Special Assistant, Presidential and Leadership Support
Institutional Advancement Division

The Opportunity

Brandeis University – a distinguished private research university recognized for its academic excellence and leading-edge research – has an exciting and unique opportunity for a Special Assistant, Presidential & Leadership Support.

Located in the suburbs of Boston, a global hub for higher education and innovation, Brandeis is dedicated to first-rate undergraduate education while making groundbreaking discoveries. Established as a nonsectarian university in 1948 by members of the American Jewish community, our visionary founders shared a commitment to social justice and to making the world a better place.

Our founders’ pioneering spirit and intellectual pursuits continue today at Brandeis – from helping to solve a national public health crisis through work at its newly established Opioid Policy Research Collaborative, to the biological discoveries that last year earned two faculty members a Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. We aspire to further such important endeavors and are looking to grow our team with individuals who share our passion and commitment. In preparation for its next ambitious campaign, Institutional Advancement (IA) seeks to strengthen the bonds with the University’s many constituencies. By working together, we will secure the financial resources necessary to continue the legacy of excellence in teaching, research, and scholarship at Brandeis.

Position Summary

Reporting to the Senior Vice President for Institutional Advancement, and working closely with the President’s Office, the Special Assistant is responsible for proactively initiating and implementing strategic management of the President’s fundraising efforts, coordinating all planning and actions related to or affecting donors or prospects engaged with the President, or for whom the President has ongoing responsibilities. The effective candidate will become sufficiently familiar with the assigned pool of Presidential prospects in particular, and the larger pool of prospects and donors identified as having the capacity to give $1 million or more in philanthropic support for whom the President plays a role in the relationship.

The Special Assistant will suggest courses of action to the SVP, such as communications, meetings and next actions, for, between, and on behalf of the President and high-level prospects and donors that support cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship efforts.

The Special Assistant will facilitate strategy discussions, coordinate actions and proactively initiate and recommend appropriate use of the President’s time for individual meetings and constituent events that are intended to advance cultivation and solicitation strategies for high-level prospects and donors or to engage a wide audience of Brandeis alumni, parents and friends in conversations about the University’s top fundraising priorities.
The Special Assistant will also write and review correspondence for the President’s signature, prepare briefings and collect or prepare other materials, as needed, for the President’s donor visits and activities.

The Special Assistant will work collaboratively with senior leaders and colleagues across the institution to engage our most generous donors in support of programs and initiatives that align with the President’s vision and priorities and that complement the importance of current-use and unrestricted support.

Creating strong and positive relationships is fundamental to fundraising success. To serve as a liaison between and representative of IA and Brandeis’ alumni, parents and friends, the Special Assistant will exhibit in-depth knowledge of the University, its initiatives, and its internal and external constituents. Other responsibilities include effective collaboration and partnership with colleagues, peers and unit managers within a diverse advancement organization and complex top tier research institution; establishing strong working relationships with members of the President’s Office, including the Chief of Staff, Executive Assistant and other senior leaders of the institution.

Decisiveness, diplomacy, trustworthiness, discretion, and creativity are indispensable qualities of the Special Assistant. The incumbent must have the ability to interact easily with individuals of considerable social, economic, and educational levels, and at all times, must professionally represent Brandeis.

Primary Responsibilities and Essential Activities

- Partner with the President, Chief of Staff, Senior Vice President, Institutional Advancement, Special Assistant for the Senior Vice President, and the President’s Executive Assistant to manage the portfolio of Presidential prospects and donors. Successfully facilitate advancing the President’s relationships through the development cycle – from identification and qualification to active engagement, investment, solicitation, and stewardship.

- Assist in the creation and execution of all fundraising strategies for Presidential prospects that support the development of meaningful, mutually-beneficial relationships with current and prospective donors on behalf of the University. This includes determining the touchpoints for each of the President’s assignments, regularly reviewing prospect status, and recommending actions, next steps and moves.

- Identify and prioritize donors and prospects for meetings with the President. Work closely with the Executive Assistant to the President and Special Assistant and Executive Assistant to the Senior Vice President, Institutional Advancement on the coordination of donor meetings; planning and management of an effective annual schedule of Presidential contacts and meetings; arranging campus visits, etc. Engage University leaders, faculty, staff and other Advancement colleagues in the President’s donor engagement activities, as appropriate.

- Draft and review correspondence for signature of the President to donors, prospects, alumni, and other constituents. Partner with the Office of Donor Relations and Corporate and Foundation Relations on gifts proposals and strategic stewardship of high level donors. Draft talking points/remarks and coordinate briefings for the President for donor visits.
• Execute or delegate (as appropriate) all follow up from donor meetings and events on behalf of the President, working with colleagues in the Advancement Office, University administrators, faculty and staff across the University as needed. Be a primary source of contact with donors on behalf of the president, as requested.

• Provide guidance to Advancement colleagues on prioritizing recommendations for use of the President's time, including strategic direction and insight related to the development of invitation lists, staffing protocols for Advancement events attended by the President, and approving and coordinating schedules in collaboration with representatives of the President's Office.

• Routinely interact with a variety of University personnel, including those in Advancement Administration, Alumni Relations, and Development; various academic departments, faculty members, and administrators, among others.

• Ensure that activities, contacts, proposals and strategy plans for the President’s prospects are entered into the donor database. Share any knowledge of updates to constituent biographic and contact data maintained in the database with Advancement Services.

**Qualifications**

• Bachelor’s degree required. Advanced degree preferred.

• Minimum 5 years of relevant work experience or equivalent combination of education and experience.

• Requires a sophisticated understanding of the complex nature of the relationship building process as it relates to high-level fundraising and alumni relations activities.

• Experience in a higher education or non-profit setting preferred; direct experience with fundraising and volunteer management of high-profile, HNWI donors highly desired.

• Proven track record of working in a dynamic, evolving and highly energetic fundraising environment.

• Superior interpersonal skills with proven ability to successfully interact and collaborate with varied constituencies in a professional manner, exhibiting excellent written and oral communications skills.

• Ability to apply good judgment and discretion when dealing with highly confidential alumni, parent, student, family, donor and prospect information.

• Must be a detail-oriented, self-starter with an ability to work independently and manage multiple high-priority projects and priorities simultaneously to meet aggressive timelines and challenging deadlines. The offices of the President and Senior Vice President, Institutional Advancement are fast-paced, high-pressure environments that often extend beyond the typical 9 – 5 work day.
Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Founded as a model of ethnic and religious pluralism, Brandeis University welcomes students, faculty, and staff of every nationality, religion, and orientation. Social justice is central to the mission of Brandeis, which endeavors to foster a just and inclusive campus culture that embraces the diversity of our larger society. Brandeis embodies the American heritage of cultural diversity, equal access to opportunity and freedom of expression. Learn more at: http://www.brandeis.edu/about/mission.html

Brandeis University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer. It is the policy of Brandeis University not to discriminate against any person on account of race, color, ancestry, religious creed, gender, national or ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, genetic information, disability, veteran status, or any other category protected by federal or state law. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Vice President of Human Resources, Bernstein-Marcus building, 781-736-4464.

Submit Your Candidacy

We welcome your nominations, inquiries and expressions of interest in this position, which may be directed informally via email or telephone to Advancement administration contacts:

Ania Morris  
Assistant Director, Advancement Talent Management & Administration  
781-736-4004 | armorris@brandeis.edu

Elizabeth Crabtree  
Vice President, Advancement Administration & Operations  
781-736-4034 | ecrabtree@brandeis.edu

To apply, please visit our career website and submit your cover letter and resume via the Brandeis University Human Resources online portal at https://careers.brandeis.edu/staffjobs/

Please note that you must upload your cover letter and resume as one combined file.

The material presented in this position summary is for informational purposes only. Candidates offered a position at Brandeis University may be subject to an employment reference check and additional background screening satisfactory to Brandeis. This screening may include a criminal background check, drug testing, and motor vehicle records check.