

Governmental Accounting Standards Board

Academic Seat



EXECUTIVE
RECRUITMENT



GOVERNMENTAL ACCOUNTING STANDARDS BOARD (GASB) ACADEMIC SEAT

The Financial Accounting Foundation (FAF) is the independent, private-sector organization with responsibility for the oversight, administration, and finances of its standard-setting Boards, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) and the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), and their Advisory Councils. Through its standard-setting Boards, the organization establishes and improves financial accounting and reporting standards—known as Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, or GAAP—for public and private companies, not-for-profit organizations, and state and local governments in the United States. The FAF Board of Trustees selects and appoints the members of the FASB and the GASB and protects the independence and integrity of the standard-setting process. The FAF is a non-stock Delaware corporation that operates exclusively for charitable, educational, scientific, and literary purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The FAF, FASB, and GASB are located in Norwalk, Connecticut.

The FAF is seeking a highly qualified individual with substantial recent experience as a tenured professor of accounting to fill one of the seven seats on the GASB. The GASB is comprised of members with experience as state and local government financial statement auditors and preparers, a governmental financial statement user, a public accounting auditor, and a governmental accounting academic. The background and perspective of a tenured professor of accounting are important to the success of the GASB.

Additional information on the GASB and its mission follows the position description below.

BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE

- Substantial recent employment experience as a tenured professor of accounting is required. Experience and a background in governmental accounting are required.
- A PhD or DBA from an accredited college or university is required.
- Holding a Certified Public Accountant designation or having other professional certifications or advanced degrees in business administration, public administration, or a related field is desirable, but not mandatory.
- Being an active participant in related professional associations is desirable, but not mandatory.

QUALIFICATIONS

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- **Knowledge of state and local government financial accounting and reporting.** A candidate should have knowledge of, and experience with, financial accounting and reporting for the state and local government organizations included under the GASB jurisdiction.
- **Commitment to operate as an advocate for the public interest.** A candidate should be free of conflicts of interest (employment by a college or university is allowed) and should be an advocate for the public interest with the goal of producing the highest possible quality of standards that serve the current needs of users.
- **High level of intellect applied with integrity and with discipline.** The Board deals with controversial, complex issues. High intelligence helps in absorbing a variety of complicated information and in understanding the pros and cons of the arguments advanced. Intelligence must be used with discipline, that is, with objectivity, logic, and concentrated energy.
- **Judicial temperament.** Candidate demonstrates the discipline of gathering all evidence, weighing arguments, and making timely decisions free of bias or partiality.
- **Ability to work in a collegial atmosphere.** The GASB is a collegial body, characterized by group decision making. Give-and-take is required among the decision makers in order to arrive at timely, workable solutions to problems. A collegial process can work effectively only if individual members are tactful, respectful of one another's views, and mindful of the need to agree on workable, rather than ideal, solutions to problems.
- **Communication skills.** Board members should be able to communicate effectively in both oral and written form. Oral communication includes discussion in Board meetings, dialogue with fellow Board members and the technical staff, speeches, and other contacts with persons outside the GASB. Written communication includes internal memoranda, speeches, articles, and correspondence with constituents. All of these kinds of communication require thought, tact and clarity of expression.

QUALIFICATIONS (continued)

- **Awareness of the state and local government financial reporting environment.** The GASB deals with technical accounting issues, but its decisions must be made in the context of trends and events in the government and financial community as a whole and in the context of the needs of users of governmental financial reports. A member of the GASB should have a broad understanding of the environment in which government operates and the forces that impact that environment. Consideration will be given to a candidate's understanding of the relationship between accounting and reporting standards and government operations, finance, and public accountability.
- **Commitment to the GASB's mission.** A candidate for membership on the GASB should be committed to the Board's mission as described in its mission statement and to the hard work required to fulfill it. A candidate should understand the role of due process, the need for consensus building in the promulgation of standards, and a commitment to the goals of the GASB's strategic plan. The candidate should believe in the importance of the Board's work, be devoted to the overriding objectives of the GASB, and be sensitive to the concerns of the GASB's stakeholders.

COMMITMENT FOR PART-TIME MEMBERSHIP

The GASB meets in Norwalk, Connecticut, approximately nine times each year, generally every six weeks. Meetings are usually held on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday (normally two and a half days, ending at noon on Thursday). A teleconference meeting is normally held in the middle of the six-week cycle (generally on a Monday or a Tuesday for a half day in the afternoon). To accommodate attendance at Governmental Accounting Standards Advisory Council (GASAC) and task force meetings, the GASB may meet on a Monday and conclude on Friday. Occasionally, GASAC and Task Force meetings may be held at times other than a GASB meeting week. Availability during meeting times is very important. A Board member is expected to attend all Board meetings and, therefore, should schedule all other activities so that those activities do not conflict with the Board meeting schedule. Board meetings normally are scheduled one year in advance. TENTATIVE 2022 Board meeting dates: January 25—27, March 8—10, April 19—21, May 31—June 2, July 12—14, August 24—26, October 11—13, and November 16—18.

Materials are sent to Board members one to two weeks before each meeting, the studying of which adds about three days per month to the commitment. Board members are expected to provide timely written responses to staff requests for comments on meeting and other related materials.

In addition to the Board, GASAC, and task force meetings noted above, there is also a requirement to attend public hearings and certain meetings of key stakeholder organizations. These meetings might average four to six days per year.

The overall time commitment is considered equivalent to one-third of a full-time position.

GASB members must be mindful of their public responsibilities and the need for public confidence in the independence, objectivity, and integrity of the standard-setting process. It is of the utmost importance that members be cognizant of avoiding conflicts between their private interests and activities and their duties and responsibilities on the GASB and the public interest that the GASB serves. In this regard, members should recognize that independence and objectivity are, in large measure, subjective qualities and that reasonable people assessing like facts can in good faith reach different conclusions. Accordingly, while part-time GASB members generally are permitted to maintain other employment while serving on the GASB, they must obtain authorization of the Foundation's Trustees for such employment. In certain instances, authorization may not be granted if such other employment gives rise to the potential for actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

TERM

The successful candidate will be appointed to an initial five-year term commencing July 1, 2022 and may be eligible for reappointment to an additional term of up to five years.

COMPENSATION

There is a competitive salary for this part-time position, that is uniform for all part-time GASB members other than the vice chair, and payable monthly. Expenses are reimbursed for travel and other out-of-pocket costs directly associated with GASB membership, in accordance with FAF policies. Candidates also will be expected to comply with the FAF's "Policies in Respect of Investments and Other Personal Activities of Board Members and Board Staff Directors."

GOVERNMENTAL ACCOUNTING STANDARDS BOARD

The GASB, a standard-setting body of the FAF, is independent of all other government and professional associations. The GASB's authority for its standards has been recognized under Rules of Conduct of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Also, legislation in many states requires compliance with GASB standards.

The GASB's role as the state and local government accounting standards setter is important because external financial reporting can demonstrate a government's financial accountability to the public and is the basis for investment, credit, and many legislative and regulatory decisions.

The GASB is comprised of members with experience as state and local government financial statement preparers, auditors, and users, and from the academic community. Current members of the Board include Joel Black, chair; Jeffrey J. Previdi, vice chair; James E. Brown (term expires June 30, 2022); Brian W. Caputo; Kristopher E. Knight; Dianne E. Ray; and Carolyn Smith.

The GASB has approximately 20 technical staff drawn from public accounting, academe, government, and the user community, plus 4 support staff. The staff works directly with the Board and its task forces, conducts research, participates in public hearings, analyzes oral and written comments received from the public, and prepares recommendations and drafts of documents for consideration by the Board.

The GASB's annual operating budget is approximately \$12.4 million. The largest share of financial support for the GASB comes from accounting support fees, which are paid by municipal bond brokers and dealers. These support fees are collected under Section 978 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010 to fund the annual recoverable expenses of the GASB. Instituted in 2012 through an SEC order instructing the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) to establish, assess, and collect accounting support fees from its members, GASB accounting support fees collected in 2020 were \$10.0 million paid by a total of 374 broker dealers. The GASB does not receive any funds from federal, state, or local governments.

GASB'S MISSION

The mission of the GASB is to establish and improve financial accounting and reporting standards to provide useful information to investors and other users of financial reports and to educate stakeholders on how to most effectively understand and implement those standards.

USES AND USERS OF GOVERNMENTAL ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

Accounting and financial reporting standards are essential to the efficient and effective functioning of our democratic system of government. Financial reporting plays a major role in fulfilling government's duty to be publicly accountable in a representative democracy. Financial reporting by state and local governments is used to assess that accountability and to make economic, social, and political decisions.

The primary users of state and local governmental general purpose external financial reports are those:

- To whom government is primarily accountable—its citizens
- Who directly represent the citizens— legislative and oversight bodies
- Who finance government or who participate in the financing process—taxpayers, other governments, investors, creditors, underwriters, and analysts.

Government administrators also use financial reports; however, those who participate in preparing reported financial information or have access to internal financial information are not considered by GASB as primary users.

USES AND USERS OF GOVERNMENTAL ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING (continued)

To accomplish its mission, the GASB acts to:

- Issue high-quality standards that improve the usefulness of financial reports based on the needs of financial report users and on the underlying concepts set out in the GASB's conceptual framework
- Keep standards current to reflect changes in the governmental environment
- Provide guidance on implementation of standards
- Consider significant areas of accounting and financial reporting that can be improved through the standard-setting process
- Improve the common understanding of the nature and purposes of information contained in financial reports.

The GASB develops and uses concepts to guide its work of establishing standards. Those concepts provide a frame of reference, or conceptual framework, for resolving accounting and financial reporting issues. The GASB's work on both standards and concepts is based on research conducted by the GASB's technical staff and others. The GASB actively solicits and considers the views of its various stakeholders on all accounting and financial reporting issues. The GASB's activities are open to public participation and observation under the "due process" mandated by GASB Rules of Procedure.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In establishing standards and concepts, the GASB exercises its judgment after research, due process, and careful deliberation. It is guided by these principles:

- To be objective and neutral in its decision making and to ensure, as much as possible, that the information resulting from its standards is a faithful representation of the effects of state and local government activities. Objective and neutral mean freedom from bias, precluding the GASB from placing any interest above the interests of the many who rely on the information contained in financial reports.
- To weigh carefully the views of its stakeholders in developing standards and concepts so that they will:
 - a. Meet the accountability and decision-making needs of the users of government financial reports,
 - b. Gain general acceptance among state and local government preparers and auditors of financial reports.
- To establish standards only when the expected benefits justify the perceived costs. The GASB strives to determine that proposed standards (including disclosure requirements) fill a significant need and that the costs they impose, compared with possible alternatives, are justified in relation to the overall public benefit.
- To consider the applicability of its standards to the separately issued general purpose financial statements of governmentally owned special entities. The GASB is aware of the unique and distinguishing characteristics of the government environment, which may require different standards from those used by similar private-sector entities. However, it specifically evaluates similarities of special entities and of their activities and transactions in both the public and private sectors, and the need, in certain instances, for comparability with the private sector.
- To bring about needed changes in ways that balance the desire to minimize disruption of accounting and financial reporting processes with the need for information in financial reports to communicate effectively to users. The GASB establishes reasonable effective dates and transition provisions when new standards are introduced.
- To review the effects of past decisions and amend or supersede standards when appropriate.

DUE PROCESS

The GASB is committed to following an open, orderly process for standard setting. The procedures followed by the GASB, as more fully discussed below, are designed to permit timely, thorough, and open study of accounting and financial reporting issues. These procedures are designed to encourage broad public participation in the GASB's standard-setting process by creating channels for the communication of all points of view and expressions of opinion at all stages of the process. Considering the expressed opinions of those concerned with or affected by governmental accounting and financial reporting is fundamental to the operation of the GASB. Of particular importance to the GASB is the receipt of thoughtful, reasoned, and timely input during the GASB's research, discussion, and deliberative processes. The GASB recognizes that acceptance of its conclusions is enhanced by demonstrating that the input received in due process is considered carefully.

GOVERNMENTAL ACCOUNTING STANDARDS ADVISORY COUNCIL (GASAC)

The GASAC has responsibility for consulting with the GASB as to technical issues on the Board's agenda, project priorities, matters likely to require the attention of the GASB, selection and organization of task forces, and such other matters as may be requested by the GASB or its chair

The Council has 32 members who are broadly representative of preparers, auditors, and users of government financial information.

TO APPLY

Apply electronically with resume, cover letter and contact information for five references to www.govhrjobs.com. Open until filled but to ensure consideration, please apply by July 15, 2021. For questions regarding this opportunity, please contact Heidi Voorhees at HVoorhees@GovHRUSA.com.

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Additional information about the GASB can be found at the GASB's website at www.gasb.org.



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