

## POSITION PROFILE

On behalf of our client, the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation,

CohenTaylor Executive Search Services  
is conducting a retained executive search for its

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WILDER RESEARCH



AMHERST H.  
WILDER  
FOUNDATION

Here for good.®



The Amherst H. Wilder Foundation (Wilder) combines knowledge, compassion and action to improve lives today and for generations to come. Wilder creates lasting, positive change and improves lives through three core areas: direct services, research and community building.

For more than a century, Wilder has adapted to meet existing and emerging community needs. Through collaboration, it draws upon the strengths of the community to develop smart solutions to the challenges the community faces. Wilder's Saint Paul focus gives it a valuable launch pad in the capital of Minnesota that allows expansion of its impact far beyond the city limits.



TO LEARN  
MORE, VISIT  
[Wilder.org](http://Wilder.org)



## MISSION

To promote the social welfare of persons resident or located in the greater Saint Paul metropolitan area by all appropriate means including:

- Relief of the poor
- Care of the sick and aged
- Care and nurture of children
- Aid of the disadvantaged and otherwise needy
- Promotion of physical and mental health
- Provision of needed housing and social services

And in general, the conservation of human resources by the provision of human services responsive to the welfare needs of the community, all without regard to, or discrimination on account of, nationality, sex, color, religious scruples or prejudices.

## VISION

The greater Saint Paul area will be a vibrant community where all individuals, families and neighborhoods can prosper, with opportunities to work, to be engaged in their communities, to live in decent housing, to attend good schools and to receive support during times of need.

## VALUES

To accomplish our stated mission, Wilder is committed to being **responsive, innovative and effective**. We will meet that commitment by:

- listening, communicating and engaging respectfully
- honoring diverse perspectives and cultures
- behaving ethically, compassionately and responsibly
- taking action to create positive change

## Programs

Wilder Programs offer hope and support to people going through challenging times. Wilder provides services that promote mental health and wellness, family stability, healthy aging and community building.

### **Mental Health and Wellness**

Wilder is a leader in providing mental health services in the Twin Cities. Its whole family, trauma-informed and culturally appropriate approach to mental health and wellness has addressed the needs of diverse communities for generations. Wilder provides a one-stop shop for all social, emotional, behavioral, mental and chemical health concerns ranging from low to high intensity, helping families grow and heal together.

### **Family Stability**

Wilder is the largest provider of family supportive housing services in Ramsey County, Minnesota. Its continuum of services helps young adults and families find and maintain stable housing so they can achieve their goals and thrive across generations. Wilder partners with organizations and community residents to offer innovative approaches to disrupting poverty and is a site partner of the national UpTogether Initiative.

### **Early Childhood Education**

Wilder's early childhood education services meet the diverse needs, abilities, interests and cultures of children and families in Saint Paul. Its child development center focuses on quality academics as well as social and emotional learning to prepare children for kindergarten.

### **Healthy Aging**

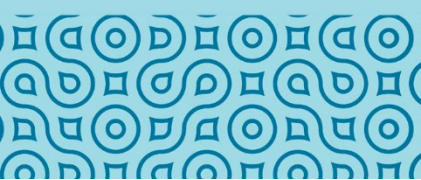
Wilder's Healthy Aging and Caregiving Services help older adults and caregivers maintain their health, well-being and independence. Wilder provides residential support services, Meals on Wheels, wellness classes and support to anyone actively caring for a friend, family member or neighbor.

### **Community Building**

Wilder is committed to creating lasting, positive change with and for Minnesota's Saint Paul community. Wilder unites with partners to eliminate barriers, transform systems and strengthen communities from within.

Wilder houses the Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood Initiative, an education partnership that puts children in the Frogtown, Rondo and Summit-University neighborhoods of Saint Paul on the pathway to college and career success. The African American Babies Coalition and Projects is also housed at Wilder and brings together numerous partners to promote the healthy development of African American Babies across the Twin Cities.

Wilder's public policy work advances systemic equity and social and economic opportunities so that all people and communities throughout Minnesota can thrive. The Community Equity Program brings together Black, Indigenous and People of Color who want to be more involved in state-level policy and fight for change in their communities. The organization works closely with partners in coalition on a range of issues related to Wilder's mission, including health care, housing, mental health and aging.



# Wilder Research

## WILDER RESEARCH FAST FACTS

- Approx. 80 full and part-time staff

Annually:

- Serves 180 organizations
- Produces 250 reports
- Reaches 6,000 + people through various presentations and trainings
- Has 38,000 unique visitors to its webpages
- \$8M revenue & budget

Founded in 1917, Wilder Research operates as an independent research unit of the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation. It helps communities thrive by turning information into impact. Through research and evaluation services, consulting and training, Wilder Research works with nonprofits, community leaders, government agencies, foundations and policy makers to measure and improve their effectiveness, identify needs and solutions, make data-informed decisions and drive action to improve lives and communities.

With the mission to “improve the lives of individuals, families, and communities through research,” Wilder Research gathers and interprets facts and trends to help families and communities thrive, get at the core of community concerns and uncover issues that are overlooked or poorly understood. Wilder Research staff work with organizations of all sizes at the local, state, and national level to help them bring about needed change, increase their effectiveness, and demonstrate the value of what they do. Wilder Research is committed to conducting research that is practical, meaningful, and useful. Being part of an operating foundation gives it an immediate link to service programs and the unique opportunity to test and evaluate innovative programming. Whenever possible, it shares the results of studies so others can learn from them. Focus areas include homelessness and housing, mental health, substance use, health equity, education, criminal justice, aging, social indicators, and more.

Wilder Research works with hundreds of organizations to assess the impact and economic value of their programs, improve their operations and outcomes, plan for the future, allocate funds, revise policies and increase public awareness of important issues affecting our communities. Its triennial statewide Minnesota Homeless Study receives national recognition for its critical role in providing data used by state and local planners, policy makers and service providers. Minnesota Compass, expanded from Metro Trend Watch, a set of indicators to track the health of the East Metro, provides current data on issues affecting the state's well-being.

As a community-focused organization, Wilder Research emphasizes a collaborative and flexible approach that is culturally responsive and informed by sound and innovative methods. Their experienced in-house staff of approximately 80 researchers and data collection and analysis, web and application development, information science, communications and graphic design specialists provide a full range of services.



## The Role

Working in partnership with the President/Chief Executive Officer and the Board of the Wilder Foundation, the Executive Director of Wilder Research will be accountable for the overall leadership of the Wilder Research division. The ED will be responsible for all research, products and services, financial management, business generation, enterprise business operations, communications and staff leadership for Wilder Research.

The Wilder Research leader will utilize the synergies of a strong research team to provide future strategy direction, supporting research growth initiatives across all sectors, including government, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, foundations and the broader community.

The ED will frequently represent Wilder Research on committees and at conferences, events and other research or information-sharing settings. The leader must ensure Wilder Research produces high quality, non-partisan research that carries out the mission of Wilder Foundation and improves human services, social policies and the lives of communities, families and children.

### **Reporting Relationships**

The Executive Director will report to the Wilder Foundation CEO and have direct oversight of approximately 80 staff members.

### **Key Roles and Accountabilities**

The Executive Director will be responsible for the overall leadership of Wilder Research. Key roles and desired accountabilities include:

#### STRATEGIC, VISIONARY LEADERSHIP:

- Embody the mission and core values of the Wilder Foundation. Exhibit passion about the work of Wilder Research both inside and outside the organization.
- Drive, develop and promote a positive focus on achievement of the mission, goals and objectives of Wilder Research.
- Increase Wilder Research quality, efficiency and productivity by being aware and knowledgeable of the latest research practices, methods and project management principles.
- Develop and recommend strategic directions, plans and policies to guide the work of Wilder Research.
- Collaborate with Wilder Foundation CEO and leadership team in making strategic, financial, funding and new business initiative decisions in a timely and efficient manner.
- Strengthen the work of Wilder Research by thinking strategically about the organization's markets and how those markets can be more broadly and creatively served.



## The Role

### TEAM LEADERSHIP:

- Provide guidance, coaching and development to assist staff in achieving their organizational objectives. Set a positive leadership tone throughout the organization and work with all staff in a collegial way.
- Invest in staff excellence. Support, develop, and retain qualified and excellent research staff. Support and strengthen the research management team and the capacity of core internal functions.
- Build upon and enhance the internal culture that makes Wilder Research an attractive place to work.

### ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP:

- Serve as an active member of the Wilder Foundation leadership team
- Ensure a high integrity research environment that recognizes and demonstrates an ongoing commitment to research ethics and solid research methods.
- Ensure the creation and execution of plans, processes and procedures that enhance and grow the financial stability and strength of Wilder Research.
- Oversee the development of budgets and supervise administration of the financial and business operations of Wilder Research. Oversee pricing and resource allocation with a keen eye toward enhancing the financial position of Wilder Research.

### EXTERNAL INFLUENCER:

- Build on and enhance Wilder Research's strong partnerships with thought leaders in health and human services, education and community safety and organizations in the broader community to strengthen communities and the lives of families and children.
- Represent Wilder Research on boards, on panels and at conferences where the Executive Director's involvement enhances Wilder Research and the Foundation's presence in the national spotlight and allows them to share knowledge that could improve policies and communities.
- Grow and enhance the ability of Wilder Research to produce and disseminate applied and theoretical research in the fields of health and human services and education.

## The Ideal Candidate

For more information or to send your credentials, please email [Wilder@cohentaylor.com](mailto:Wilder@cohentaylor.com)

All inquiries will remain confidential.

**Wilder is an equal opportunity employer.**

Equal Opportunity Employer/ Protected Veterans/ Individuals with Disabilities: The contractor will not discharge or in any other manner discriminate against employees or applicants because they have inquired about, discussed, or disclosed their own pay or the pay of another employee or applicant. However, employees who have access to the compensation information of other employees or applicants as a part of their essential job functions cannot disclose the pay of other employees or applicants to individuals who do not otherwise have access to compensation information, unless the disclosure is (a) in response to a formal complaint or charge, (b) in furtherance of an investigation, proceeding, hearing, or action, including an investigation conducted by the employer, or (c) consistent with the contractor's legal duty to furnish information.

The ideal candidate will be an entrepreneurial, business and results-oriented research leader equipped to build on Wilder Research's past successes, expand its reach and influence and broaden support for Wilder Foundation and its programs. This person will bring energy, passion, intellectual curiosity, creativity and humility to their work and will be passionate and proven in leading Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives. While no one candidate will have all the criteria enumerated below, the ideal candidate will possess the following professional and personal abilities and attributes:

- A proven people leader who has led complex teams; a strong talent developer and mentor of staff who can develop and maintain a positive organizational culture.
- A strategic leader with strong business acumen who can engage the board and staff in the creation of a sustainable, long term business model for Wilder Research.
- An equity-minded leader who has proven experience leading and engaging Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives.
- A leader with passion for utilizing applied research methods to focus on social issues in order to improve the lives of individuals and communities.
- A leader with a high EQ; a leader who is inspiring and decisive and who understands how to lead through change.
- A leader who has an entrepreneurial mindset; equipped to evaluate, envision and build the Wilder Research business model for the future.
- A relational leader who can unite the Wilder Research staff along with the broader organization, building strong partnerships and stakeholder relationships; a bridgebuilder.
- A strong communicator who is comfortable being an ambassador for the organization, able to tell the story and sell Wilder Research capabilities.

### Qualifications

- Master's degree required; a PhD is preferred but not required.
- Established, visionary and strategic leader with a minimum of 10-15 years' leadership experience.
- Proven executive leadership in a nonprofit, foundation, government, research and/or academic institution.
- An entrepreneurial mindset. Experience in a consultant or project-based environment helpful.
- Vibrant, exemplary interpersonal communication and presentation skills.
- Demonstrated experience staying current on latest research methodologies. Applied research experience preferred.
- Demonstrated success in growing a department or business through new partnerships, services and/or projects serving the community and organizations in a new way.
- A dynamic leader who exudes both confidence and care for others with the ability to build relationships and be a model of authenticity, credibility and ethical conduct.
- An individual who celebrates diversity in all its forms and who demonstrates cultural responsiveness in research and relationships.
- A person with a high degree of emotional intelligence, skilled at communication and collaboration.