

University of Denver - Director of Development, Foundation Relations

Work Type: Staff Full-Time

Location: Denver, CO

Categories: Alumni / Development / Fundraising, Business Operations / Services, Admin / Executive / Office Support, Advancement

About the University of Denver

The University of Denver (DU), a private university, is the oldest independent university in the Rocky Mountain region, with approximately 12,000 students in undergraduate and graduate programs. DU is classified as an R1: Doctoral University.

At the University of Denver, we're doing higher education our way: authentic to the Rocky Mountain West's confident optimism and pragmatic independence. It sets us apart. We're preparing young people to be the solutions in their own stories, empowering them to face uncertainty with confidence and uncommon sense.

We're fiercely ambitious and forward-thinking, surpassing all expectations to redefine success and how to achieve it. And we're true to our mission as a top-tier private R-1 institution dedicated to making the world a better place - contributing to our communities and making positive change in the world.

About DU Advancement

The Denver Difference campaign is our most ambitious campaign yet. It marks a dramatic shift in conventional thinking about what the university experience can and should be. DU is setting the bar with our approach to higher education, developing and preparing students to be successful in life in every way. The University of Denver is building an advancement enterprise that mirrors the excellence and innovation of our great institution. Inclusive of alumni engagement, development, operations, and campaign leadership, DU Advancement is building and fostering a culture of deep engagement and philanthropy in support of our bold vision.

About the Foundation Relations Team

The Foundation Relations team at the University of Denver is a dynamic and collaborative group dedicated to securing funding from private grant-making organizations to support the University's highest priorities. The team is composed of an Executive Director, Director, and Manager, each playing a crucial role in advancing the University's mission. The Foundation Relations team is committed to fostering strong relationships with foundation leadership and program officers to secure complex gifts and philanthropic grants. Their collaborative

efforts ensure that the University of Denver continues to thrive and achieve its strategic goals through effective foundation partnerships.

Position Summary

The University of Denver is seeking an experienced, driven, and passionate Foundation Relations fundraiser to join our Advancement team as the Director of Development, Foundation Relations. Reporting directly to the Executive Director of Foundation Relations, the Director of Development will partner with administrative, academic, and Advancement colleagues to secure funding from private grant-making organizations in support of the University's highest priorities. The Director serves as a subject matter expert in the area of institutional giving (predominately private foundations) and will possess the sound technical expertise needed to adeptly and independently navigate pre- and post-award grant processes in close partnership with the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, unit grant administrators, budget officers, and fiscal compliance experts. The Director will manage a diverse portfolio of foundation prospects that are aligned with DU's highest priorities and campus strength areas. They will develop and mature their assigned portfolio of foundation donors, including the qualification and management of foundation prospects, in pursuit of individual and unit goals set annually in collaboration with the Executive Director and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Development.

Additionally, the Director will establish and maintain relationships with program officers and foundation leadership to assist in advocacy of university programs for funding opportunities. They will serve as a close partner and key resource for academic leadership. The campus-wide Advancement team is highly collaborative in its work, and the Director will be expected to build and foster extensive and trusted relationships with their campus partners.

The successful candidate will possess a strong capacity for developing relationships with foundation leadership and program officers, and to actively cultivate, solicit, and close complex gifts and philanthropic grants from institutional funders. The candidate will conceive and implement customized strategic cultivation and solicitation plans for each foundation prospect in their portfolio. They must possess excellent communication (written and oral) and relationship-building skills. They must approach their work with agility, responsiveness, and a strategic approach to maximize foundation philanthropy for DU.

Required Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree or an equivalent combination of education and relevant professional experience.
- Seven (7) years of professional experience, including at least five (5) years of direct fundraising experience.
- Demonstrated experience closing gifts at major gift level (\$50,000-\$999,999) through strategic portfolio management and relationship building.
- Experience using standard office software (Microsoft Word, Excel) and donor management systems such as Salesforce and Advance.
- Demonstrated experience securing gifts and grants from professional, private foundations.

Preferred Qualifications

- Fundraising experience in higher education or a comparably complex nonprofit environment.
- This position is eligible for hybrid work, will require occasional travel to key markets outside of Denver, and will support the team with occasional events and evening activity attendance.

Essential Functions

Fundraising Outcomes

- Responsible for raising \$1,000,000+ annually, through a combination of leadership annual gifts and major gifts, once the portfolio is mature.
- Contribute to annual and campaign goals by securing gifts and grants aligned with institutional priorities and strategic initiatives.

Fundraising Activities

- Develop and execute complex fundraising strategies to identify, qualify, cultivate, solicit, and steward major gift prospects.
- Manage a portfolio of donors with capacity to make gifts of \$50,000+.
- Leverage campaign priorities and university initiatives to inspire philanthropic investment.
- Solicit private foundations for major gifts and grants of \$50,000+, including current use funding, endowments, and multi-year commitments.
- Represent the university's breadth of academic programs and initiatives in donor conversations and proposals.

Leadership

- Provide strategic guidance and mentorship to development team members and support staff.
- Prepare, debrief, and coach colleagues and academic partners for donor meetings and solicitations.
- Steward budgetary and operational resources to support fundraising success and team efficiency.

Programmatic & Operational Responsibilities

- Align donor interests with institutional needs and campaign priorities.
- Partner with academic leaders to identify fundable priorities and translate them into compelling philanthropic opportunities.
- Develop and implement donor engagement and stewardship initiatives.
- Articulate the impact of philanthropy through customized communications, reports, and donor experiences.
- Ensure accurate and timely entry of contact reports and donor data in the CRM.
- Track and report on key performance indicators such as qualifications, visits, solicitations, and dollars raised.
- Manage complex projects and initiatives in compliance with university policies and procedures.

Collaborate Across Campus

- Partner with central and unit-based advancement teams and campus colleagues.
- Staff dean, academic leaders, and/or faculty to drive strategy, preparing for donor visits, and solicit and follow up.
- Participate in cross-functional planning and strategy sessions to support integrated advancement goals.
- Liaise closely with the Office of Research and Sponsored (ORSP) programs on grant opportunity communications, limited submission competitions and pre- and post-award grant coordination.
- Intentionally and thoughtfully partner with faculty, academic leadership, grant administrators, ORSP, and unit-based Advancement colleagues to develop fundable proposals to foundations, including interdisciplinary, multi-unit campus projects.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Demonstrates expertise in managing major gift and institutional giving fundraising and outcomes.

- Demonstrated ability to cultivate and close gifts of \$100,000+
- Writes major gift proposals and crafts compelling cases for support
- Leads through uncertainty and change and develops solid solutions for varied situations. Applies sound judgment when making decisions and considering the impact on donors, colleagues, and institutional priorities.
- Builds and manages an individual portfolio to meet personal goals
- Partners with deans/faculty to shape cases for support
- Oversees prospect strategy and metrics for themselves
- Works effectively with internal and external constituents and faculty. Collaborates effectively with other Advancement teams
- Acts as an Advancement ambassador internally and externally. Provides mentorship or supervision to team members

Working Environment

- Standard open office environment
- Noise level is quiet to moderate
- Non-essential role. Note: essential employees are those individuals who must report to work, be "on call" to report to work, and/or work remotely if required in order to maintain the critical functions of the University during scheduled closures or an unscheduled suspension of normal operations due to emergencies, events, or other situations.

Physical Activities

- Ability to use a computer for an extended period
- Occasionally required to move about the office/campus with the capability of transporting objects up to 20 lbs. with assistance
- This role is not required to operate an Automobile, Passenger Van, UTV/ATV, or golf cart

Work Schedule

Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Application Deadline

For consideration, please submit your application materials by **4:00 p.m. (MST) August 3, 2026.**

Special Instructions

Candidates must apply online through <https://jobs.du.edu/en-us/listing/> to be considered. Only applications submitted online will be accepted.

Salary Grade Number:

The salary grade for the position is 14.

Salary Range:

The salary range for this position is \$100,000 - \$115,000.

The University of Denver has provided a compensation range that represents its good faith estimate of what the University may pay for the position at the time of posting. The University may ultimately pay more or less than the posted compensation range. The salary offered to the selected candidate will be determined based on factors such as the qualifications of the selected candidate, departmental budget availability, internal salary equity considerations, and available market information, but not based on a candidate's sex or any other protected status.

Benefits:

The University of Denver offers https://www.du.edu/sites/default/files/2026-02/Benefits%20Overview-Benefited%20Employees_FINAL_2.9.2026.pdf, including medical, dental, retirement, paid time off, tuition benefit and ECO pass. The University of Denver is a private institution that empowers students who want to make a difference. Learn more about the <https://www.du.edu/>.

Please include the following documents with your application:

1. Resume
2. Cover Letter

The University of Denver is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex (including sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression), marital, family, or parental status, pregnancy or related conditions, national origin, disability, or status as a protected veteran. The University of Denver does not discriminate and prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, religion, creed, disability, sex (including sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression), marital family, and parental status, pregnancy, genetic information, military enlistment, or veteran status, and any

other class of individuals protected from discrimination under federal, state, or local law, regulation, or ordinance in any of the University's educational programs and activities, and in the employment (including application for employment) and admissions (including application for admission) context, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Americans with Disabilities Act; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; the Equal Pay Act; the Colorado Equal Pay for Equal Work Act; the Colorado Protecting Opportunities and Worker's Rights ("POWR") Act; and any other federal, state, and local laws, regulations, or ordinances that prohibit discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation. For more information, please see the University of Denver's <https://www.du.edu/equalopportunity/non-discrimination-statement>.

All offers of employment are contingent upon satisfactory completion of a criminal history background check.

To apply, visit <https://apptrkr.com/7332133>