

# VIEWCREST ADVISORS

Director of Learning and Evaluation

Barr Foundation

Position Description

2017



**THE ORGANIZATION:**

The Barr Foundation's mission is to invest in human, natural, and cultural potential, serving as thoughtful stewards and catalysts. As stewards, Barr nurtures and enhances vital community assets. As catalysts, the Foundation cultivates and advances the breakthrough ideas that will shape our collective future. Barr focuses on achieving impact as a constructive partner, willing to exercise leadership. Based in Boston, the Foundation focuses regionally, and selectively engages nationally, working in partnership with nonprofits, foundations, the public sector, and civic and business leaders to elevate the arts and creative expression, advance solutions for climate change, and expand educational opportunity. One of the largest private foundations in New England, with assets of more than \$1.6 billion, Barr's 2016 grantmaking of \$73.5 million represented the largest authorization to date. The Foundation's trustees have approved a further 9% increase for 2017, to a grants budget of \$80 million.

A set of core values defined by the Barr Foundation's founders express beliefs about what constitutes effective philanthropy and guide how the Foundation carries out its philanthropic mission. The Foundation is committed to strive for excellence, act with humility, adopt a long-term perspective, and embrace risk. Additionally, while each program is guided by distinct priorities and goals, Barr embraces a common set of approaches in all aspects of its work, namely flexibility and nimbleness, a broad range of tools, knowledge and learning, openness and transparency, and active collaboration.

For more information on the Barr Foundation, please visit: <https://www.barrfoundation.org/>.

**THE OPPORTUNITY:**

As a key complement to its bold, revised strategies, and an expression of its values, including learning and transparency, Barr Foundation will be deepening its investments in learning and evaluation. Over the past six months, the Foundation consulted with grantees, partners, colleagues, and national experts to understand current practices, opportunities, and needs, and frame a set of goals, principles, and next steps. To lead this work, the Foundation is hiring a Director of Learning and Evaluation, who will report to the Vice President, Roger Nozaki.

The overall goal for evaluation and learning is to maximize the impact of the Foundation's resources over time. The Director of Learning and Evaluation role is a compelling opportunity for a consultative, rigorous and adaptable professional who will work with Foundation leadership and program teams to develop and implement strategies to:

- Invest selectively in evaluations at the grant, Foundation, and field levels to assess impact and identify the elements that led to impact.
- Develop and support structures and opportunities for learning at the Foundation and in the field.

The Foundation will also make targeted investments in capacity building at Barr and in the field, where it identifies particular needs and opportunities.

Three principles will guide this important work –all efforts must be:

- *Meaningful*: Designed to produce credible information on critical questions that advance Barr's understanding in significant ways; inclusive of learning from success and failure.
- *Actionable*: Focused on questions and information that can be applied directly to increase the impact of an intervention or strategy.
- *Manageable*: Structured to maximize learning while minimizing the burden on Barr or grantees, requiring clear focus and utilizing methods appropriate for the scale and complexity of the work being evaluated.

**THE ROLE:****Learning and Evaluation Strategy**

- In partnership with the Vice President, develop and refine the vision, principles, strategy, frameworks, and structures for learning and evaluation at the Barr Foundation;
- Stay abreast of and contribute to effective learning and evaluation practices in the broader field;
- Partner with the Director of Communications and Program Leads to identify, strategize, and seize targeted opportunities to share learning and evaluation findings publicly, for the benefit of Foundation partners and the broader fields in which Barr works.

**Learning and Evaluation Approaches**

- Provide consultation to Program Leads to develop hypotheses, learning questions, and indicators and metrics for strategies and initiatives;
- Work with Program Leads to identify priorities for in-depth learning and evaluation at the grant, field, or Foundation level; partner on the development of strategies, approaches, and plans for learning/evaluation;
- Support program teams to ensure that learning and evaluation results are considered and integrated into ongoing efforts as well as future strategy and program planning;
- Identify and cultivate partnerships with external evaluators and resources that are situationally tailored to Barr's program areas and the level of rigor required.

**Systems and Capacity Building**

- Build the capacity of Barr's program teams and grantees through a range of approaches, which may include individual and group training, outside workshops, consultants, etc.;
- Partner with the Operations/Grants Management team to create and support internal structures and systems for cross-program sharing; and develop specific tools and technology supports that anchor a culture of learning, both organizationally and within each program;
- Make targeted investments in capacity building in the field, where opportunities are identified.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Seven or more years of experience within high impact, data-driven social sector or philanthropic organizations; understands multiple approaches to develop of social-sector evidence.
- An organizational learning and effectiveness orientation, with a track record of developing and implementing processes that advance rigor and learning across an organization or team.
- Experience working collaboratively with others across an organization.
- Demonstrated capacity of translating ideas into action.
- Strong project management experience; able to simultaneously facilitate the work of multiple teams.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills; ability to distill and explain complex concepts.
- A personal style characterized by humility, self-awareness, accessibility, intellectual curiosity and a genuine team orientation; must be a self-starter who is largely self-sufficient in terms of administrative support.
- Ideally brings experience of diverse social sector and philanthropic programs.
- An advanced degree is preferred.

*The Barr Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and seeks a diverse pool of candidates in all of its searches.*

For more information, or to apply, please contact Viewcrest Advisors or submit resume and cover letter (in MS Word format), to: [apply@viewcrestadvisors.com](mailto:apply@viewcrestadvisors.com)