



Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund

Accelerating the Development of Vermont's Green Economy

JOB DESCRIPTION: DIRECTOR, BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Reports to: *Executive Director*

General Work Experience: *at least ten years work experience with at least 3 years in related sustainable development work and business advisory work.*

Education: *A degree in sustainable development, business, finance, community development, economics, psychology or related degree preferred.*

The Director of Business Assistance Programs leads VSJF's efforts to advance entrepreneurial success and job growth within Vermont's green economy. The position manages engagements with business owners and their management teams in the business sectors of *sustainable agriculture and forest products, waste systems, renewable energy, and the climate economy*. The Program Director manages four inter-connected activities:

- The **Vermont Agriculture & Forest Product Development Program** provides one-on-one deep-dive coaching to a select number of early and growth stage business owners within the agricultural and forest products industries.
- The **Peer to Peer Collaborative** matches CEOs and management teams with peer mentors to navigate key strategic transitions.
- **Value Chain Development Program:** facilitates the development of effective Business-to-Business relationships within existing value chains allowing the chain to accomplish specific strategic initiatives.
- The **Climate Economy Business Network** represents a new initiative to create a business assistance and financing ecosystem to that creates market solutions to address the negative impacts of climate change. The initiative will work to develop and maintain an intentional and robust climate-economy network focused on engaged collaboration among for-profit, government, higher education and non-profit organizations. The position will work to support the creation of a business accelerator program, in partnership with other organizations, to help accelerate the growth of early stage climate economy businesses and help them secure needed investments for growth, in order to create quality jobs in Vermont.

The Program Director will provide overall direction, operational management, as well as administrative and financial oversight for these four initiatives. The Director will be the public face of the organization's business assistance efforts, working to engage businesses, grow the cohort of skilled business assistance consultants, and sustain the financial support for the program.

Job Responsibilities and Duties:

A. Strategic Direction

1. Program Design & Priorities

- Work with the Executive Director to adapt, implement and integrate all business assistance programs within VSJF.

B. Operational Management

1. Consultant Management

- Select, support, and manage the consultants to assist with client projects.
- Expand and utilize the “inventory” of available consultants.

2. Business Assistance

- Provide general technical assistance and referrals to business inquiries.
- Facilitate key value chain stakeholder meetings to identify and implement strategic activities.
- Work with business owners to understand their strengths, weaknesses, and needs; communicate the benefits of working with VSJF’s business programs; and match them with consultants best able to address their situation.

3. Business Development

- Collaborate with the VSJF’s Communications Director on marketing and promotional activities for all business programs.
- Provide ongoing outreach to Vermont’s entrepreneurial community, business assistance and financing partners.

4. Network Development

- Facilitate face-to-face and virtual interactions with, and educational opportunities for, businesses in the climate economy aimed at creating and supporting a self-identifying industry cluster.
- Collaborate internally with the VSJF’s Forest Products Program Director and Farm to Plate Director to maximize the flow of communication and market intelligence between these program areas.

5. Communications

- Maintain regular communication with business assistance clients.
- Develop and maintain relationships with business assistance partners.
- Collaborate with the Communications Director to support the overall communications and marketing needs of each program.
- Participate fully as a member of the VSJF team working to integrate Business Assistance programming with other VSJF activities.

C. Administrative Oversight

1. Grant Management

- Assist with foundation proposal writing, as requested.
- Develop the annual budget for the program, and monitor budget to actual over the course of a FY, with oversight from the Executive Director.
- Prepare and submit funder interim and final reports.
- Prepare updates of activities for funders and program partners, as needed.
- Maintain relationship and grant administration with the VT Training Program.

2. Accountability & Evaluation

- Develop metrics and the necessary documentation forms and spreadsheets to track progress against various deliverables and metrics.
- Work with VSJF Office Manager and Finance Manager to maintain all tracking and accountability information for all business assistance programs.

Core Competencies and Qualifications:

1. Strong personal commitment to VSJF's mission of creating economic growth that also enhances our physical environment and community health;
2. Ability to manage a group of consultants: providing guidance, maintaining accountability; increasing their effectiveness; and improving their access to resources able to assist businesses;
3. Leadership skills including: excellent "people skills", advanced written and verbal communication skills, demonstrated quantitative and analytical skills, and the ability to facilitate diverse groups in collaborative decisions and action;
4. Strategic thinking and outcome-oriented planning and project management capabilities;
5. Direct entrepreneurial experience; and
6. Personally driven to make a difference.

The following represent additional competencies we value highly: experience with network and market development approaches and/or value chain development; knowledge and experience in VSJF's industry sectors; fundraising and/or grant management experience.

Send resume and cover letter to Lydia Pitkin (lydia@vsjf.org) **no later than 5pm, March 31, 2017**. Position start date is flexible, but preferred by May 1, 2017. Salary and benefits will be commensurate with experience and available funding. VSJF is an EOE employer.

The mission of the VSJF is to nurture the sustainable development of Vermont's economy by providing business assistance, network development, research and financing in agriculture and food system, forest product, waste management, renewable energy, and environmental technology sectors. To learn more about the VSJF and its efforts to accelerate the development of Vermont's green economy, visit www.vsjf.org.