



GOOD REASON HOUSTON

Chief Advancement Officer

Sorrell is proud to partner with Good Reason Houston in its search for a new Chief Advancement Officer. Good Reason Houston exists to create a future where every child in every neighborhood of Houston has access to a world-class public education that prepares them to thrive in the Houston of tomorrow. The organization believes that all Houston students deserve an excellent education and works to reshape the Houston education landscape by inspiring hope, possibility, and action as it works towards its mission of growing the number of students learning in great public schools.

Good Reason Houston builds awareness of, advocates for, and advises school systems on measures aimed to improve the quality of education available to all. Today the organization partners with 25 public school systems that collectively serve 700,000 students across 900 public schools in the Houston region. The organization seeks to cultivate a shared regional vision for educational quality, to build the capacity for systematic change required within districts and the greater Houston community, and to foster collective ownership to support student-level results for kids across our city.

For more information, please visit www.goodreasonhouston.org.

Position Overview

Good Reason Houston (“GRH”) seeks a dynamic and highly strategic and collaborative leader to develop, lead and grow a comprehensive fundraising program that advances the organization’s mission and strategic goals by generating sustainable philanthropic revenue to meet the organization’s fundraising requirement. The position will also support the fundraising requirement of GRH’s affiliated organization, Houstonians for Great Public Schools (Houston GPS – see <https://houstongps.org/>).

The Chief Advancement Officer (“CAO”) will lead, plan, build and oversee the day-to-day operations of the organization’s fundraising department and major gift support for the organization’s fundraising priorities. The ideal candidate has extensive skills leading a fundraising operation and proven experience in creating and leading fundraising strategies, campaigns and initiatives and facilitating leadership gift conversations with individual, corporate and/or foundation donors.

The CAO will report directly to the Chief Executive Officer and work in close collaboration with the Executive Director of Houston GPS and the GRH Board of Directors to execute against the fundraising strategy of the organization. A results-oriented and strategic leader, this role will be responsible for managing and growing a high-performing advancement team and will serve as a member of the organization's senior management committee.

The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate has extensive skills leading a fundraising operation and proven experience in creating and leading fundraising strategies, campaigns and initiatives and facilitating leadership gift conversations with individual, corporate and/or foundation donors at a local, regional and national level. An energetic self-starter, this individual is both visionary and execution-oriented, thriving on setting and achieving ambitious goals. This individual genuinely loves fundraising and moves

management and sees this work as a true “calling” -- pairing people with means with opportunities they care about. He/she/they will continuously think about strategic philanthropy and will relish deeply knowing GRH’s work and effectively building upon its impact to create compelling proposals for partnership.

The ideal candidate will focus on making thoughtful and strategic connections and fostering nuanced relationships that will grow and deepen over time. This individual will proactively build strong relationships with the Board of Directors, leading the efforts to expand support from existing resource partners and cultivating and engaging new supporters. The ideal candidate will have deep connections throughout Greater Houston and will have a keen understanding of the local philanthropic landscape, while possessing a national and international outlook to foster broad relationships and hone best practices. This key leader will be adept at setting a comprehensive fund development strategy, building and effectively leading a team, personally "making the ask" and leveraging the Board, CEO, and fellow senior leaders when appropriate. GRH expects this individual to be genuinely excited about helping to build the profile of the organization and cultivate the relationships that are necessary to ensure that GRH will be the first stop for people who want to make an impact in public education, and hopefully where they will invest.

Primary Responsibilities

- Develop and execute a fundraising strategy to secure \$5-6M of private revenue annually from a pyramid of funders – a diverse and expansive set of individual and institutional donors to meet the fundraising requirement of both GRH and Houston GPS. This annual revenue goal will be phased in over the next three years, after which time the expectation will be to sustain private funding at this level annually.
- Build a high-functioning advancement team and infrastructure that balances fundraising strategy and execution appropriately across staff, senior leadership, and the Board of Directors.
- Lead, grow and inspire a high-performing advancement team while fostering a collaborative and results-driven work environment that aligns with the values and culture of GRH.
- Personally manage a portfolio of current and prospective donors at the highest levels of giving capacity, moving them through the stages of cultivation, solicitation and stewardship.
- Oversee the management of a robust donor pipeline of individual and institutional funders.
- Serve as a key member of the leadership team and collaborate with the other leaders to identify and refine giving priorities and translate those priorities into compelling opportunities for philanthropy and persuasive proposals.
- Cultivate a dynamic relationship with GRH’s Board of Directors. Lead BOD Advancement Committee meetings and be the point person for the Committee Chair.
- Play a key role in establishing and managing public/private and multi-sector collaborations.
- Set and implement multi-year and annual fundraising goals and manage revenue and expense budgets.
- Construct strategies and execute plans that will markedly increase support from major gifts, corporate and foundation support, fundraising events, institutional marketing campaigns, and grants.

- Provide regular updates to senior leadership and Board of Directors on fundraising progress and individual team members in donor cultivation efforts as relevant.
- Collaborate regularly with GRH's CFO and finance team on revenue goals and outcomes.
- Oversee the planning and execution of fundraising events and develop strategies to maximize event revenue, engage participants, and increase awareness of GRH.
- Effectively manage the advancement team's day-to-day operations, budget and income forecasts.
- Champion an overall data-driven approach to advancement strategy, including developing a mastery of any relevant technological tools and processes that support this approach.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

Qualifications and Key Attributes

- Bachelor's degree and 10+ years of related professional experience preferred.
- Former experience as a Head of Development and/or leading a team of multiple fundraisers highly preferred.
- Major giving background is a plus.
- National relationship network highly preferred.
- Record of successful grant awards from major local and/or national institutional donors preferred.
- Credibility, capability and interest to work with sophisticated, professional grantmakers.
- Proven track record of leading people and processes within complex organizations, including coaching and motivating teams to successfully reach and/or exceed fundraising goals.
- Exceptional judgment, strong initiative, and the ability to think strategically and analytically to move from vision to action and influence others towards outcomes.
- Personal drive and high motivation with the ability to manage a significant volume of diverse tasks, activities and projects efficiently and effectively.
- Outstanding verbal and written communication skills, including the ability to write and present fundraising materials to a diverse set of audiences.
- A problem-solving orientation – can break down problems, define pathways forward, and invest others in a solution.
- Proficient with MS Office, CRM systems, and pipeline management/planning tools.

Team Culture

Along with its core beliefs, the traits listed below were generated by the GRH team to capture what it looks like in action when operating at their best.

- We **embrace** and **drive change**.
- We are **flexible** and **fierce**.
- We operate with a **bold bias toward action**.
- We **fess up** when we mess up.
- We **dare greatly** and **engage humbly**.

- We grow as we go.
- We turn up the love when we turn up the heat.
- We root for each other.

All GRH staff are expected to support this organizational culture by promoting and adhering to these team traits to maintain an open and cohesive work environment and relationships.

Compensation and Benefits

GRH offers a competitive salary commensurate with experience in a similar position. New hires are offered a salary depending on qualifications, internal equity, and the budgeted amount for the role. Benefits offered include 401(k) (automatic 3% employer contribution), life, medical, dental and vision insurance packages. Each employee accrues 35 paid time off days per calendar year in addition to the 19 paid holidays per year. GRH is an office-based organization but allows for virtual work on Mondays and Fridays.

Application and Referral Process

Applicant review is currently underway and will continue until the candidate has been selected. To nominate or be considered for this position, please contact Priscilla Plumb at priscilla@sorrellco.com / 281-224-0881 or Laura Sorrell at laura@sorrellco.com / 713-854-5351. All inquiries will be held in confidence.

About Sorrell

Sorrell is a highly relational provider of executive recruiting. Our mission is to serve as partners with our clients to accelerate their efforts to attract, hire, and retain talent that impacts the future of the organization. For more information, call 713.840.1870.