



Boston Public Library Fund Director of Individual Giving

Introduction

Established in 1848, the Boston Public Library (BPL) is a pioneer of public library service in America. It was the first large free municipal library in the United States; the first public library to lend books; the first to have a branch library; and the first to have a children’s room. Today, under the leadership of Boston Mayor Michelle Wu, and President David Leonard, the BPL features a central library in Copley Square and 25 neighborhood branches and is recognized not only locally but nationally as a historic cultural institution.

The BPL’s mission, as articulated in its current strategic plan, is to open a world of discovering and learning to enrich lives and elevate every community. The Library advances this mission by serving as a welcoming destination, a trusted civic resource, a community connector, and a lifelong learning and research partner for the residents of the City of Boston, the Commonwealth, and beyond. Learn more about the Library’s strategic plan here: <https://www.bpl.org/about-the-bpl/strategic-plan/>. The BPL remains focused on its enduring charge to remain “free to all”—a promise etched in stone on the Central Library McKim building’s façade and central to its identity. To that end, the Library proudly welcomes everyone equally, regardless of gender, race, national origin, sexual orientation, faith, or economic status.

Today, libraries are more essential than ever. In an age of limitless information but diminishing opportunities for genuine human connection, the Boston Public Library and its neighborhood branches stand as vital civic anchors across the city. They are among the few places that remain truly free and open to all — welcoming every Bostonian to gather, learn, reflect, and belong.

As ongoing renovations and facility upgrades reimagine and modernize branches systemwide, these spaces are being transformed into vibrant, accessible community hubs designed for the needs of today and tomorrow. As *Boston Magazine* observed (November 2023), the Library is “the place where we store the stories, we tell ourselves about ourselves.” More than repositories of books, our libraries safeguard our shared history, nurture new ideas, and create conditions for connection, creativity, and civic life to flourish.

In parallel, the Boston Public Library Fund, the philanthropic partner to Library, is working to build toward a future capital campaign supporting the renovation of the historic McKim Building—a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to preserve and reimagine one of Boston’s most iconic civic and cultural landmarks for generations to come. [Learn more about the McKim renovation.](#)

The Boston Public Library Fund

The Boston Public Library Fund (the Fund) is the independent nonprofit organization that drives philanthropic support for the Boston Public Library — cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding the relationships that sustain the Library for generations to come. Established in 1982 as the Boston Public Library Foundation and relaunched in 2019 with a renewed vision and investment, the Fund serves as the primary philanthropic partner of the BPL.

Since its relaunch, the Fund has raised more than \$50 million to advance the Library’s mission. In that time, it built a comprehensive, best-in-class development operation spanning annual giving, major and leadership giving, planned giving, corporate and foundation relations, communications, and advancement operations — all grounded in strong governance and fundraising best practices.

The Fund is governed by a committed Board of Directors that provides strategic direction, fiduciary oversight, and active engagement in philanthropy. Board members serve as ambassadors, advocates, and investors in the Library’s future, ensuring accountability, transparency, and long-term sustainability.

Led by an experienced Executive Director and initially supported by six major corporations and foundations — the Fund’s “Founding Investors” — the organization is charged with building a strong, sustainable fundraising enterprise capable of attracting transformational philanthropy and cultivating a robust, long-term pipeline of support.

The Opportunity

Reporting to the Executive Director of the Boston Public Library Fund and working alongside a talented and energetic development team, the Director of Individual Giving will play a pivotal role in growing unrestricted annual support for the Fund. This is a highly external, relationship-driven position with significant responsibility for donor visits, events, and engagement activities designed to expand individual giving and build a strong leadership pipeline for future major, principal, and planned gifts.

The Director provides strategic oversight of a comprehensive annual giving program and leads the growth of leadership annual giving at the \$2,500+ level. Working closely with colleagues, donors, and volunteers, this individual will expand participation in Patrons of the Courtyard (POTC), the Fund’s leadership annual giving recognition society, primarily through personal engagement — including one-on-one visits, phone conversations, and tailored solicitations.

This role is central to identifying, cultivating, soliciting, and upgrading donors who demonstrate both the capacity and inclination for deeper philanthropic investment. Success in this position requires building authentic, enduring relationships that strengthen long-term commitment to the Boston Public Library.

The Director of Individual Giving supervises the Assistant Director of Annual Giving and provides strategic leadership for annual giving campaigns and initiatives. The role also oversees the Fund’s Virtual Engagement Officer program, which focuses on targeted digital outreach to qualify prospects and thoughtfully transition them into personalized engagement with front-line fundraisers.

In partnership with the Director of Communications and Donor Relations, the Director of Individual Giving will collaborate on the development of a robust POTC stewardship program, including targeted

engagement opportunities and compelling, personalized communications such as the annual impact report and donor newsletters.

The ideal candidate is a confident and visible fundraiser who is energized by donor-facing work, thrives in a dynamic environment, and brings curiosity, creativity, and strategic discipline to relationship building and revenue growth. A genuine passion for the mission of the Boston Public Library — and a belief in its role as a free, civic, and cultural cornerstone of the city — is essential.

This position is based at the Central Library in Copley Square in Boston, Massachusetts, and follows a hybrid work model. Candidates are not required to reside in the City of Boston.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Annual Giving and Digital Engagement Oversight

Supervise the Assistant Director of Annual Giving, who holds primary responsibility for the development and execution of the annual giving program. Provide strategic guidance, feedback, and performance oversight as they:

- Create, execute, and evaluate a comprehensive annual giving program aimed at expanding the donor base and increasing unrestricted contributions.
 - Develop and implement strategies for donor acquisition, retention, and upgrading, with particular focus on leadership annual giving and pipeline development.
 - Plan and manage annual giving initiatives such as acquisition campaigns, year-end appeals, giving days, summer reading and early literacy efforts, and matched giving opportunities; monitoring results and adjusting strategies as needed.
 - Oversee the content, design, and production of annual giving materials, including direct mail, email campaigns, and related collateral.
 - Utilize the donor database and CRM tools to segment and analyze donor data, developing targeted campaigns and communications based on donor behavior, preferences, and giving history.
 - Coordinate with colleagues to ensure thoughtful and consistent donor communications across touchpoints.
 - Partner with the Director of Communications and Donor Relations to align messaging, branding, and appeal timing with the Fund's and Library's mission and objectives.
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Oversight of Patrons of the Courtyard (POTC) Recognition Society

- Oversee all aspects of the Patrons of the Courtyard recognition society, including participation, benefits, solicitations, and stewardship activities.
- Develop and execute strategies to grow membership, increase giving levels, and deepen donor engagement.

- Recruit, grow, and manage a volunteer committee of Patrons of the Courtyard members to support peer-to-peer outreach, identify and cultivate new prospective donors, and serve as ambassadors for the Fund.
 - In coordination with the Director of Communications and Donor Relations, plan exclusive events and experiences for society members to enhance engagement and appreciation.
 - Ensure timely, accurate, and meaningful donor recognition through personalized outreach, communications, donor profiles, and inclusion in donor lists.
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Personal Solicitation and External Engagement

- Manage a portfolio of approximately 150–250 prospects, with a strong emphasis on in-person and virtual visits.
 - Develop and implement strategies for soliciting annual gifts of \$2,500 or more from existing and prospective donors, with a clear focus on upgrading donor support over time.
 - Serve as a highly visible external representative of the Fund, participating in donor meetings, cultivation events, recognition gatherings, and Library programs.
 - Build long-term relationships that position donors for eventual transition to major, principal, and planned giving portfolios.
 - Provide exceptional stewardship to ensure strong donor retention, satisfaction, and advocacy.
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Donor Strategy and Pipeline Development

- Identify donors with interest and capacity for movement into major, principal, and planned giving.
 - Collaborate closely with BPLF colleagues and volunteers to develop coordinated, strategic cultivation and solicitation plans.
 - Oversee the Virtual Engagement Officer program with a goal of qualifying prospects for leadership giving and pipeline development.
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Data Management and Reporting

- Maintain accurate and up-to-date records of donor interactions, solicitations, and commitments.
 - Report on fundraising progress, donor pipeline health, and performance against goals.
 - Use data and metrics to evaluate fundraising effectiveness and continuously refine strategy.
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Qualifications, Skills, and Knowledge Required

- Bachelor's degree and six to eight years of relevant professional experience, preferably in a fundraising organization.
- Proven track record of expanding annual giving revenue, particularly at the leadership level, through strategic cultivation, personal solicitation, and thoughtful donor upgrading.

- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, with confidence in donor-facing and relationship-building settings.
 - Experience balancing in-person, virtual, and digital engagement strategies.
 - Knowledge of direct marketing, donor engagement, and stewardship best practices.
 - Excellent project management and organizational skills.
 - Demonstrated experience managing fundraising budgets, setting financial projections, and using data to inform strategic investment decisions.
 - Cooperative, collegial professional demeanor.
 - Familiarity with fundraising databases (Raiser's Edge preferred).
 - Proficiency in Microsoft Office.
 - A deep appreciation for the essential role that public libraries play in civic life.
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Commitment to Inclusion

The Boston Public Library Fund is committed to building an inclusive culture that encourages, supports, and celebrates the diverse voices of our employees and community. We welcome candidates of all backgrounds and lived experiences who share our commitment to equity, access, and the Library's enduring promise to be "free to all." Residency in the city of Boston is not required.

How to apply

Please send your resume and cover letter to Liz Swanson, Assistant Director of Communications and Special Projects, at eswanson@bplfund.org. Priority deadline of **March 6, 2026**.