Chief Development Officer

The Opportunity

Facing History and Ourselves uses lessons of history to challenge teachers and their students to stand up to bigotry and hate. For more than 40 years, Facing History has provided a transformative experience for educators and their students, and the mindsets and skills the organization fosters — empathy for others, critical thinking, moral reasoning, and sense of agency — help create a world guided by knowledge and compassion.

The world is in dire need of this kind of education. This position affords the opportunity for an experienced and innovative leader to help bring Facing History to the next level of impact through the growth and stewardship of the organization’s constituency and donor base.

Facing History believes that in today's society, it is especially vital that educators become more confident and skilled in teaching the legacies of pivotal moments in history and learning to address them: how to live with and alongside others; how to empathize with people who may have very different lives and experiences from our own; how to deliberate together about the ethics and morals of our decisions; and how to act together for the common good.

To this end, Facing History provides teachers with rich, curated sets of historical materials, and students focus on the rigorous investigation of history, through primary sources, secondary accounts, and literature. Students use the models within history to shape and hone their own ethical decision-making and civic engagement. The organization works principally at the middle and high school level, because adolescent students are ideally situated to develop awareness of how their own beliefs, motivations, and actions have the potential to impact the world around them. The agency and perspective they gain gives young people a lesson that can last a lifetime: namely, that it is their moral obligation to engage civically within society and to treat others humanely and equitably.

Facing History is uniquely located at the intersection of rigorous academics, civic literacy and engagement, moral and ethical reasoning, and social and emotional learning. And the approach is evidence-based: over forty years of studies demonstrate how Facing History classrooms (found in public, private, parochial, and charter schools) are safe spaces where students’ social, emotional, civic, moral, and critical thinking competencies grow.

Nearly 60 percent of Facing History’s work is with schools in underserved urban areas. The problems and issues confronting these urban schools — and, in fact, in all schools — are typically manifestations of larger societal problems related to inequality, racism, and the deterioration of resource-deprived urban areas across the world. Facing History are actively creating future generations of engaged, informed, inclusive, and responsible decision makers who — when faced with injustice, misinformation, and bigotry — will stand up for social justice, equity, and equality.

Facing History today has grown to 9 offices, in the United States, Canada, and the UK, with 175 staff members, and an annual operating budget of approximately $30 million. In addition, Facing History continues to rapidly expand its reach globally, with educational partnerships in countries around the world, including France, Northern Ireland, South Africa, and China. The strategic plan currently in process calls for dramatically increased impact by extending Facing History’s network of teachers, schools, and districts, through strategic partnerships, online tools, and community conversations. In the first two years of the plan, Facing History has doubled its impact from about 50,000 to nearly 100,000 implementing teachers, and the organization is on track to double this scope yet again over the coming three years.

Program and Pedagogy
Each Facing History program — whether integrated into classes of social studies, literature, or used as curriculum for stand-alone electives — is built around a core methodology that helps students explore the complexities of history and human behavior and consider how they can make a difference as engaged moral citizens. Just as Facing History helps individual teachers integrate its programs into their classrooms, the organization does the same on a larger scale with whole-school and district-wide programs.

When Facing History works with an entire school to offer curriculum development, school-wide programming, and staff engagement, Facing History goes beyond the classroom to transform entire schools into communities of respect, empathy, and academic engagement. Facing History’s network of more than 130 “Partner Schools” has found value in a whole-school approach that strengthens school culture and gives teachers and their students a common language to help them identify and discuss these issues — in the classroom, in student advisory, in staff meetings, and in the broader community. The activation of this exceptional network provides an opportunity for profound impact in communities and around the world.

Facing History has brought its entire curriculum online, allowing it to deliver award-winning content through multiple channels. At this time, Facing History has over 3,000 learning objects on its website, and nearly 10,000 pages of web content overall. The organization empowers teachers to use videos, podcasts and other online and offline resources to design more engaging lesson plans and measure classroom effectiveness. Finally, Facing History’s curriculum aligns well with Common Core State Standards and the NCSS’s C3 Framework, and has been customized to meet local, state, and national mandates, and international standards.

The Role

Reporting to and partnering with the President and CEO, the Chief Development Officer (CDO) sets strategy and oversees all development functions for Facing History and Ourselves including individual solicitation, planned giving, corporate and foundation support, annual campaign, endowment, alumni outreach, special campaigns, and stewardship/donor relations.

The CDO oversees a development office of 35 fundraising professionals to ensure that the organization’s ambitious fundraising goals are being met. As a member of the senior management team, the CDO also has a leadership role in addressing issues including but not limited to program development, organizational change, and governance. Facing History thrives through a culture of internal collaboration, and this individual’s leadership must play out as a member of this team.

This individual will also serve as a vocal champion for Facing History. The Chief Development Officer will present articulately to a host of different audiences — including donors, corporate partners, and volunteers, but also educators, policy makers, the news media, and staff — communicating the growing need to support Facing History’s work worldwide.

Key responsibilities for this role include:

Relationships and Influence

- Provide inspiring representation of the organization to governance, individual donors, foundations and corporations, civic and business leadership, educational leaders, and other audiences.
- Collaborate effectively with internal leadership including regional executive directors, program staff, and administrators; create and build appropriate and productive relationships from a development perspective.
Leadership and Strategy

- Provide leadership and oversight for all aspects of the development program including the annual fund, major gifts, gift planning, corporate and foundation support and development operations.
- Develop a strategy and plan for evolving development organizational structures, roles, and tasks to meet the needs of the strategic plan. Supervise the development team, unleashing their potential with strong leadership and opportunities for professional development.
- Partner with the President to plan and execute strategies for prospect/donor cultivation and solicitation. Develop, execute, monitor and evaluate annual development plans, ensuring targets are met. Plan and manage endowment and other campaigns.

Donor Cultivation and Stewardship

- Cultivate, solicit, close and steward five, six and seven-figure gifts from current and prospective donors, with an emphasis on growing major and principal level donor pipelines and support.
- Provide leadership for and staff the Board of Directors and the Development Committee of the Board of Directors in identifying and securing philanthropic prospects and gifts.
- Ensure processes and structures to raise stewardship and donor recognition – including the PRISM giving community – to new levels.

Candidate Profile

The successful candidate will be an inspiring and creative leader who brings a compelling vision for accelerating the growth of support for the organization, and the experience and the will to implement it effectively across the network. S/he will be a highly strategic and dynamic individual able to energize supporters around its mission.

Facing History and Ourselves is looking for an exceptional revenue generator and strategic thinker – someone with a track record of meeting revenue goals as well as proposing innovative and sustainable resource-generating ideas. S/he will be results-oriented, and have the ability, experience, and stature to communicate effectively within the organization and externally.

The ideal candidate is a warm, collaborative individual with a passion Facing History’s mission for a world guided by knowledge and compassion, not prejudice or bigotry. S/he will possess the experience and leadership skills necessary to establish a culture of philanthropy throughout the organization, and to align Facing History’s development plan to its strategic goals. A demonstrated capacity to lead and marshal the talents of a high-performing diverse team is an integral part of this role.

In terms of the performance and personal competencies required for the position, we would highlight the following:

Setting Strategy

- Provides the strategic focus, creative vision, and leadership required to motivate, inspire, and realize a new level of philanthropic success.
- Ability to link strategy with implementation to enable strategic objectives and visions to be realized.

Delivering Results
• Ability work thoughtfully and decisively in complex, successful organizations seeking transformational growth; has a proven ability to set priorities, achieve individual and team goals, and demonstrate impact.

• Has an established track record of driving results, as well as developing, soliciting, and closing six and seven-figure gifts from individuals, foundations, and government sources.

• Balances financial wisdom and prudence with innovation and calculated risk-taking to build a strong development organization. Experienced in enhancing team performance by implementing fundraising best practices as needed, including portfolio management systems and appropriate stewardship protocols.

• Career success in increasingly responsible fundraising roles including management of professional staff, ability to implement multi-faceted fundraising campaigns and working with boards.

Communicating, Influencing, and Building Relationships

• Ability to link the work of Facing History to the concerns of donor and prospective donors; articulate forward-thinking strategies and compelling stories that inspire and motivate constituencies to achieve ambitious revenue generation goals.

• Adept at establishing trust quickly with key constituents by demonstrating sound judgment, strategic thinking, and meaningful expertise. Builds genuine, productive relationships with others both inside and outside the organization, demonstrating strong emotional intelligence.

• Outstanding communication skills, both written and verbal, and the ability to articulate the need for Facing History in an engaging way. Highly articulate; makes arguments in a clear and compelling manner and is able to motivate others to pursue common goals.

Leading Teams

• Ability to provide leadership that will challenge, inspire, and motivate the range of people involved in and with Facing History.

• Has a proven ability to recruit, mentor, lead, and develop staff in an accountable and professional way; building high-performing, diverse, and loyal team; encourage a positive, collaborative environment and culture that fosters a high level of performance; a talent for managing successfully in a collaborative culture while dealing with multiple stakeholders.

Personal Competencies

• Passion and commitment to Facing History’s mission: to use lessons of history to challenge teachers and their students to stand up to bigotry and hate; a demonstrated commitment to personally oppose injustice and work toward inclusion and equity.

• Maintains personal drive, integrity, exemplary levels of professionalism, probity, and resilience; someone who leads by example and has excellent judgment of people and situations.

• A healthy, balanced ego and the confidence to recognize his/her own strengths and weaknesses; has a penchant for continual refinement and intellectual rigor in his/her work.

Contact

Russell Reynolds Associates has been exclusively retained for this search, and prospective candidates are invited to contact Russell Reynolds Associates directly. All inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential. For more information or to apply for the role, please reach out to FHAOCDO@russellreynolds.com. All applications should include a resume and statement of interest.