



LEADERSHIP PROFILE



Chief Executive Officer
Kids In Need Foundation
Minneapolis, MN

To ensure that every child is prepared to learn and succeed in the classroom by providing free school supplies nationally to students most in need.

Kids In Need Foundation mission

THE OPPORTUNITY

The Kids In Need Foundation has been a national leader in helping children in need gain access to school supplies since 1995.

Working through resource centers, a vast network of partners and direct support initiatives, KINF has provided more than \$1B in school supplies to teachers, schools and children over the course of its almost 25-year history. Despite the scale of these efforts, millions of students across the nation continue to struggle in school because they lack the basic tools to study and learn. The Kids In Need Foundation is committed to changing this reality.



The organization is at a critical inflection point. The new CEO will employ business acumen, creativity and an authentic passion for the mission to help guide KINF's vision for the future. The CEO will inherit a strong, well-regarded organization poised for its next era of growth and accomplishment, and will lead KINF to new levels of impact, awareness and reach that build upon current momentum, a solid financial foundation and a deeply credible reputation.

The opportunity for the CEO is bold and compelling: to help elevate the profile of the Kids In Need Foundation throughout the nation and to enable the organization to reach more children in need. By providing essential school



supplies and advocating for the direct impact they have on children, KINF can help ensure that students will learn and succeed in school regardless of their zip code or socioeconomics.

To reach its aspirations, KINF seeks an executive who is driven to help address the basic, material needs of vastly under-resourced children, teachers and schools, is a passionate servant-leader and who brings relevant professional experience in managing an organization of similar complexity and scope.

In partnership with a strong, engaged Board and staff, the CEO will work to address several key mandates that include:

- Helping KINF become a household name as the undisputed national school supply charity.
- Raising \$4.2M in cash and doubling the number of individual donors in 2019.
- Procuring \$135M in overall product in 2019 (\$75M specifically in core categories).
- Expanding KINF's reach to serve 10M kids annually by 2020.

THE ORGANIZATION

Established in 1995 by the school supplies and office products industry, KINF received its initial financial support from the industry's international trade association (SHOPA). The organization opened its first Resource Center in Chicago in 1997, and by 1999, the number of KINF Resource Centers had grown to five. By 2007, the organization had gained enough momentum to become independent from the trade association, and with a solid business model in place, moved forward on its own. Having grown considerably in scale and scope since its founding, KINF programs now benefit more than 6 million students and nearly 200,000 teachers annually.




KINF receives over \$130M of in-kind product donations annually; dedicated national product partners include Georgia-Pacific, Elmer's (Newell), Target, Staples/Office Depot, 3M, ACCO brands, Crayola and Bic (a full list of product partners can be found [here](#)). A core strength of the organization is a robust product distribution network, and KINF works to make school supplies available


to teachers, schools and students through four central distribution programs and initiatives:


National Network of Resource Centers

As the largest program initiative of KINF, Resource Centers are affiliate partners throughout the country that serve as product hubs where teachers can “shop” for their students to help provide them with supplies. These partner organizations serve communities where 70 percent or more of the students are on a Federal Nutrition Program. As of 2019, KINF’s network of Resource Centers includes 43 organizations with a broad footprint from Washington to Maine and Minnesota to Texas.



 **School Ready Supplies** Through generous sponsorships, KINF provides pre-assembled backpacks filled with essential school supplies and/or provides the necessary resources to support backpack building events for communities, businesses and campaigns. In FY 2018, more than \$1.3M was pledged to support this initiative.

 **Second Responder Program®** Every year, devastating hurricanes, earthquakes, wildfires and tornadoes destroy schools nationwide. The Kids In Need Foundation’s Second Responder Program® is dedicated to providing school supplies to students affected by natural disasters, and with the help of local authorities, schools and select sponsors, help students return to normal routines.

 **SupplyAClassroom.org** On average, teachers spend more than \$500 per year from their own pocket on supplies for their classroom. This program allows individuals or organizations to make a cash donation to a classroom of their choice to help provide core supplies needed for a full semester of projects and active learning. With these tools, teachers can increase the variety and scope of products offered to children; self-esteem, class preparedness, participation and interest in learning all improve as a result.

The organization has a full-time staff of 23 between its Minneapolis headquarters and its Dayton office and a current annual budget of \$139M (\$4.2M in cash/program expenses) supports its programs and operations. The Board of Directors is comprised of business leaders and key representatives of the school supplies and office products sector, and members are engaged and deeply committed to the organizational mission. Contributed income for KINF is



consistent, and the organization is supported in large measure by over \$4 million in philanthropy and donations.

KINF is recognized as a good steward of its resources and has enjoyed a four-star rating from Charity Navigator for eight consecutive years. Further, the organization is financially stable, and has established cash reserves of over \$1M to help undergird its day-to-day operations.

For additional information about the Kids In Need Foundation and its programs, please go to www.kinf.org.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES

The new CEO will be a leader with vision, charisma, authentic passion and credibility. S/he will have a compelling presence, strong communication skills and proven expertise in leading a strong organizational culture, cultivating relationships and scaling impact and revenue growth.

The CEO will:

- 1. Be a strategic, inspiring leader who will lead KINF with passion and purpose.** The CEO will be a strong leader, strategist and systems thinker who will guide the vision of KINF and move the organization forward with quiet confidence, gravitas and a strong sense of personal and collective accountability around both short and long-term goals. S/he will be open to innovation and will champion new approaches for optimizing the physical, human and reputational resources of KINF – with the mission to help reach more children in need always being the focus.
- 2. Bring strong financial and business acumen to KINF and capably execute the organizational mission.** S/he will manage the business with a steady hand that combines experience and an acute understanding of financial statements, managing risk, cash flow and planning and executing a P&L. Under the CEO's leadership, the organization will be recognized as a well-run nonprofit that can responsibly balance the tensions between mission and margin and risk and pragmatism.
- 3. Be a compelling advocate and ambassador for the brand and an uncommonly good relationship builder.** The CEO will be inspirational and influential at making an informed, persuasive case for the KINF mission. S/he will be a compelling speaker and presence who commands the attention and respect of donors, community leaders, partners, policy makers and the

media. The CEO will bring a facility with digital literacy, social media and technology and understand how to leverage these tools to the benefit of KINF. S/he will build and develop relationships with a broad spectrum of stakeholders and partners with ease and readily engage others in the work of KINF.



- 4. Proactively lead KINF's business development efforts and successfully grow both partnerships and revenue.** The CEO will embrace stewardship of relationships as an organizational imperative and manage individual, corporate and partner relationships with grace. S/he will actively cultivate new relationships, partnerships and opportunities that will help KINF meet current and future needs of teachers and students and help further establish the organization as the pre-eminent leader in providing tools, educational resources and supplies to those most in need.
- 5. Be a humble servant leader that embraces the need for a strong organizational culture as a high organizational priority.** The CEO will be approachable, authentic and a good listener with high emotional intelligence. S/he will be a person with an approachable style, unimpeachable integrity and someone people from all walks of life will naturally trust and want to work with. The CEO will be a proven developer of great talent, teams and infrastructure. S/he will be a leader and mentor who builds an environment of shared vision, values, high standards and mutual accountability.
- 6. Develop and shape a bold vision for the future of KINF and ensure that the organization achieves its aspirations.** The CEO will be a strategic thinker who will work with the Board to develop a vision for the next generation of KINF that is innovative, progressive and responsive to the evolving requirements of teachers, schools and children in need. S/he will lead organizational efforts to plan and scale growth and embrace change in pursuit of increased impact and measurable outcomes. Additionally, the CEO will be good at communicating the vision and ensuring that the future direction of KINF is widely embraced both internally and externally.

THE CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate is a compelling leader with significant knowledge, passion and experience in contexts relevant to the Kids In Need Foundation. S/he will



have a proven track record of leadership, fundraising and/or sales, cultivating relationships and program management in an organization of similar complexity. Personal attributes will include integrity, credibility and outstanding relationship and interpersonal skills. Previous experience with product distribution and inventory management would be considerable assets, but are not mandates.

Attributes being sought in the new CEO include:

- Passion for the mission of KINF
- Strong financial and business acumen
- A compelling, energizing and inviting presence, with high emotional intelligence, listening, and communication skills
- The ability to lead, inspire and mobilize people to accomplish important goals
- Experience in scaling business initiatives and growing programs
- A vision for how to increase the visibility and awareness of an organizational brand through traditional and digital media
- A strong commitment to the professional development of staff
- The ability to create and grow a strong organizational culture that is reflected in productive, positive relationships with Board and staff members, donors, leaders, Resource Centers and partners throughout the U.S.
- Familiarity with strategy, planning and driving consensus around a common vision – and the courage to implement change
- The ability to present and communicate clearly, persuasively and compassionately to audiences that include the media, elected officials, civic clubs, peers, current and future partners, donors and corporate leaders
- Experience in working successfully with nonprofit boards
- Fundraising, revenue generation and/or experience with business development
- The ability to foster an environment of innovation, accountability, creativity that in tandem lead to effectiveness and measurable results
- Leadership experience in a comparable growth-oriented organization of similar size and complexity

THE RELATIONSHIPS

The CEO reports to the KINF Board of Directors and manages a team of 23; key relationships include:

The CEO reports to:	Board of Directors
The CEO directly manages:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VP of Development and Corporate Partnerships • Director of Donor Relations and Gift In-Kind • Accounting Director • Director of Marketing and Communications • Director of Events and Special Projects • Director of School Ready Supplies and Second Responder® Programs • Executive Director, Kids in Need Minnesota • Executive Assistant
Other key CEO relationships include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KINF board members and volunteers • Current and potential partners and donors • Resource Center leaders and key staff • Key leaders in the education space • Corporate, civic, philanthropic and community leaders • Elected officials • Peers and best practice leaders

THE LOCATION

The CEO is based at KINF headquarters in Minneapolis, one of the most dynamic metropolitan areas in the country. Often ranked in national surveys as one of the country's best places to live, Minneapolis and St. Paul are known for their lakes, vital arts communities, good government and fine school systems.



The cities have an extensive network of hiking, biking and skiing trails and more theater per capita than New York City. Arts institutions include the Walker Museum, Guthrie Theater, Minnesota Orchestra and St. Paul Chamber

Orchestra. Major league sports teams include the Vikings, the Wild, the Timberwolves and the Twins. The area is also one of the nation's economic hubs, home to several Fortune 500 companies including Target, 3M, Medtronic, General Mills, Best Buy, United Health Group, and U.S. Bancorp as well as excellent public and private schools, colleges and universities.

Compelling candidates could come from a variety of backgrounds. KINF is an equal opportunity employer, and a diverse slate of candidates is being sought.

**To apply or suggest a prospective candidate,
email KINF@BoardWalkConsulting.com
or call John Sparrow or Paula Nicholas at 404-262-7392.**