

MRG Foundation

Igniting social change. Advancing social justice.

This organizational position summary provides a brief overview of the history, recent challenges and opportunities that are critical for prospective applicants to be aware of and to consider in thinking about how their experiences can help meet the needs of the organization and shape MRG's future.

History and Background

MRG Foundation fills a unique niche in the philanthropic landscape of Oregon. MRG is an activist-led, fundraising foundation. Our board, grantmaking committee, staff and donors are, or have been, connected to community organizing and advancing social justice on a wide range of issues that affect Oregonians. This model of partnership between activists and donors focused on grassroots organizing for social justice and racial equity has been the foundation of our approach and organizational culture over the last 42 years.

As a fundraising foundation, our core business model is raising all the money we grant to groups every year. Because of MRG's history and legacy, we bridge wealthy donors and \$5-a-month donors, to be able to give grants of \$5,000 - \$15,000 to groups ranging from first-time startups to groups with a long history but small budget. The heart of our work is in bringing together organizers, activists and donors to make the decisions about our grantmaking and to grow our ability to grant more funds.

Over the past ten years, MRG's programming grew with the Movement Building Fund, a significant gift from a long-time donor, and a partnership with Meyer Memorial Trust in our Capacity Building Initiative (CBI), which boosted our grantmaking resources and underwrote staffing. The spend-down of the Movement Building Fund and ending of the CBI, coinciding with multiple staff transitions during a drastic national, political landscape shift, made an already challenging environment even more difficult to navigate. We are now in a period of returning to operating on our core business model: grantmaking through fundraising and investment income.

We have an experienced interim leadership team that has begun the process of realigning MRG's business model to advance our work under the current conditions. We are strengthening MRG's committee structure (grantmaking, finance, development and events), and we are focusing on broadening and deepening our engagement with MRG's full community – grantees, activists, volunteers, donors and partners. The board has prepared a plan for the onboarding and ongoing support of the new executive director.

The Opportunity

MRG's new executive director will come into a well-established organization that has strong bones, an excellent reputation, courage in facing the current political and economic environment, and resiliency in managing transitions in staff, resources and programs. We benefit from strong partnerships with our activist and donor communities, which are in need of care and cultivation. MRG has a significant endowment, operating reserve and other financial resources to bridge the organization's rebuilding and

position for growth. The organization has some resources to support the strategic planning and organizational development processes needed to identify the most strategic roles for MRG over the next three to five years.

MRG's history of community engagement in the visioning and work of the organization is a cornerstone of our ability to be effective over time. The opportunities are plentiful and there are many willing partners to help shape the future of this special organization.