Position and Candidate Specification

Heterodox Academy

President

PREPARED BY:
Jennifer Bol
Anastasia Crosswhite
Ellen Pennnow

January 2021
Assignment: 65116-001
Founded in 2015, Heterodox Academy (HxA) is a nonpartisan collaborative of 4,400+ professors, administrators, K-12 educators, staff and students who believe diverse viewpoints and open inquiry are critical to research and learning. HxA aspires to create college classrooms and campuses that welcome diverse people with diverse viewpoints and that equip learners with the habits of heart and mind to engage that diversity in open inquiry and constructive disagreement.

HxA’s members come from a range of public and private institutions, from large research institutions to community colleges. They represent nearly every discipline and are distributed throughout 49 states and beyond. All of HxA’s members have embraced the following statement:

“I support open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement in research and education.”

History
Heterodox Academy was founded by Jonathan Haidt, Chris Martin, and Nicholas Rosenkranz, in reaction to their observations about the negative impact that a lack of ideological diversity has had on the quality of research within their disciplines. What began as a website and a blog in September of 2015 — a venue for social researchers to talk about their work and the challenges facing their disciplines and institutions — soon grew into an international network of peers dedicated to advancing the values of constructive disagreement and viewpoint diversity as cornerstones of academic and intellectual life.

The Opportunity
HxA sees the university as a place of collaborative truth seeking, where diverse scholars and students approach problems and questions from different points of view in pursuit of knowledge, discovery, growth, innovation, and the exposure of falsehoods. Heterodox’s mission is to protect and promote these values in the academy and beyond.

Rigorous, open, and responsible engagement across lines of difference is essential to separate good ideas from bad, and to make good ideas better. Scholars and students must develop the habits of heart (e.g., empathy, perspective taking) and mind (e.g., humility, curiosity) necessary to evaluate claims, sources, and evidence; and to reason carefully—and compassionately—about the world.

What HxA Does
HxA has the expertise, tools, and profile necessary to make change happen. It increases public awareness to elevate the importance of these issues on campus; develops tools that professors, administrators, and others can deploy to assess and then improve their campus and disciplinary cultures; publicly recognizes model institutions; and cultivates communities of practice among teachers, researchers, and administrators.

For more information, please visit https://heterodoxacademy.org/.
The President of Heterodox Academy has a unique opportunity and platform from which to support the fundamental values of the academy — truth seeking and open inquiry. This leader is responsible for stewarding HxA’s vision, value proposition, brand, strategy, and business model, ultimately transitioning the organization beyond its start-up phase into its next chapter of organizational maturity.

The successful candidate will have a deep understanding of and a commitment to the academy. They will foster an internal and external environment that exemplifies its values of open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement in pursuit of learning and the development of knowledge.

**KEY RELATIONSHIPS**

**Reports to**
Heterodox Academy Board of Directors

**Direct reports**
Executive Director

**Other key relationships**
Current and prospective HxA members
Current and prospective funders
Leaders and faculties of academic institutions
Public intellectuals

**KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Amplify HxA’s voice in the public discourse around diverse viewpoints and open inquiry, and serve as a leader in the movement that protects the core academic value of truth seeking
- Create a distinctive value proposition and a more visible brand that leads to increased awareness, engagement and membership beyond HxA’s existing group of supporters
- Lead the development and execution of a growth strategy that will diversify the organization’s revenue streams and significantly enhance its influence and impact in higher education
- Increase engagement in HxA’s work by creating readily accessible resources and tools that are widely distributed and easily incorporated in campus settings
- Provide support to individuals and academic institutions who encounter challenges while navigating their approach to open inquiry
- Work effectively with both the staff and the board in ways that motivate and inspire


IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- A track record of intellectually rich engagement on issues of academic freedom, rigorous inquiry, viewpoint diversity and the essential role of the academy in truth seeking and knowledge creation
- Experience in and around higher education sufficient to engender credibility within the academy and an ability to navigate its stakeholders
- A demonstrated ability to connect a vision with action and build institutional heft
- Experience fundraising and building new revenue streams
- Strong external representational experience and capability
- Relevant exposure to nonprofit boards, governance best practices and board building
- Experience building and motivating high-performing teams, translating aspirational goals into clear priorities and empowering individuals to drive impact

CRITICAL LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

Strategic Leadership

HxA’s President will bring strategic and intellectual breadth, depth, and agility to help unleash the full potential of the organization. This leader:

- Defines the evolving future of HxA, builds and operationalizes a strategy, and explores new directions that are fiscally sound and relevant to the organization’s mission.
- Ensures that HxA’s brand is well understood and that HxA’s activities deliver on that brand promise in distinctive and valuable ways.

Collaborating and Influencing

The President will have strong interpersonal skills and the ability to inspire trust and confidence with a range of stakeholders. This leader will:

- Engage with relevant stakeholder groups, while maintaining HxA’s moral credibility and nonpartisan identity.
- Identify opportunities to build and cultivate relationships that will accelerate and amplify HxA’s impact.
- Focus on new partnerships and resource cultivation to enable greater fulfillment of HxA’s mission.

Driving Impact

The President will scale up HxA’s profile, reputation, and impact by:

- Defining and measuring progress against organizational goals, including enhancing brand clarity and awareness, diversifying and growing revenue, and increasing membership and engagement.
- Recognizing and realizing new opportunities for HxA to fulfill its mission.
- Setting continually higher expectations for self and others that are ambitious but realistic.
OTHER PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- An authentic passion for HxA's mission, a strong moral compass, and a reputation as an honest broker
- Capacity and ability to cultivate and engage a diverse and engaged board of trustees
- Intellectual heft and gravitas

APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS

If you wish to submit application materials or nominate someone to serve as the President of Heterodox Academy, please email HxAPres@SpencerStuart.com.