



Our Mission

We in Boston University Development & Alumni Relations (DAR) harness the power of philanthropy to make an excellent education accessible and welcoming to all, and to advance BU's global leadership in research, scholarship, artistic creation, and professional practice. To support our work, we have built—and are continuing to build—an outstanding team of dynamic, mission-driven advancement professionals who constantly strive to create an environment where everyone belongs. Where it's not just about a job, but a career and a community.

Now, our **Donor Relations & Stewardship** team is looking for an **Executive Director** who will conceive of and direct the implementation of a comprehensive donor relations and stewardship program.

Donor Relations & Stewardship at Boston University

The central Donor Relations & Stewardship team is responsible for the design and implementation of a strategic and integrated donor relations program for past and current donors to enhance their relationships with the University. Through collaboration with their Development & Alumni Relations colleagues, and various offices across the University, the team creates meaningful communications and opportunities to express Boston University's gratitude to its constituents and demonstrate the impact of their philanthropy.

Executive Director

Reporting to the Vice President for Development, the Executive Director, Donor Relations & Stewardship (DRS) oversees a program that encompasses gift acknowledgements, endowment and impact reporting, university-wide giving societies, donor and scholarship stewardship, fund development and utilization, and creating a variety of high-impact donor experiences, including but not limited to DAR events.

Leading a DRS team of approximately ten professionals, the ED will evaluate the quality and impact of the donor relations/stewardship program and play an instrumental role in building and strengthening relationships across Boston University. In this role, the ED will lead the strategy for expanding the understanding (and role) of donor relations and stewardship across DAR and the university.

Responsibilities:

Develop innovative, strategic, and actionable plans for donor experience/engagement at various gift levels and types based on priority donor behaviors, with particular attention paid to those individuals and organizations whose philanthropy has had significant impact on BU. Reinforce

targeted communications appropriate to various groups and develop strategies aimed at increasing retention and giving.

- Partner with prospect managers centrally and across BU's schools and colleges to develop and implement DSR strategies that blend stewardship and cultivation with offerings that strengthen long-term relationships with major donors. Ensure that details of stewardship frameworks and plans are communicated, accessible and documented—taking the guesswork out of what resources are available for frontline officers and reducing ad hoc requests of DRS staff. Simplify processes with the aim of making space for more creative and tailored donor engagement.
- Devise strategies for meaningful donor recognition via custom impact communications for individual supporters, impact pieces for broad audiences, recognition for capital project donors and other tactics that convey the impact of giving.
- Provide input on donor experience and communications for donors of the highest level, working closely with the Offices of the President and the Senior Vice President, DAR and in alignment with the VP and AVPs. Help develop individualized stewardship plans for donors at the principal gift level including individualized and small group/cohort donor engagement. Be attuned to the unique and varied ways that principal gift donors advance and are connected to BU's achievements—from financial support to advisory appointments and campaign-related volunteer leadership. Bring a holistic and coordinated approach to the donor experience that maps acknowledgements, impact reporting, and donor experiences to key milestones, relationships, and cultivation strategies.

Oversee all aspects of endowment fund reporting, gift agreements, presidential acknowledgments, and related correspondence, as well as leading donor recognition strategies.

- Develop digital platforms, tools, and workflows that encourage productive relationships with faculty members and frontline officers and orient them to impending reporting requirements and milestones. Provide insights into how the structure of transformative gift agreements may require tailored activities that will necessitate additional staffing or resources.
- Serve as a key partner with DAR leaders, development officers, BU general accounting, BU financial assistance, and partners in colleges and units to ensure BU's scholarship fund stewardship practices are best-in-class and provide donors with meaningful and individualized information regarding scholarship awards. Partner with advancement services to ensure that BU technology platforms and business processes support BU's scholarship stewardship goals.
- Promote an approach to gift agreements that centers on building trust for all parties involved. Ensure that all new agreements drafted for commitments of \$100,000 or more reflect the intersection of donor interests and the university's needs, both near and long-term. Confirm that all funds tracked by DRS (including endowed and relevant term funds) are used according to their purpose, working with appropriate departments, and that any errors are identified and corrected.

- Work with colleagues in advancement services as well as with BU general counsel and general accounting to ensure BU's gift acceptance and stewardship practices follow industry best practices.

Align DRS strategies and approaches with those of DAR colleagues for a robust donor experience that sparks connection with BU and meets audiences where they are in their philanthropic journey.

- Partner with senior leaders, campaign, and strategic initiatives colleagues to ensure that "big ideas" and other key elements of the campaign framework and university strategic plan are woven throughout the donor experience.
- Collaborate with colleagues to create synergies and align strategies and roadmaps for shared donor experiences and philanthropy-focused marketing and communications opportunities. Serve as a strategic partner on individual/cohort engagement strategy elements with key DAR team members, including signature campaign events, transformative gift announcements and donor event(s), giving societies (e.g., the 1839 Society) and related events and programming, roundtable discussions, unique donor events related to named opportunities and the completion of capital projects, or significant moments for the BU community.

Promote a collaborative, strategic, high-performance environment for the DRS team that is solutions- and impact-focused, rather than primarily measured by outputs.

- Evaluate the effectiveness of all donor relations activities and suggest adjustments to the program on an ongoing basis. Determine the overall framework for what activities are centralized in DRS or distributed throughout BU's schools and colleges.
- Provide overall leadership and direction to the team, creating a culture of trust, accountability, and transparency. Coach, mentor, and support direct reports in the successful day-to-day management of the team.
- Work with each staff member to set mutually-agreed-upon goals, performance management metrics, budgets, hiring plans, and personnel management. Ensure that individuals have a sense of responsibility and ownership for the successful outcome of the organization.
- Maintain a leadership style that is open and fluid, and capable of inspiring, empowering, and motivating staff. Foster a work environment that recognizes and rewards performance, supports new ideas and risk-taking, builds confidence, encourages interaction and teamwork, and promotes diversity. Serve as an advocate for staff, representing their needs and concerns.

Apply innovative technology solutions to make information and resources accessible in ways that empower DAR colleagues in their work and enhance donor experiences.

- Work in tandem with advancement services to ensure that DRS frameworks and resources are available through the CRM platform and that best practices are introduced to support

key data tracking, knowledge, and analysis. Ensure that primary points of contact for questions and projects are highlighted. Leverage data to enhance and streamline workstreams.

- Expand upon the functionality of the successful deployment of BU's digital reporting platform for endowed gifts.
- Collaborate in creating online content that supplements or enhances donor experience or recognition efforts.
- In partnership with advancement resources and talent management—and with the support of advancement services—develop training/learning modules and best practices that provide overviews of critical DRS programs for the onboarding of new staff members and effective partnership with existing colleagues.

Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree.
- A minimum of ten years of progressively responsible managerial experience in donor relations and stewardship in support of fundraising, preferably within the higher education, large nonprofit, or healthcare sectors.
- Expert knowledge of best practices, strategies, and metrics in all key areas of donor experience and communications; ideally within the framework of a comprehensive and large-scale capital campaign in a higher education setting. Ability to cocreate and design new initiatives.
- Knowledge of scholarship award management in a higher education environment; prior experience in scholarship stewardship and endowment reporting.
- Ability to communicate and translate ideas into action and a clear understanding of how to organize and disseminate information that inspires engagement.
- Excellent communication skills and prior experience working collaboratively with creative teams to produce high-impact donor communications.
- Experience working with technology and data teams to develop processes and tools to effectively manage a donor relations program.
- Familiarity with implementing digital tools to simplify, visualize, and share complex information.
- Proven experience and success managing complex projects on ambitious timelines.
- Ability to combine strategic planning and project management skills in identifying, analyzing, developing, and implementing short- and long-term strategies, approaches, metrics, and incentives.
- A sharp eye for operational efficiency and the best use of resources, including a demonstrated understanding of budgets and the ability to manage them.
- Experience working collaboratively with cross-institutional partners including executive leaders, development colleagues, volunteer leaders, and donors.

- Ability to serve as a donor relations subject-matter expert and advisor to partners across the university.
- The political savviness to navigate a complex academic community; the desire and ability to build bridges and strong collaborative relationships with all members across the enterprise and diverse alumni and constituents. An interest in serving as a resource to others and obtaining their input; persuasive, persistent, and determined.
- Proven management skills in building a high-performance fundraising team and a goal-oriented environment that empowers staff members through active communication, personal accountability, and delegation and that builds confidence, promotes diversity of thought, and celebrates achievements. Must have a history of recruiting and developing exceptional people.
- Extensive event management knowledge, including both large-scale formal events and smaller events like receptions and dinners.
- Familiarity with Salesforce, CRM or similar donor databases is preferred.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office, specifically Word and Excel.

But that's not all we're looking for; we want someone who embodies our values:

- **Teamwork, transparency, and mutual respect**, because we value every member's contributions and know that leadership can come from anywhere.
- **Diversity, equity, inclusion**, and a commitment to ensuring that each of us knows we belong here.
- **Integrity** in how we work and how we treat one another.
- **Strategic thinking and curiosity** in the relentless pursuit of fresh approaches and measurable results.
- **Continuous growth and improvement**, both as individuals and as a team.
- **Joy and shared appreciation** for working hard toward goals that matter.

If this resonates with you and you want to help us in our ambitious next campaign—and maybe do some of your best work as an advancement professional— we encourage you to apply. If you are hesitant to apply because you have not previously performed every responsibility listed in the description, but you do possess transferable skills and the defined qualifications, we still want to hear from you and welcome your application as well.

To learn more about Development & Alumni Relations at Boston University, and other job opportunities, please stop by the DAR Talent website: <https://www.bu.edu/dar-talent/>.

Please note all newly hired staff and faculty will need to be in compliance with Boston University's COVID-19 Vaccination and Booster [Requirement](#) within 30 days of date of hire. You must upload your vaccine documentation or request a medical or religious exemption ([instructions](#)). For

further information on the University's response to COVID-19, please visit the [COVID-19 Resources](#) site.

We are an equal opportunity employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, military service, pregnancy or pregnancy-related condition, or because of marital, parental, or veteran status. We are a VEVRAA Federal Contractor.

If you require a reasonable accommodation in order to complete the employment application process, please contact the Equal Opportunity Office at 617-358-1796.