

Director of Community Innovations

Reports to Chief Program Officer

Job Summary

The Partnership is looking for an established leader to oversee all programs within our Community Innovations portfolio which includes initiatives rooted in equitable access for historically disenfranchised or underserved populations such as youth, African-Americans, Latinx, women, veterans and people with disabilities. Focused on equity and systems-level change, the qualified candidate for the Director of Community Innovations (DCI) will be an experienced leader of programs and people, comfortable navigating an ever-changing environment.

Utilizing design thinking principles, strategic planning tools, and sector, place-based, and population focused strategies, the DCI will lead the design, programmatic and fund development, and implementation of innovative workforce and economic development solutions. The mission of the Community Innovations Team and the programs under the DCI's oversight is to advance equity and inclusion in workforce development for target communities, both geographically and demographically defined.

Key Responsibilities and Duties

Manages a team of program managers tasked with identifying, creating, implementing, and evaluating initiatives designed to advance The Partnership's mission, promote innovation within the field of Workforce Development, and improve the impact of The Partnership's investments.

Develops protocols for assessing contractor's achievement of performance measures/goals and is responsible for the preparation/compilation of reports to oversight boards and funders.

Builds coalitions of various partner organizations and stakeholders to rally behind a common mission and design innovative and effective programs with partner organizations.

Maintains relationships with national and local researchers to evaluate effectiveness and impact of the Partnership's programming.

Collaboratively leads efforts within The Partnership to establish programmatic solutions to difficult realities confronting job seekers and businesses, and drive key community initiatives created to address specific workforce development needs including but not limited to:

- a. achieving racial and gender equity in the labor market;
- b. reducing the racial wealth gap and intergenerational poverty;

- c. creating opportunity for inclusion and access for marginalized communities with a focus on returning citizens and persons with disabilities;
- d. connecting Opportunity Youth to career pathways;
- e. investing in communities that have been most impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic;
- f. establishing sector focused initiatives to increase access and representation in construction, tech, manufacturing and other high demand industries; and
- g. serving residents and voucher holders of public housing authorities.

Leverages Career Connect, The Partnership's integrated case management and business services data system, as a tool for tracking and benchmarking outcomes from The Partnership's initiatives; and utilizes Career Connect to better understand job seeker needs, and to evaluate programs.

Maintains an understanding of workforce development funding in the region, including city, state, and federal allocations, private investments, and opportunities for grants from government entities or foundations.

Diversifies The Partnership's funding for its operations and programs by securing philanthropic, corporate and government resources for special initiatives, general operating expenses, business relations and economic development functions and research and evaluation functions.

Works in tandem with Fiscal staff to ensure that programmatic and fiscal needs of contractors are met, and budgets and expenses are aligned.

Communicates organizational strategies to key audiences.

Works with government, business, community-based organizations, and other partners to align workforce programming and funding.

Helps shape The Partnership's strategic response to critical issues through researching national and international best practices related to workforce development, Cook County and the City of Chicago's key industry sectors, and targeted populations of focus.

Minimum Qualifications

- MBA, MPP, MPA or other relevant professional degree OR
- Bachelor's degree from four-year college or university and a minimum of ten (10) years' experience preferably in, project management, government management, non-profit management, public administration, public policy, or social services, as well as directly and successfully managing staff. Experience in strategic planning, quantitative analysis, working with senior officials in the private or public sector, and managing projects which promote workforce development /economic development is also valuable OR

- Equivalent combination of professional work experience, training, and education.
- Ability to travel throughout the region, state, and nationally, if necessary.

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Other Characteristics

- Ability to work in a racially diverse environment in which working towards racial equity in workforce or economic development or social service sectors is key.
- Comfortable and experienced leading a team.
- Strong strategic thinking skills.
- A deep understanding of workforce development strategies, including career pathway development, place-based strategies, population-focused strategies, sector-based initiatives, and equitable economic development.
- Commitment to serving the people and businesses of Chicago and suburban Cook County.
- Flexible, self-directed, and able to prioritize competing demands for time and resources.
- Ability to manage and supervise relationships with co-workers, sub-grantees, and contractors.
- Strong, effective oral and written communications skills, including ability to produce concise and effective reports and analyses.
- Ability to analyze large amounts of quantitative and qualitative data and draw insightful conclusions—including the ability to manage large datasets using Excel or other database and statistical software.
- Ability to use design thinking principles, logic models, and other strategic planning tools to map systems and identify areas of need.
- Ability to facilitate effective meetings that include senior level officials and executives.
- Effective relationship-building skills.
- Strong time-management and multiple-priority management skills.
- Ability to effectively present information and respond to questions from groups of managers, clients, customers, key stakeholders including funders and the general public.
- Ability to evaluate, write, research, monitor, and implement grant proposals.
- Ability to manage government contracts including performance, fiscal oversight, and adherence to governmental regulations.
- Ability to manage private grant agreements including performance, public relations, and funder cultivation.

The duties listed are not set forth for purposes of limiting the assignment of work. They are not to be construed as a complete list of the many duties normally to be performed under a job title or those to be performed temporarily outside an employee's normal line of work.