



WashU

Boyden Executive Search ContactWendy Wilsker | 781.572.5703 | wwilsker@boyden.comShaké Sulikyan | 508.410.1811 | ssulikyan@boyden.com**Position Summary**

Washington University's University Advancement seeks a strategic and collaborative advancement professional to lead the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts Philanthropic Strategy team in the position of Executive Director of Advancement.

University Advancement strives to advance the institution's mission by creating a culture of philanthropy among alumni, students, faculty, and friends. With the 2025 public launch of the With You Campaign, WashU is ambitiously pursuing solutions to the world's greatest challenges—to make a more promising future for all. The Sam Fox School—which includes art, architecture, and the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum—is uniquely positioned to advance these campaign themes as a leader in art and design education. As evidenced by the work of its students, faculty, and alumni, the school is committed to advancing these fields through innovative research and creative practice; excellence in teaching; a world-class university art museum; and a deep commitment to addressing today's social and environmental challenges.

The Executive Director will serve as the chief strategist for Sam Fox School advancement and oversee a team of advancement professionals who serve as subject matter experts with the objective of driving solicitation, cultivation, engagement, and stewardship strategies for Sam Fox School fundraising priorities. The team advises gift officers and oversees targeted strategic stewardship, engagement, and volunteer opportunities designed to build the Sam Fox School donor pipeline.

The Executive Director will set the fundraising strategy for the school, working directly with the Dean of the Sam Fox School and other academic leaders within the school, as well as University Advancement leadership, to identify and develop strategic funding opportunities and goals. The Executive Director will oversee the Dean's portfolio of prospects and engage with key donors and volunteers to increase engagement with and philanthropic support for Washington University.

The Executive Director will report to the Associate Vice Chancellor of Advancement for Philanthropic Strategy, and partner closely with the Sam Fox School's leadership and the University Advancement senior leadership team. The incumbent will sit on the Philanthropic Strategy senior team.

Location: St. Louis, MO

Department: University Advancement

Primary Duties & Responsibilities**Lead the Comprehensive Advancement Strategy for the Sam Fox School:**

- Serve as a strategic advisor to the Dean related to all advancement activities. Serve on the Dean's cabinet and senior leadership team, as requested.
- Establish and maintain strong and effective working relationships with Sam Fox School faculty and staff. Act as the lead contact for all Sam Fox colleagues with University Advancement.
- Oversee the Sam Fox School prospect pool development and management, in collaboration with University Advancement colleagues.

- Supported by Sam Fox School strategy officers, manage the Dean's caseload and ensure the execution of appropriate prospect strategy.
- Direct the volunteer strategy for boards and committees, such as the school's National Council and Eliot Society Committee, and ensure engagement opportunities support annual fund goals and align with Advancement and school priorities.
- Responsible for setting appropriate fundraising goals, and overseeing gift tables and progress reporting, in collaboration with University Advancement colleagues.
- Support relationships across University Advancement for the Sam Fox School.

Advance Sam Fox School Funding Priorities:

- Advise and partner with Sam Fox School leadership and faculty to identify school-specific fundraising priorities and related giving opportunities.
- Develop a deep understanding of key areas of distinction for the School, as well as the University, and campaign priorities.
- Work with school-based stakeholders to be kept informed of timely developments that may impact on Advancement activities.
- Review collateral, case statements, opportunity menus, proposals, talking points and other school-specific resources for approval and alignment to School and Advancement standards.
- Understand and apply University and Advancement-wide policies that impact giving opportunities and proposals.

Develop and Execute Donor Strategies:

- Lead the development of cultivation and solicitation strategies to build support for Sam Fox School priorities and the University's campaign initiatives.
- Collaborate with generalist gift officers to develop individualized strategies for prospects that align to school priorities.
- Guide gift officers through scripting, consultation, and offering curated resources tailored to specific programs or initiatives.
- Provide guidance and support to the Sam Fox School strategy officers, as needed.
- Partner with Principal Gifts to develop and execute strategies for prospects.
- Serve as a Sam Fox School subject matter expert and/or proxy for the dean in donor meetings. Travel and attend events and meetings with the Dean, if needed.
- Collaborate with the Corporate and Foundations Relations team in executing comprehensive strategies for corporate and foundation support for the school.
- Attend and staff key academic and school events as a representative of University Advancement.

Serve as Subject Matter Leader of Sam Fox School for University Advancement:

- Partner with Individual Giving Executive Directors to ensure they have effective school-based strategies for gift opportunities.
- Support unit-based training for gift officers.
- Serve as liaison for principal gift activity.
- Oversee fund administration for the Sam Fox School in collaboration with the Donor Relations team and supported by the Sam Fox School stewardship officers.
- Navigate and manage the development of proposals and gift agreements in collaboration with the appropriate WashU and UA partners that support the Sam Fox School; advise gift officers on donor expectations.

Oversee Team Operations:

- Lead the Sam Fox School Advancement team in the Philanthropic Strategy vertical: set performance goals, provide mentorship, guidance, and regular feedback.

- Develop and manage budgets for unit activity.
- Develop and manage annual operational plans.
- Manage relationships with units across University Advancement; drive accountability for agreed-upon goals and deliverables.

Performs other duties as assigned.

Required Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree.
- Eight years of professional experience in advancement, fundraising, or a related field.
- Demonstrated record of significant achievement in major gifts fundraising, including success cultivating, soliciting, and closing transformational gifts.
- Proven ability to develop and execute sophisticated fundraising strategies for planning, implementing, and managing complex gift opportunities.
- Ability to collaborate effectively with diverse constituencies across a complex organizational environment.

Preferred Qualifications

- Five years of successful fundraising experience with a demonstrated track record of securing major gifts or comparable fundraising achievements.
- Five years of progressively responsible experience in advancement, fundraising, and fundraising management.
- Ten years of leadership experience, including managing teams, developing talent, and driving organizational fundraising success.

Skills

- Accountability.
- Analytical thinking.
- Budget management.
- Confidentiality.
- Cross-functional collaboration.
- Proficiency with Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems.
- Commitment to ethical fundraising practices.
- Fundraising.
- Fundraising strategy development.
- Goal setting.
- Highly developed interpersonal skills.
- Leadership.
- Knowledge of legal and regulatory compliance requirements.
- Major gifts fundraising.
- Meeting organization and coordination.
- People management
- Relationship building.
- Strategic planning.
- Team accountability.
- Team goal setting.
- Team leadership.
- Ability to work independently.
- Workplace productivity and organizational effectiveness.

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About Boyden Global Executive Search

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