

NATHAN CUMMINGS FOUNDATION REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Executive Summary:

Nathan Cummings Foundation (“NCF”) seeks the services of an experienced executive search firm to lead the search for candidates for NCF’s Board of Trustees and to support the Board in building a pipeline of future candidates.

About the Foundation:

Nathan Cummings Foundation is a multigenerational family foundation, rooted in the Jewish tradition of social justice. NCF is working to help create a more just, vibrant, sustainable, and democratic society. NCF envisions a future where all people, in body and spirit, breathe freely, care for each other, and flourish in just, regenerative, and loving communities. They are guided by their core values of justice and equity, interdependence, learning and listening, courageous transformation, and integrity as they partner with social movements and organizations that offer creative, catalytic solutions to NCF’s interconnected goals of racial, economic, and environmental justice (REEJ).

With a remote-first work environment and headquarters in New York City, NCF holds approximately \$450 million in assets, has an annual budget of about \$25 million, and currently has a staff of 21. While NCF’s work is primarily concentrated in the United States, with a concentration in the U.S. South, it also supports efforts of visionary leaders and organizations that address inequalities and build capacity for a better future in Israel-Palestine. More information about Nathan Cummings Foundation can be found at nathancummings.org

In 2023, NCF adopted its five-year strategic plan. Under this plan, NCF uses a totality-of-assets approach, aligning resources – grants, investments, leadership, influence, and more – to advance racial, economic, and environmental justice. By leveraging every tool at their disposal, NCF seeks to support transformative change led by those most proximate to the challenges. NCF is currently in year four of this plan and is on track to adopt an updated plan by the end of 2027.

Scope of Work:

NCF seeks a firm that can provide simplified, flexible approaches for this engagement to meet its unique needs. The retained firm will lead the end-to-end logistics of a search and work in partnership with the Independent Trustee Search Committee (ITSC, an ad hoc committee of the Board), the Board Chair, the CEO, the Governance Committee Chair, and assigned staff. NCF expects a process involving the following high-level milestones:

- Convene the ITSC to confirm a job description (pre-drafted by staff and the ITSC) and priorities in the experience and backgrounds of candidates.
- Establish a process to manage internal candidate referrals.
- Review candidates with the ITSC using a shared evaluation rubric tied to the job description, to align on priority candidates.
- Establish interview meetings, develop protocols, and provide guidance on the interview process.

- Manage communications with candidates until the selection and election of trustees occurs.
- Conduct background checks on selected candidates.
- Provide a closing report and recommendations for managing a candidate pipeline.

NCF seeks search firms that can speak to the quality, breadth, and depth of their candidate networks, with a particular focus on candidates based in or with deep roots in the U.S. South, reflecting the geographic concentration of NCF's programmatic partnerships. NCF seeks candidates whose backgrounds reflect the socio-economic diversity of the communities most affected by racial, economic, and environmental injustice, including candidates with lived experience navigating the issues NCF's mission addresses.

As a foundation rooted in REEJ, NCF extends our commitment to equity in how we build our Board, welcoming candidates of all backgrounds and evaluating them without regard to any characteristic protected by applicable law.

The selected candidates could be elected as early as November 2026, pending confirmation of a final timeline.

Proposal Requirements:

Background Information

- Describe your firm, its history, and its place in the market.
- Describe the differentiating features or competitive advantages of your firm.
- Describe your firm's relevant practice experience in a board member search, in particular, where your firm has worked for other philanthropic/family foundations.
- Share biographical information for any key personnel assigned to the engagement.
- Describe your firm's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Methodology and Process

- Provide a written narrative describing your approach to this search and the proposed process, including a projected timeline for completion and proposed project management.
- Describe your firm's approach to identifying candidates based in or with connections to the U.S. South.
- Detail how your firm conducts background checks, including both criminal and civil databases.
- Describe your firm's standard candidate confidentiality and non-disclosure terms, and your process for identifying and disclosing conflicts of interest.

Fee Structure

- Prepare a proposed budget to execute the scope of the search, including an estimate of any reimbursable expenses.
 - NB: NCF has allocated up to \$75,000 to this project.

References:

Provide at least three references for projects of similar size, scope, and complexity, preferably with private foundations and/or organizations in the field of social justice. Each reference should include a brief project description, project date, and contact information.

Selection Timeline:

July 22: Launch/Distribute RFP

August 10: Proposals due
August 17-31: Interview finalists
September 1: Search firm selected
Week of Sept. 14: Anticipated first meeting with the ITSC

Proposal Submission: Please submit your proposal in electronic format (PDF suggested) to Katherine White, Board Liaison, by August 10, 2026, to: ncfpresidentsoffice@nathancummings.org.