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Program Officer, Invention Education

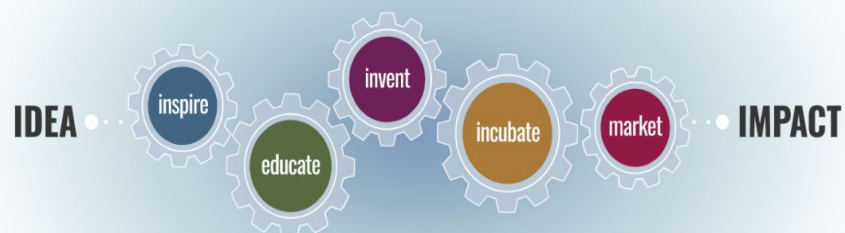
Position Specification | January 2023



The Opportunity

The Program Officer (PO) will join the [Lemelson Foundation](#) (the Foundation)'s [Invention Education](#) team, which supports efforts to equip primary, secondary, and college students with the invention and problem-solving skills and mindsets needed to build and thrive in an innovation economy. The PO will work with the team's Senior Program Officer (SPO) to advance the Invention Education Program's national and statewide (Oregon) goals, and contribute to the Foundation's overall strategy. The PO will assume responsibility for projects and initiatives that support the development and integration of in-school invention education opportunities, especially for Black and Latinx students during middle school and high school, in the transition to college, and throughout their undergraduate years. The PO will contribute to the ongoing development of the Program's strategy, and will join the Senior Program Officer (SPO) in implementing that strategy together with grantees, funding partners, and community members. The PO will share responsibility with the SPO to develop, manage, and monitor a portfolio of grants and program related activities, as well as other non-financial activities such as convenings and public events, in support of this and other Program and Foundation strategies. The PO will be expected to apply technical and domain expertise in the evaluation of grant making opportunities, and in the ongoing support of grantees. The PO will serve as a thought leader and spokesperson for Foundation priorities in education, and as an advocate for the power of invention education to improve lives.

The PO will report to the Executive Director and work closely with Foundation colleagues, advisors, and Board members.





Role and Responsibilities



Culture and performance

- a. Participate in the Foundation's evaluation and communication initiatives; engage with Foundation colleagues and partners to develop, understand, and communicate the impact of its collective portfolio;
- b. Contribute to strategic planning and other Foundation-wide initiatives, including work to make the Foundation increasingly accountable to its values of equity, justice, and inclusion;
- c. Contribute to the Foundation's culture of 'inquiry, learning, and collaboration'; cultivate an organizational culture in which timely, accurate, and meaningful information is shared by and accessible to all;
- d. Participate in refining and implementing operational processes especially as they relate to grantmaking and management.



Organizational Leadership

- a. Support the development and implementation of a grantmaking strategy for the Invention Education Program, leveraging the Foundation's historic investments and extensive knowledge about how to cultivate and support inventors and educators; lead in the development, integration, and implementation of a component priority to increase access to and participation in invention education opportunities for Black and Latinx middle and high school students;
- b. Serve as a resource both to Foundation staff, board and grantees, and on their behalf, concerning primary through secondary education and youth engagement; initiate, manage and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with relevant experts and communities;
- c. Represent the Foundation's interests, affirm its reputation, and enhance its credibility among current and potential partners in the philanthropic and grantee communities, in Oregon (the geographic focus of the Foundation's investments in the high school to college pathway, comprising about 25% of the PO's portfolio) and throughout the United States.



Portfolio Management

- a. Build, direct, and manage an annual portfolio of complex grants and contracts;
- b. Collaborate with fellow program officers on the Invention Education team and in other program areas to identify and develop emerging and potential opportunities for portfolio alignment, integration, and mutual advancement;
- c. Assist grantees to access networks, funding, data, and other resources and opportunities to enhance their relevant capacities and capabilities, including their ability to provide quantitative and qualitative data relevant to the Foundation's theory of change and impact.



Qualifications

The Lemelson Foundation welcomes expressions of interest from candidates with the expertise and ability to deliver against the above responsibilities, and has identified the following characteristics as indicative of the abilities, aptitudes, and dispositions that will make for success in this role:

- 10+ years' professional experience with one or more complex organizations and organizational networks or systems;
- 5+ years' working on issues in one or more of the following areas: primary or secondary public education; youth development; youth engagement and /or entrepreneurship; educational equity; invention education; STEM/STEAM education; educational philanthropy;
- Experience building and running complex and collaborative programs or initiatives;
- Experience contributing to organizational strategy, learning, and evaluation;
- Record of publication, invited engagement, and / or public speaking in areas of relevant expertise;
- Conversant with the history of race and education in the United States, its legacy and contemporary manifestations;
- Experience as an active member or partner of one or more Black or Latinx organizations or initiatives;
- Enthusiasm for the role of invention, education and entrepreneurship in building an innovation economy in which all can thrive.

Prior grantmaking experience is not a requirement for this position; interested individuals with alternative relevant qualifications are encouraged to apply, and to explain in their cover letters how their specific experience may have prepared them to fulfill the responsibilities of the role.



Invention is critical to the future we all want



Benefits and Conditions

The salary range for this position is \$140,000-160,000.

The Lemelson Foundation offers employees an exceptionally generous benefits package including fully paid health care coverage for employees and dependents, a 403(b) plan with a generous employer match, and 20 paid vacation days per calendar year during the first year of employment, increasing over time.

While employees are welcome to work in the office on any day of the week, The Foundation has official 'Core Days' (administrative support present) on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Employees are expected to be in the office 6-10 Core Days per month (approximately 27-45% of a typical 22 working-day month). Relocation assistance will be provided should the successful candidate reside outside the Portland, Oregon area.





About The Lemelson Foundation

The Lemelson Foundation uses the power of invention to improve lives.

Established by prolific US inventor Jerome Lemelson and his wife Dorothy in the early 1990s, and guided today by the Lemelson family, The Foundation believes invention can solve many of the biggest economic and social challenges of our time. A private philanthropy located in Oregon and operating globally, The Lemelson Foundation has assets of approximately \$400 million and an annual budget of approximately \$20 million. All told, the Foundation has provided over \$300 million in grants and other investments to hundreds of organizations around the world. The Foundation approaches its work to strengthen the invention ecosystem and empower inventors to solve the biggest global challenges and opportunities of our time, guided by a three-part framework called Impact Inventing:

- Inventions should have positive social impact;
- Inventions should be environmentally responsible—from the materials and processes used through final products that go to market; and,
- Business models should become financially self-sustaining.

The Foundation promotes a culture of collaboration and continuous learning, and operates its programs and initiatives through two strategically focused teams: Invention and Entrepreneurship, and Invention Education. Its flexible approach and entrepreneurial environment has helped The Foundation's small team (10-15) to have an outsized impact in the social landscape of invention.

How to Apply



The Lemelson Foundation has retained OE Consulting to support this search.

In order to apply, please submit a CV and thoughtful cover letter [here](#) that explains your interest and addresses your relevant qualifications. Applicants may expect an email from OE Consulting confirming receipt. Completed applications will consist of a cover letter and CV, incomplete applications will not be considered.

Applications will be accepted through Wednesday, 1 March 2023. Finalists will be invited to participate in on-site interviews during the week of 10 April 2023. The Lemelson Foundation expects to extend and finalize an offer of employment by the end of April, 2023.

The Lemelson Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and seeks to build a diverse team. Candidates with historically underrepresented identities and affiliations are encouraged to apply.

Please refrain from contacting The Lemelson Foundation about this opportunity, and direct any questions to OE Consulting at (Lemelson@oeconsulting.com). Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis.



OE Consulting provides purpose driven companies, philanthropies, and nonprofits with talent and organizational effectiveness solutions.