, Russell Sage continues to make a substantial contribution to the social science literature. The Foundation publishes books on a wide variety of subjects, with particular emphasis on work related to its programs, and in 2015 launched [RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences](#), a peer-reviewed, open-access journal of original empirical research articles by both established and emerging scholars. RSF publications present the latest in high-quality social science research and are intended to appeal to a broad audience of students, scholars, and policymakers.

## FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- 28 full-time employees
- 18 visiting scholars
- Operating budget (FY24): approx. \$20M
- Endowment: approx. \$400M

For more information about the Russell Sage Foundation, please visit the Foundation’s website at <https://www.russellsage.org>.

As its next President, the Russell Sage Foundation seeks a broadly accomplished scholar with expertise in sociology, economics, psychology, political science, law, history, or related disciplines with the intellectual heft, collaborative curiosity, and administrative acumen to find new and creative ways to deploy social science research in the service of Margaret Olivia Sage's charge "to improve social and living conditions in the United States." The President will develop the Foundation's ongoing research programs, design and launch new research initiatives, build collaborations with other foundations, oversee the operation of the Foundation's visiting scholar program, serve as the publisher of the Foundation's scholarly books and journal publications, and hire, retain, develop and lead the Foundation's staff. The President must elegantly coordinate the interests of the Foundation's many stakeholders and contributors, and work closely with the Board of Trustees who have ultimate fiduciary authority over the direction of the Foundation's programs and the disposition of its resources.

## KEY RELATIONSHIPS

<b>Reports to</b>	Board of Trustees
<b>Direct reports</b>	Foundation Secretary and Senior Program Officer Director of Administration Director of Communications Director of Publications Program Directors (2)
<b>Other key relationships</b>	Current and former visiting scholars Current and former Foundation-affiliated authors Relevant foundation and higher education leaders

## KEY PRIORITIES

- Effectively collaborate with the Board of Trustees on the intellectual vision for the Foundation.
- Oversee the funding, support, and dissemination of top-quality social science research that coheres with the Foundation's mission.
- Thoughtfully engage the Foundation's various stakeholders to determine how the Foundation can encourage its scholars to be increasingly active and impactful in shaping policy.
- Prioritize the Foundation's ongoing efforts to support the careers of the next generation of social science scholars through early career programs aimed at candidates from underrepresented backgrounds and institutions.
- Advance and evolve the Foundation's current partnerships with other foundations and philanthropic organizations to further support timely, cutting-edge social science research.
- Within the Foundation's existing funding priorities and areas of focus, continue to foster increased diversity of grantees and visiting scholars with respect to career stage, gender, geography, ideology, and institutional context.

## IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- A substantial record of scholarship and research related to the foundation's core themes, and a willingness to support and promote work across social science disciplines.
- Demonstrated success as an administrative leader within an academic enterprise or philanthropic setting, ideally with close faculty interaction.
- Proven record of building diverse, equitable, and inclusive teams and working environments.
- Experience communicating and engaging effectively with a wide range of audiences, conveying enthusiasm and excitement both for scholarly inquiry in general and for the mission of the Foundation in particular.
- Prior experience working with a board of directors (or other advisory board) preferred.

## CRITICAL LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

### Strategic Thinking

The President will capitalize on the recent success, stellar reputation, and unique identity of the Foundation to advance its excellence and impact by providing strategic leadership, effectively articulating and executing the Foundation's intellectual vision in partnership with the Board of Trustees. The President will translate a clear vision into an executable strategy and effectively build consensus to support it.

### Collaborating and Influencing

Within a research-intensive organization where people are a critical asset, the President will create conditions where the Foundation's staff, board, visiting scholars, and other key stakeholders can pursue their work with a sense of agency and collegiality. The President will foster a culture of open communication, collaboration, and mentorship, and work to ensure that all members of the Foundation feel aligned with its mission and efforts.

### Operational and People Leadership

The President must provide effective operational oversight and advance the Foundation's goals to address key issues in American society by supporting and championing the work of its scholars and grantees.

## OTHER PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Intellectual breadth and curiosity
- Strong personal connection to the mission of the Foundation
- Unimpeachable integrity

## COMPENSATION RANGE

The Russell Sage Foundation is required to provide a reasonable estimate of the compensation range for the role, and anticipates that the President's annual salary range will likely fall between \$550,000 - \$650,000.

## THE SEARCH PROCESS

The Russell Sage Foundation is eager to receive input that will help it build a pool of talented individuals to consider for the important leadership opportunity. To that end, the Search Committee welcomes comments, inquiries, applications, and nominations, which may be submitted via the confidential search mailbox:

[RussellSageFoundationPresident@SpencerStuart.com](mailto:RussellSageFoundationPresident@SpencerStuart.com).