

AMERICAN ACADEMY IN ROME

Manager of Foundation Relations and Development Strategy

Location: New York, New York

Reports to: Associate Director of Development

Founded in 1894, the American Academy in Rome is a leading American overseas center for independent study and advanced research in the arts and humanities. Each year, the Academy awards the Rome Prize to approximately 30 artists and scholars who join a dynamic, transdisciplinary residential community on the Academy's eleven-acre campus on the Janiculum Hill—enriched further by invited Residents and Visiting Artists and Scholars, reaching a community of approximately 100 at any given time. Fellows and Residents have gone on to earn 79 Pulitzer Prizes, 63 MacArthur Fellowships, 5 Nobel Prizes, and 5 Pritzker Prizes, among many other distinctions.

The Opportunity

The Manager of Foundation Relations and Development Strategy is a senior fundraising professional responsible for developing and implementing strategies to secure philanthropic support from private foundations, family foundations, and selected individual donors. This position serves as the organization's lead strategist for foundation fundraising while also supporting major gift and institutional fundraising efforts through prospect research, proposal development, grant management, and fundraising planning.

Reporting to the Associate Director of Development, the Manager will identify and cultivate foundation prospects, develop compelling funding opportunities, prepare high-quality grant proposals and donor materials, and ensure timely grant reporting and compliance. The position works closely with senior leadership, program staff, trustees, and fundraising colleagues to develop funding strategies that align organizational priorities with donor interests.

Success in this role will be defined by increased foundation revenue, a growing pipeline of prospective funders, successful proposal submissions, strong grant stewardship and reporting practices, and the development of strategic fundraising initiatives that support the Academy's long-term philanthropic goals.

Key Responsibilities

Working closely with the Associate Director of Development, the position will take the lead on:

Foundation Relations Strategy

- Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to secure support from private, family, and corporate foundations.
- Build and maintain a robust pipeline of foundation prospects capable of supporting general operations, programs, and strategic initiatives.
- Monitor trends in philanthropy and foundation giving to identify new funding opportunities.
- Develop annual goals, funding priorities, and foundation engagement strategies aligned with organizational objectives.
- Maintain strong relationships with foundation staff, trustees, and philanthropic advisors.

Prospect Research and Development Strategy

- Lead prospect research efforts for foundation, individual, and institutional fundraising initiatives.
- Identify, evaluate, and qualify prospective funders using research tools, wealth screening resources, public filings, and philanthropic databases.
- Prepare donor and foundation profiles, briefing materials, cultivation strategies, and prospect analyses for senior leadership and trustees.
- Work closely with advancement staff to support major gift and campaign planning.
- Assist in developing long-range fundraising strategies and priorities based on donor interests, organizational needs, and philanthropic trends.

Proposal Development

- Serve as the primary author and coordinator of foundation proposals, letters of inquiry, concept papers, and grant applications.
- Develop compelling funding narratives that clearly articulate the Academy's mission, impact, programs, and funding needs.
- Collaborate with programmatic, financial, and executive staff to gather information required for proposals and funding requests.

- Support the preparation of customized proposals and briefing materials for individual donor solicitations and major gift opportunities.
- Ensure that all submissions meet funder requirements, deadlines, and organizational standards.
- Maintain a library of proposal language, organizational information, budgets, and supporting materials.

Grant Tracking and Reporting

- Establish and manage systems for tracking proposals, grants, reporting requirements, deadlines, and funding outcomes.
- Maintain accurate records of all foundation and grant activity within the organization's CRM and grant management systems.
- Coordinate with Finance and program staff to collect outcome data, financial information, and program results required for reporting.
- Prepare and submit timely, accurate, and compelling grant reports.
- Monitor grant compliance and ensure fulfillment of all donor and foundation requirements.
- Produce regular reports on proposal activity, grant status, funding forecasts, and fundraising performance.

Foundation Stewardship and Relationship Management

- Develop stewardship plans to strengthen relationships with foundation funders and institutional partners.
- Coordinate site visits, meetings, briefings, and other engagement opportunities for foundation representatives.
- Ensure donors and funders receive meaningful updates on program outcomes and organizational impact.
- Work with leadership to provide thoughtful and personalized stewardship communications.
- Track relationship activity and identify opportunities for renewed or increased support.

Fundraising Operations and Collaboration

- Partner with Development colleagues to ensure alignment among foundation relations, major gifts, annual giving, and special events strategies.
- Collaborate with organizational leadership to identify funding priorities and opportunities for philanthropic investment.
- Assist in preparing fundraising materials for trustees, senior leadership, and volunteer committees.
- Work closely with Communications, Finance, Programs, and Executive Leadership to develop consistent fundraising messaging and reporting.
- Contribute to campaign planning and strategic fundraising initiatives as assigned.

Institutional Leadership

- Serve as a key member of the Development team, contributing to organizational fundraising strategy and planning.
- Provide insights and recommendations based on donor research, philanthropic trends, and funding opportunities.
- Help foster a culture of philanthropy throughout the organization.
- Represent the Academy professionally within philanthropic and nonprofit communities.
- Support special projects and strategic initiatives as assigned.

Qualifications

Required

- Bachelor's degree required.
- Minimum of 5–7 years of progressively responsible experience in foundation relations, grant writing, development strategy, or institutional fundraising.
- Demonstrated success securing significant foundation and institutional grants.
- Exceptional writing, editing, and storytelling abilities, including extensive experience developing persuasive proposals and reports.
- Strong analytical and research skills with experience utilizing donor research and prospect management tools.
- Experience managing complex proposal calendars, reporting requirements, and grant portfolios.

- Knowledge of fundraising best practices, donor stewardship, philanthropy trends, and nonprofit compliance requirements.
- Experience with CRM and fundraising databases, including Salesforce or comparable systems.
- Ability to translate complex programs and initiatives into compelling funding opportunities.
- Excellent project management and organizational skills.
- Strong interpersonal, communication, and diplomatic skills, along with a sense of humor.
- Flexibility to participate in calls in off-hours to accommodate colleagues in Rome, and work some evenings and weekends as required by events and donor activities.
- Ability to manage multiple deadlines and priorities with accuracy and attention to detail.
- Commitment to ethical fundraising practices and donor-centered philanthropy.

Preferred

- Advanced degree or CFRE certification a plus.

Candidate Profile

The ideal candidate will be a strategic thinker, skilled writer, and intellectually curious fundraiser who enjoys connecting organizational priorities with philanthropic opportunities. They will possess exceptional attention to detail, strong analytical abilities, and a collaborative approach to relationship-building. They will be resourceful, proactive, and highly organized, with the ability to manage multiple complex projects while maintaining a focus on long-term fundraising success and mission impact.

This role is particularly well suited for a fundraising professional who excels at turning ideas into compelling funding opportunities, translating organizational impact into persuasive donor communications, and building the systems and strategies necessary to support sustained philanthropic growth.

Compensation & Location

Compensation: \$80,000-\$90,000

Salary is based on a range of factors that include relevant experience, knowledge, skills, other job-related qualifications.

Based in our Chelsea offices, New York. Our hybrid work model allows employees to optionally work from home on Mondays and Fridays.

To Apply

Candidates should submit a one-page letter outlining their interest in the Academy and the contributions they expect to make to its mission, along with a current CV. Applications should be submitted to devcareers@aarome.org with the subject line “FOUNDATION RELATIONS” and will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

The American Academy in Rome is an Equal Opportunity Employer. AAR believes that a diverse community makes for a stronger institution, and actively encourages applications from candidates of all backgrounds, identities, and lived experiences. We are committed to a hiring process that is equitable, inclusive, and free from bias, and to building a leadership community that reflects the breadth of the artistic and scholarly traditions we support.