



**President and Chief Executive Officer  
Scherman Foundation**

**The Opportunity**

**Position:**

President and Chief Executive Officer

**Reporting Relationship:**

Board of Directors

**Location:**

New York, NY  
Hybrid

**Website:**

<https://www.scherman.org/>

**About the Organization**

Founded in 1941, the Scherman Foundation is a New York–based private philanthropy committed to advancing racial justice. The organization envisions a vibrant society that actively cultivates collective liberation ensuring historically oppressed communities have the resources, autonomy, and full capacities to thrive. The Foundation invests in the economic, political, and cultural transformation necessary for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color to reclaim and build power.

With a small, dedicated professional staff and an engaged Board of Directors, the Foundation is known for its thoughtful, values-driven approach and long-term partnerships with grantees. The approach reflects both continuity with its founding principles and an ongoing commitment to learning, adaptation, and aligning its resources with the leadership and vision of communities driving change.

As the Foundation marked its 80th anniversary, it undertook a multi-year reimagining process to deepen its commitment to racial justice, resulting in updated mission, vision, values, and program guidelines released in 2024. These changes reflect a strengthened dedication to organizing, power shifting, and movement building in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities. It also means an increased commitment to impact investing and in 2025 and 2026 an [increased grantmaking payout](#) of 10% of approximately \$145 million endowment.

Scherman’s work is guided by its [Racial Justice Framework](#), which shapes not only grantmaking but also the Foundation’s internal culture, decision-making, and relationships with grantees and partners. In its grantmaking, the Foundation prioritizes supporting grassroots organizations that are accountable to or directed by BIPOC communities where communities have clear influence and decision-making power over strategy, direction, programmatic work, and finances. Scherman’s work and relationships are guided by a clear set of values that shape its internal culture, external partnerships, and approach to philanthropy:

- **Authenticity:** Aligning words and actions through honesty, humility, and accountability.
- **Collaboration:** Practicing structured collaboration with staff, board, grantees, and external stakeholders, with deliberate attention to transparency and power dynamics.
- **Humility:** Building strong relationships with grantees, recognizing the Foundation as part of broader movements, and approaching grantmaking with curiosity and partnership.
- **Learning:** Treating learning as a continuous commitment grounded in transparency, exploration, and self-reflection. Responsiveness: Making timely, community-informed, action-oriented decisions that remove barriers and accelerate grantee work.
- **Transparency:** Practicing transparency internally and externally to strengthen trust, accountability, and decision-making.

### **Role Overview & Responsibilities**

The President and Chief Executive Officer of the Scherman Foundation will step into a rare and compelling leadership opportunity: to guide a respected, values-driven institution into its next chapter following a period of significant organizational transformation. With a strong foundation in place, the next CEO will advance Scherman’s Racial Justice Framework by bringing clarity, consistency, and integrity to how the Foundation operates internally and engages externally, while shaping the future of a modern philanthropic organization with outsized influence.

This is a hands-on, high-impact role for an executive who thrives at the intersection of vision and execution. With approximately \$145 million in assets and a deeply committed five-person staff, the CEO will steward disciplined operations while sustaining a collaborative, inclusive culture grounded in trust, partnership, and shared purpose. The Foundation is not seeking disruption; rather, the CEO will build on existing momentum by strengthening systems, relationships, and practices that enable rigor, responsiveness, and long-term sustainability.

Externally, the CEO will serve as Scherman’s primary ambassador and field-facing leader across New York City’s philanthropic, civic, and movement ecosystems and beyond. Leveraging the Foundation’s progressive stance and niche as a small but influential funder, the CEO will deepen visibility, cultivate strategic relationships, convene peers, and contribute thought leadership aligned with Scherman’s mission and commitments. In close partnership with the Board, the CEO will support strong governance, thoughtful decision-making, and continued board development as the Foundation further refines its identity as a racial justice–centered philanthropic institution.

### ***Essential Duties and Responsibilities:***

#### **Advance and Champion the Foundation’s Racial Justice Framework**

- Lead the continued operationalization of the Foundation’s racial justice framework, ensuring that existing commitments are embedded meaningfully into daily practice, decision-making, and institutional rhythms.
- Align internal practices and external engagement with stated values, ensuring consistency, accountability, and integrity.
- Maintain momentum while deepening trust and alignment across staff, Board, and grantees, strengthening shared expectations and accountability.

#### **Strategic Leadership, Grantmaking Stewardship, and Portfolio Evolution**

- Provide values-driven strategic leadership across program priorities, ensuring coherence between mission, strategy, and grantmaking practice.

- Exercise grantmaking authority to initiate, approve, and steward grants, including cultivating new relationships and sustaining long-standing partnerships.
- Lead portfolio evolution with care and transparency, honoring commitments to stability, trust, and accountability with grantee partners.
- Strengthen learning and reflection practices tied directly to grantmaking outcomes, partner feedback, and shifting contexts.

### **Modernize and Strengthen Internal Operations**

- Continue strengthening systems, structures, policies, and operational practices to support clarity, sustainability, and effective decision-making.
- Oversee planning, budgeting, and operational discipline appropriate to stewarding significant assets in service of a long-term mission.
- Build durable internal capacity within a small-team environment.

### **Lead and Develop a High-Performing, Values-Aligned Team**

- Lead and support a staff of five with a collaborative, inclusive, and transparent management approach.
- Foster a culture that values shared power and staff expertise while maintaining clear roles, accountability, and follow-through.
- Support staff growth, role clarity, and cross-functional collaboration as organizational demands evolve.

### **External Leadership and Ecosystem Engagement**

- Elevate the Foundation's visibility and leadership within New York City's philanthropic and movement ecosystem and beyond through relationship-building, strategic convening, and consistent, values-aligned engagement.
- Represent Scherman publicly with credibility and care, engaging funders, movement leaders, and community partners to advance shared goals and strengthen the field.
- Navigate complex and high-stakes relationships with emotional intelligence, maintaining trust and clarity during moments of tension or uncertainty.

### **Mission-Aligned Investment Stewardship**

- Provide informed stewardship of the Foundation's mission-aligned and impact investing efforts.
- Bring sufficient financial fluency to guide decision-making, assess tradeoffs, and uphold fiduciary responsibility, in partnership with Board members and advisors.
- Ensure investment practices align with Scherman's mission and long-term objectives.

### **Board Partnership and Governance**

- Serve as a close, trusted partner to the Board, supporting strong governance, clear roles, and effective decision-making.
- Communicate proactively and transparently, ensuring the Board has the information and context needed for thoughtful stewardship.

### **Candidate Profile**

The Scherman Foundation seeks a strategic, values-driven Chief Executive Officer who can steward a respected institution through its next phase with steadiness, clarity, and sound judgment amid a complex and evolving philanthropic landscape. The ideal candidate will understand the heightened scrutiny and risks facing progressive philanthropy and bring the

foresight needed to protect and advance the Foundation's mission across legal, operational, policy, investment, and movement-building dimensions.

This leader will bring credibility and confidence to guide a mission-centered organization following a period of transformation, balancing responsiveness with continuity and thoughtful decision-making with care for relationships and long-term impact. Grounded in racial justice and movement-building work, the CEO will position Scherman as a steady, trusted, and relevant field-facing institution that adapts to changing contexts while remaining firmly anchored in its values.

### **Experience and Qualifications**

- **Senior Executive Leadership:** 10+ years of senior executive leadership experience with responsibility for organizational strategy, operations, and people management; brings executive experience in philanthropy or community-based nonprofits (e.g., organizing, advocacy, policy, arts and culture, civic engagement, or community power-building) and the ability to articulate a clear, compelling vision within a complex, evolving sector.
- **Commitment to Racial Justice:** Demonstrated, sustained commitment to racial justice and equity, aligned authentically with Scherman's mission, values, and community partners.
- **Programmatic Fluency:** Subject-matter familiarity in one or more program areas, with the ability to engage thoughtfully and credibly with grantees, partners, and field leaders.
- **Governance and Board Partnership:** Proven experience partnering with and supporting a Board of Directors, including governance, communication, role clarity, and ongoing Board development.
- **People and Team Leadership:** Proven success leading a small, high-performing team and strengthening internal systems; that values staff expertise and lived experience while ensuring accountability and follow-through.
- **Operational and Financial Stewardship:** Experience stewarding significant financial resources, including oversight of organizational budgets and partnership on investment or mission-aligned investing strategies.
- **Relationship Builder with High Emotional Intelligence:** Builds trust across staff, Board, grantees, and peers; navigates tension, disagreement, and complexity with discretion, empathy, and sound judgment.
- **Steady, Execution-Oriented Leadership:** Balances long-term strategy with disciplined execution; leads through organizational transition or external uncertainty with calm judgment and continuity.
- **Externally Engaged, Field-Facing Leader:** Experience serving as an organizational ambassador, engaging peers, convening stakeholders, and contributing to the broader philanthropic landscape.
- **Creative and Adaptive Leadership:** Brings imagination, curiosity, and a systems-oriented lens to strategy, grantmaking, and organizational practice while remaining grounded in mission and community impact.
- **NYC Civic and Philanthropic Fluency:** Deep familiarity with New York City's philanthropic, civic, and/or political ecosystems, or the demonstrated ability to build credibility and relationships quickly within it, strongly preferred.

### **Education**

Candidates of all degree and academic certification levels are welcomed. We encourage all candidates with the professional experiences, values, and skills outlined in this position specification to apply.

### **Compensation**

This position offers a competitive salary and includes a comprehensive benefits package. We actively welcome all candidates from a wide range of backgrounds who have the skills to fulfill this role – regardless of compensation history.

Anticipated compensation range: \$300,000-\$325,000.

### **Applications & Nominations**

All interested candidates are encouraged to submit a resume and cover letter for consideration. Applications should be sent directly to **Dayna Keene** at [dayna.keene@kornferry.com](mailto:dayna.keene@kornferry.com). Given the competitive nature of this search, candidates are encouraged to apply promptly, as applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Should you have nominations or recommendations you wish to submit, please feel free to do so directly with Dayna as well.

For more information, please visit: <https://jobs.candidate.kornferry.com/job/Korn-Ferry-Executive-Search-New-York-New-York/261334216>