



LEADERSHIP PROFILE

President & Chief Executive Officer
Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta

Atlanta, GA

"Inspiring and leading our region toward equity and shared prosperity for all."

Executive Summary

The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta sits at the intersection of generosity, civic leadership and community change in one of America's most dynamic regions. With \$1.8 billion in assets, a 23-county service area and deep relationships across philanthropy, nonprofits, business and civic life, CFGA is positioned to help Atlanta imagine—and fund—a more equitable future.

The Foundation is entering a new chapter. Atlanta is dynamic, generous and growing, but the region continues to face real disparities in income, wealth, housing and opportunity. Recent strategy work placed equity and shared prosperity at the center of CFGA's aspirations. The next strategy, to be guided by the new CEO, will be every bit as ambitious, with a streamlined focus on the Foundation's role, resources and capacity.

The President & CEO will inherit extraordinary assets: a respected institution, a dedicated team, a strong balance sheet, an influential board, and a mission that matters both locally and nationally. The chief mandate: Bring CFGA's relationships, systems, strategy and public voice into clearer alignment—and, just as importantly, reinforce a confident, unified team at the top. CFGA's staff of about 50 are talented and mission-driven; promoting trust, clarity and accountability within the team will be among the new CEO's early priorities.

CFGA offers something national donor-advised fund platforms cannot match: the local knowledge, trusted relationships and civic convening power that make place-based philanthropy so compelling. Success at this work requires both ambition and discipline: ambition for the communities CFGA serves, and the discipline to deliver the operational excellence and team cohesion that lasting impact requires.



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The opportunity is not simply to manage a transition, but to help one of Atlanta's essential civic institutions become more focused, more connected and more fully equipped for its next era of impact.

The Context

Atlanta has a unique combination of strengths, among them numerous globally recognized corporations, the world's busiest airport, nationally significant universities and medical institutions, a vibrant arts and cultural sector, a deep civil rights legacy, influential faith communities, and a growing technology and creative economy. Of critical importance in this context, Atlanta is also home to a large, highly engaged, and civic-minded philanthropic community.

Sadly, Atlanta is also a national leader in income inequality. In fact, among America's fifty-largest metro areas, Atlanta ranks dead last in economic mobility, per [Raj Chetty's groundbreaking research](#). For the region to thrive, all residents need to have (and know that they have) a genuine opportunity to learn, work, engage and contribute to a healthy community.

This work takes patience, credibility and staying power. CFGA is not a direct service provider; its role is catalyst, convener, advisor, investor and trusted partner. The Foundation helps donors understand the region more deeply, helps community partners access aligned resources, and helps Atlanta act with more coherence on problems too large for any individual or institution to solve alone.

Those roles matter even more now that donors have more options than ever, including low-friction donor-advised funds offered by national financial institutions, platforms that are efficient but place-agnostic. CFGA's edge is exactly what

those platforms lack: deep local knowledge and real relationships that turn giving into more than a transaction.

The Organization

Founded in 1951, CFGA has helped shape the region's civic and philanthropic life for 75 years. Today it stewards approximately \$1.8 billion in assets, serves a 23-county region, and employs a staff of nearly 50. Its grantmaking is substantial: Over the five years from 2021 through 2025, the Foundation took in just under \$1.2 billion in contributions and made just over \$900 million in grants. Coupled with over \$400 million in investment returns during the same period, CFGA has never been financially stronger.¹

Its work includes donor-advised funds, scholarship and agency funds, competitive grantmaking, philanthropic advising, convening, and impact investing. Of special note is CFGA's affordable housing investment work, including debt and equity investments that support community outcomes while protecting donors' resources. That leading-edge work has attracted attention from foundations around the country looking for practical ways to deploy philanthropic capital in service of community need.

The next CEO's mandate is as much about building a strong, high-performing organization internally as it is about external vision. CFGA's [senior leaders and staff](#) are collaborative and execution-minded, and they thrive under clear direction and consistent follow-through.

Like many organizations that are growing quickly, CFGA's operating systems must keep up with its ambitions. Technology, finance, fund administration, legal and compliance, and internal



Operational effectiveness
is inseparable from
mission impact.

¹ Over the ten years ending 2025, CFGA's assets under management grew by over \$900M (unaudited estimates).



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communications are not back-office details; they are what make a vision tangible and a strategy credible.

The Foundation is governed by [a volunteer board](#) of 23 experienced metro-area leaders whose collective experience, lived and professional, reflects the diversity of the community they serve.

Additional information on CFGa can be found on the Foundation’s [website](#), a major update of which is underway. Financial information since 2001 is available on [GuideStar](#), and Charity Navigator’s four-star rating is detailed [here](#).

The Mandate

To guide this new chapter of confidence and impact, CFGa seeks an executive who can lead both inside and outside the institution, a credible and present ambassador who, as one staff member put it, “is as committed to internal excellence as to external impact.”

- Internally, the next CEO will inherit a group of talented and deeply committed colleagues ready for greater clarity, collaboration and stability, keen to be part of a workforce that is as strong and values-driven as the impact CFGa seeks in the larger community.
- Externally, stakeholders will embrace a CEO who combines vision and relationship-building with disciplined execution—a leader who listens well, communicates transparently, and serves as a compelling champion for strategic philanthropy backed by the responsive staff, reliable systems and strategic discipline that sophisticated donors and community partners expect.

The successful candidate will strengthen confidence among donors and external partners while developing the people, culture and

systems required to serve them and the broader community with consistency, responsiveness and respect. Among the key priorities the next CEO can expect:

Lead with trust, inside and out

Relationships are the lifeblood of community philanthropy. The next CEO must enjoy connecting with people and earn the confidence of an unusually complex set of constituencies. That takes more than a public presence; it takes humble confidence and the ability to move comfortably among people and institutions that do not always share the same language or priorities.

Empower a confident, unified team

CFGA's senior team and staff are talented and will rally around decisive leadership. The CEO needs to be a genuine leader of people, someone who builds trust deliberately and exhibits a style of engagement that invites collaboration, expects vigorous discussion and rewards initiative.

Make CFGA one of Atlanta's first calls

CFGA should be among the first institutions people turn to when they want to understand the region's needs, invest in its future, or bring others together around shared civic purpose. The next CEO needs to be a credible ambassador for that role, a model of leadership exercised with discernment. Neither the Foundation nor its CEO needs to lead on every issue, but where its mission and resources are uniquely relevant, CFGA should be ready to educate, convene and act—and be widely respected for doing so.

Sharpen strategy and strengthen capacity

CFGA's aspirations are high. The next CEO must help the board and staff translate those aspirations into a clear strategy grounded in the people, systems and partnerships needed to do the work. This calls for sharp choices, cohesive priorities, and



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a culture of transparency that reinforces confidence and accountability.

Operational effectiveness is inseparable from mission impact, and a successful strategy depends on the willingness to say "no." Working in concert with the board, staff and key constituencies, the CEO must determine how the Foundation can best create distinctive, measurable value and ensure the stable, sustainable capacity to deliver that value.

Strengthen the operating foundation

A foundation with assets approaching \$2 billion needs systems and discipline equal to its complexity. The CEO does not need to be the organization's chief operating expert but rather must empower and hold accountable leaders who are—with clear decision rights, modern technology, reliable reporting and strong internal controls.

Make local knowledge the differentiator for donors

CFGA's value proposition must stand out in a crowded philanthropic marketplace. The CEO should be able to explain how CFGA offers something far more powerful than administrative convenience: informed giving rooted in local knowledge and real relationships. As one supporter put it, "CFGA should be known not only for the resources it stewards, but for the trust it earns, the relationships it builds, and the positive impact it helps create throughout the region."

Convert our equity commitment into durable impact

Equity and shared prosperity remain central to CFGA's aspirations for the region. The CEO must carry that work forward with credibility and discipline, honoring community voice, engaging donors in learning and action, and making sure the Foundation's own culture reflects the values it advances externally. The next chapter should preserve the best of CFGA's place-based and

systems-change work while sharpening the priorities, partnerships and measures that turn aspiration into durable impact.

Grow the resources and networks that increased impact requires

Atlanta has a fast-rising and increasingly diverse base of wealth. For example: Plenty of entrepreneurs, creatives and professional athletes call Atlanta home, but historically they have not seen—or, in many cases, been invited to see—Atlanta’s community foundation as their philanthropic home. Similarly, next-gen families of means have interests and outlets that may differ greatly from those of their forbears.

Each of these groups and others like them represent explicit opportunities for the Foundation. CFGA’s growth in scale and impact requires that both legacy donors and their 21st century counterparts find the Foundation’s role and resources compelling, as without them, there is no Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta.

The Relationships

The CEO reports to:	The Board of Directors, Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta.
And leads:	A staff of about 50, through a five-person Senior Leadership Team.
While stewarding key relationships, such as those with:	Donors, fundholders and philanthropic families; professional advisors; nonprofit and community partners; public, corporate, civic, faith, academic and philanthropic leaders; peer foundations locally and nationally; elected and appointed officials; media and other voices shaping Atlanta’s civic life; and CFGA’s own staff.

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The Candidate

The next President & CEO of the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta will be a seasoned, credible and emotionally intelligent leader with the experience and judgment to lead a complex philanthropic enterprise to greater impact.

The search committee is open to a range of backgrounds and leadership pathways. Demonstrable success in traditional place-based philanthropy or mission-driven financial platforms is certainly of interest, but CFGA is also receptive to leaders who have proven themselves at scale in other settings, demonstrated through a combination of civic impact, enterprise leadership, resource development, and community trust.

What matters most is the proven ability to lead a complex civic institution with integrity, relational skill and operational discipline, in service of a better Atlanta.

This is not a role for someone seeking a finished institution or a narrow philanthropic platform. It is a role for a leader drawn to complexity, energized by Atlanta's possibilities, disciplined about execution and committed to learning from donors, staff, community leaders and residents whose lived experience must inform the work.

CFGA expects to appoint a CEO who is:

- Ambitious for Atlanta, not just the institution; someone who understands CFGA as a platform for regional generosity and shared prosperity.
- A trusted relationship builder equally experienced in hiring, developing and empowering a strong staff as in deepening ties with donors, civic leaders, board members and program partners.
- A clear communicator, able to make the case for thoughtful philanthropy and local impact to an array of audiences.

- A confident fundraiser and donor developer who understands that generosity grows through trust, stewardship, imagination and disciplined execution.
- A strategic executive, capable of turning a curated set of bold, board-approved aspirations into operating priorities and measurable outcomes.
- A financially and operationally sophisticated generalist with enough command of finance and technology to lead (but not micromanage) a complex institution.
- Grounded in equity, with the lived commitment and experience to advance diversity and inclusion as core to the mission.

CFGA's CEO should embody:

- Integrity, humility and authenticity in all settings.
- Genuine enjoyment of people and relationships.
- Emotional intelligence and steadiness under pressure.
- A bias for clarity: clear priorities, clear communication, clear accountability.
- The courage to be bold, the discipline to be practical, and the patience to build trust over time.

The Location

CFGA is based in downtown Atlanta, from which it serves a 23-county region that is home to over six million people.

Metro Atlanta boasts a remarkable concentration of civic, corporate, cultural, academic and nonprofit assets. The region is also a place of real contrasts:



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generous and entrepreneurial but marked by deep inequities; proud of its civic traditions but still wrestling with the systems that shape opportunity. For the right leader, Atlanta offers a region large enough to matter nationally, local enough for relationships to shape outcomes, and ambitious enough to imagine a different future.

For Potential Consideration

For the right leader, this is an uncommon opportunity to help one of Atlanta's most important civic institutions become more focused, more connected and more consequential at a moment when the region's needs and its possibilities are unparalleled.

To suggest a prospect, or
express interest in the position, please email
CFGACEO@BoardWalkConsulting.com
or call **Sam Pettway, Crystal Stephens** or **Patti Kish**
at 404-BoardWalk (404-262-7392).

For the current status of this and other searches,
please visit www.BoardWalkConsulting.com
