

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

Frey Foundation Chair for Family Philanthropy

Grand Rapids, Mich.



Dorothy A. Johnson Center
FOR PHILANTHROPY



GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy (Johnson Center) is an externally-oriented academic center of Grand Valley State University (GVSU). The center works with nonprofit and foundation practitioners, scholars and students, and partners in business and government to bridge the gap between the information and skills communities need and the change they want to make.

The Johnson Center was established at GVSU in 1992 with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Through our professional education offerings; research, evaluation, and strategic services; and bold thinking to advance the field, we support a philanthropic ecosystem defined by effective philanthropy, strong nonprofits, and informed community change.

The Johnson Center now seeks nominations and applications for the Frey Foundation Chair for Family Philanthropy. The Chair was established at the Johnson Center in 2008 as the world's first endowed chair for family philanthropy. The Chair is a leading voice on family philanthropy issues, trends, and innovations while serving as a resource for all who seek to advance the many elements of family giving and engagement. Working in this dynamic field, the incoming Chair will develop and implement a creative and comprehensive applied program of research, thought leadership, service, and teaching designed to explore and advance the field of family philanthropy, broadly defined, and to actively advance the dissemination of their scholarship.

Ideal candidates will have a passion for and a deep understanding of the intricate ecosystem of philanthropy, as well as a distinctive combination of academic credentials and senior-level career experience within philanthropy and the nonprofit sector. They will combine not only a nuanced understanding of the history and evolution of philanthropy, particularly family philanthropy, but also its current practice and evolution, including its equity-focused work. A doctoral-level degree is required.

The Johnson Center is committed to inclusion and equity and encourages candidates with diverse lived experience and perspectives from underrepresented communities to apply. The ideal candidate will have experience working effectively across a diverse and broad range of stakeholders, must be comfortable navigating in complex environments, and must be able to demonstrate how they can contribute to and help extend a culture of inclusivity within our organization and the broader field.

Learn more about the Johnson Center at johnsoncenter.org.



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy

In the early 1990s, Dr. Russell Mawby (president and CEO of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1970–1995) and Arend D. Lubbers (president of GVSU, 1969–2001) shared a vision to establish an anchor institution of higher education and applied research on philanthropy in Michigan. The center of excellence they established at GVSU in 1992 as the Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership was renamed for Dorothy A. Johnson (trailblazer and founding president of the Council of Michigan Foundations) in 1999.

For more than 30 years, the Johnson Center has served as a bridge between research and practice, ensuring that changemakers have access to the cutting-edge knowledge, guidance, and supports they need to build a world where everyone can thrive. Today, the Johnson Center’s areas of expertise, partnerships, and audiences extend well beyond Michigan to communities and countries around the world.

The Johnson Center is home to the nation’s first endowed chairs in both family (Frey Foundation Chair for Family Philanthropy) and community (W.K. Kellogg Community Philanthropy Chair) philanthropy, as well as the first and only peer-reviewed journal of philanthropy (The Foundation Review) and annually publishes the 11 Trends in Philanthropy report illuminating where and how the sector is moving. Our groundbreaking research on giving circles, donor-advised funds, nonprofit leadership demographics, and other studies provide transformative insights for the field. And unparalleled professional development offerings — especially The Grantmaking School and programs for nonprofit board members — elevate practice nationwide.

“At home at GVSU, the Johnson Center is uniquely positioned to serve as an interpreter and nexus for the ideas, practices, successes, challenges, and opportunities of philanthropy and its study.”



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
LESLEY D. SLAVITT, PH.D.



Grand Valley State University

Grand Valley State University (GVSU), established in 1960, is a four-year public university attracting more than 22,000 students with its high-quality programs and state-of-the-art facilities. GVSU provides a fully accredited liberal undergraduate and graduate education and has campuses in Allendale and Grand Rapids, and regional centers in Detroit, Muskegon, and Traverse City, Michigan. The Johnson Center is located on GVSU's Pew Campus in downtown Grand Rapids.

GVSU serves students from every state in the Union and numerous foreign countries with undergraduate and graduate degree programs in 300+ areas of study. Especially relevant to the work of the Frey Foundation chair for Family Philanthropy, GVSU currently offers undergraduate degrees in Public and Nonprofit Administration, a graduate certificate in Nonprofit Leadership, and a masters in Philanthropic and Nonprofit Leadership.

The university is dedicated to individual student achievement, going beyond the traditional classroom experience with research opportunities and business partnerships. GVSU employs more than 3,000 people and is committed to providing a fair and equitable environment for the continued success of all.

Frey Foundation Chair for Family Philanthropy

The Frey Foundation Chair for Family Philanthropy was established in 2008 by a generous gift from the Frey Foundation of Grand Rapids, Michigan. In late 2023, the Frey Foundation and an anonymous donor made landmark commitments to which will fully endow this role in order to firmly position the incoming Chair for their next era of impact.

Working in the dynamic field of family philanthropy, the incoming Chair will create and implement a creative, comprehensive program of research, thought leadership, services, and teaching designed to explore and advance the field of family philanthropy, broadly defined. The program will be developed to be in line with the incoming Chair's own areas of expertise and interest and will continue to promote research and practice at this highly dynamic and exciting time for family philanthropy.

The contributions of the Frey Foundation Chair for Family Philanthropy to improving the understanding and practice of family philanthropy have been well established on an international scale under the leadership of Founding Chair Dr. Michael Moody, who served in that role from 2010–2023. With committed partners and a foundational body of work in place, the Johnson Center is now poised to welcome a new Chair.



OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

The incoming Chair will have the opportunity to:

- Plan, devise, and execute applied research projects and disseminate results.
- Develop and implement avenues for speaking engagements; media placements; thought leadership; advising and consulting projects; professional development and training; and other field-building efforts for diverse local, national, and international audiences.
- Serve as an active member of the Johnson Center leadership team, helping develop and support the center's overall vision, growth, and impact.
- Be an active collaborator with other programs and initiatives of the Johnson Center and the University.
- Contribute to learning and professional development programs of the Johnson Center, including The Grantmaking School, workshops and webinars, and *The Foundation Review* journal.
- Help solicit and secure external funding to support the center's projects and initiatives.
- Teach one 16-week course each year in a degree-granting unit of GVSU.

The incoming Chair will bring his/her/their own interests to the role and will have the opportunity to work on exciting emerging areas of practice such as:

- How will the historic transfer of family wealth and the emergence of a new and distinct generation of donors that we are experiencing today impact nonprofits, communities, and giving practice? What new or familiar methods of engagement, measures of impact, or other indicators will emerge from new donors?
- How can we better understand and strengthen the philanthropic engagement of families locally, nationally, and internationally?
- How is family philanthropy changing in a globalizing world? How is family philanthropy evolving to meet the challenges of a divided nation and a digital world?
- What approaches show the most promise as family philanthropy seeks to address issues of dignity, equity, and belonging?



QUALIFICATIONS OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

Ideal candidates will first and foremost demonstrate a commitment to building the field of family philanthropy and bring a distinctive combination of academic credentials and relevant senior-level career experience to the work. The Frey Foundation Chair for Family Philanthropy must have the knowledge and expertise to participate meaningfully as a scholar and intellectual mentor in a university setting, while also possessing the skills and experience to engage as a reflective practitioner, advisor, and partner with other leaders in philanthropic practice.

Required Qualifications:

- Doctoral-level degree required.
- Minimum of five years of relevant experience in family philanthropy.
- Record of scholarship and/or reflective practice in the field of family philanthropy, including publication in relevant scholarly, philanthropic, public administration, business journals, or periodicals.
- Commitment to applied research, and to building bridges between scholarship and practice.
- Outstanding research, writing, and communication skills.
- Proven ability to work across organizational lines and in a team-oriented setting, and also to supervise graduate assistants.
- Demonstrated commitment to inclusion and equity (i.e., personal commitment to knowledge-building, work with diverse communities, projects that support and further the advancement of equity).
- Willingness to travel nationally and internationally and to be a resident of West Michigan.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Experience teaching, developing new curriculum, and serving as a faculty member.
- Training and/or experience in raising funds to support applied research, convenings, or other programs.
- Experience leading project teams and supervising diverse students and/or staff.



ADDITIONAL DETAILS

Salary: Compensation package with attractive benefits package; Minimum starting salary of \$120,000; commensurate with experience.

Department/Division: Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy, Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence

Campus: Pew Campus, downtown Grand Rapids, Michigan

HOW TO APPLY

[Apply online here](#) or visit jobs.gvsu.edu and select “Apply now.” Please include a cover letter and résumé. The online application will allow you to attach these documents electronically. On the application, you will be required to provide names, phone numbers, and email addresses for three professional references. If you have questions or need assistance, call Human Resources at 616-331-2215.

Application Deadline: Review of applications will begin November 30, 2023. The deadline for applying is February 4, 2024.

Anticipated Timeline: The Committee will review applications and invite selected candidates to participate in virtual interviews in March, 2024, with finalists to attend in-person interviews in April. We anticipate making an offer by May 1, with the start date of the new Chair to be negotiated. Note: these dates are subject to change and reflect our current best estimate.

For more information about Grand Valley State University, visit www.gvsu.edu

Grand Valley State University is an EOE which includes protected veterans and individuals with disabilities. See <http://www.gvsu.edu/affirmative/>. TDD Callers: Call Michigan Relay Center 1-800-649-3777.

