



**Request for Proposal
To support Trustee Search and Interview Process
For the Blandin Foundation Board**

Release Date: March 4, 2022

Due Date: March 25, 2022

Overview

The Blandin Foundation is seeking to elect 3 new Trustees from rural Minnesota based on candidate criteria and timeline established by the Board of Trustees. The Foundation wishes to retain the assistance of a search firm skilled in professional/executive searches to help coordinate and conduct a defined and limited scope of services related to the search. The firm should have demonstrated knowledge and connections to the Itasca County area and rural Minnesota beyond the metropolitan Twin Cities. The Executive Committee of the Board will oversee and guide the search process and Carolyn Olson, Executive Administrative Assistant, will serve in a coordinating role and as the point of contact.

About Blandin Foundation

Blandin Foundation is a private foundation based in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. The Foundation was founded by Charles K. Blandin in 1941, and is the state's largest rural-based and rural-focused foundation. The mission of Blandin Foundation is to *connect, fund, and advocate for ideas and people to inspire resourcefulness and move rural places forward*. Blandin Foundation provides grants to our home giving area (defined as the geographic area containing Itasca County plus Hill City, Remer, Blackduck, and Northome, Minnesota) and other areas of rural Minnesota. Based on donor intent and court order, the Foundation must distribute at least 60% of all grants for the benefit of the home giving area. The Foundation also conducts some of its own programmatic work in rural leadership development and public policy.

The Blandin Foundation is the sole beneficiary of a Trust established by C.K. Blandin currently valued at approximately \$465.3 million. The projected Foundation budget for 2022 is approximately \$22.9 million, of which approximately \$14.7 million is budgeted for grants and scholarships.

More background about the Foundation is available on our website at <http://blandinfoundation.org/>.

Attached to this request for proposals is a copy of our proposed process/timeline for background information.

Scope of Services

Trustees and Staff intend to oversee the process, timeline, and initial communications about the search. Trustees and Staff have extensive relationships, history, and knowledge about the local area. The Foundation also intends to communicate this opportunity publicly, and there will be public relations matters to be considered. The Executive Committee will interview final candidates based on recommendations of the search firm. The full board will vote on the final candidates at their meeting on September 18-20, 2022.

Timeline:

- May 20 – Search firm provides candidate recommendations to Executive Committee
- May 26 – Executive Committee meets with the search firm to select candidates for interview
- August – Selected candidates will be interviewed by the Executive Committee
- September 18-20 – full board makes final selection

The services desired from a search firm include the following:

- Initial work and conversation with the Executive Committee and Staff to gain deeper understanding of the following: the Foundation's relationship with our home community, Foundation values and culture, search process/timeline/roles, trustee role/expectations/compensation, desired candidate qualifications and experience, communication expectations between search firm and candidates, interview process, and applicant information desired.
- General advice and counsel regarding the search throughout the process.
- Provide biweekly status updates to the Executive Administrative Assistant through the duration of search.
- Manage the applicant recruitment process
- Receive all applications and related documents from candidates.
- Conduct in-depth reviews of candidates' experience, knowledge and skills using criteria established by the Executive Committee.
- Provide Staff with written list of all applicants and their contact information for future consideration after search process is completed.
- Select the candidates believed to best fit the needs of the organization based on desired experience, knowledge, and skills (top 12-15 candidates approximately), and present a slate of candidates and rationale to the Executive Committee.
- Contact those candidates selected by the Executive Committee to schedule interviews.
- Advise the Executive Committee on interview strategies, techniques, and questions as needed, and assist with on-site coordination of the interview process.
- Arrange for and/or conduct finalists' background checks as directed by the Executive Committee.
- Maintain respectful and timely communication with all candidates as to their status throughout the process.
- Assist with any after-interview communication with final candidates if requested/as directed by the Executive Committee.

Proposal Format and Requirements

Proposer should provide a written proposal indicating interest, availability, and capacity to provide the services described above as well as projected fees for such services. Proposal should include:

- A brief history of your firm and related experience.
- Names and professional information for any personnel that would be assigned to this search, including relevant education and experience. Please include/describe any experience relevant to non-profit searches, board/trustee searches, rural Minnesota experience/knowledge, and experience with board governance and cultural competence.
- A list of 3-5 past clients of the firm to serve as references.
- A detailed list of services and anything related to the firm's philosophy or approach to applicant review and interviewing that would be pertinent to consider.
- Proposed cost of listed services.

Please submit your proposal via email to Carolyn Olson, Executive Administrative Assistant, cbolson@blandinfoundation.org by **March 25, 2022**. Questions about this project can also be directed to Carolyn via email.

Criteria for Selection of the Firm

The Foundation will review proposals and select a firm based on:

- The experience and expertise of designated personnel overall and especially related to experience with rural communities, cultural competence, board member/trustee searches, and non-profit/philanthropic search experience.
- Responses from references related to the expertise, professionalism, and client satisfaction.
- Willingness to gain a deeper understanding of the Foundation's culture, values, and work in order to inform candidate recommendations and interview process suggestions.
- Specific services offered and the associated costs.
- Availability to travel to Grand Rapids, Minnesota, to facilitate and support interview process.

The Foundation will notify all firms submitting a proposal whether or not they have been selected. A contract will be required between the Foundation and selected firm.