Manager of Construction Initiatives

Reports to Director of Strategic Initiatives and Policy

**Job Summary:**

This is a grant-funded 30-month position, with possibility of renewal. The qualified candidate will direct all activities of the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership’s contract to operate the Illinois Tollway Workforce Development Technical Assistance Initiative (WDTAI). Leads a coordinated regional workforce initiative to prepare historically underrepresented individuals for meaningful careers in skilled trades pertaining to heavy highway construction. Manages subcontracts with 18-20 Satellite Service Providers (SSPs). Manages relationships with Affiliate Partners. Manages the WDTAI Advisory Committee. Communicates all contract activities and outcomes both internally and externally, including regular reporting to the Illinois Tollway.

**Key Responsibilities and Duties:**

Maintain a deep understanding of the construction sector, including skilled trades occupations, regional employer landscape, regional labor and industry organizations, and regional construction buyers. Knowledge should include industry trends, career pathways, and challenges and opportunities for workers and employers.

Maintain an understanding of workforce development practices, including the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, regional community college systems, union apprenticeship programs, pre-apprenticeship programs and sector-based workforce development initiatives.

Coordinate efforts among all SSPs and Affiliate Partners on full range of WDTAI activities, including community engagement and recruitment; pre-apprenticeship training; placement and retention services; job development; technical assistance; policy and strategic planning; and engagement of regional employers, unions, and government and community stakeholders.

Provide leadership, oversight and technical assistance to 18-20 Satellite Service Providers on their scopes of work which include contextualized pre-apprenticeship training, case management and career coaching, placement assistance, career advancement strategies, workshops, post-placement services. Manage contract deliverables and invoicing, enact reporting procedures and troubleshoot any issues that arise.
Convene the WDTAI Advisory Committee comprised of leaders from workforce development, construction businesses and industry groups, organized labor, government agencies, community organizations, and other stakeholders.

Collaborate with other Partnership staff, including the Fiscal unit to manage contract financials and sub-grantee payouts; the Programs unit to manage service delivery by SSPs; the Business Relations and Economic Development unit to develop a business engagement strategy and maintain construction employer relationships; the Communications team for grant publicity and community outreach and engagement, and the Strategic Initiatives and Policy unit for labor market and economic research on construction occupational requirements, job growth and demand, industry-recognized credentials, and career pathways.

Collaborate with the Tollway’s designees and SSPs to develop goals for program enrollment, training, apprenticeships, credential attainment, placements in construction sector employment, wages, job retention, job advancement, and other metrics. Measure outcomes against these goals and manage communications with subcontractors and funders regarding progress.

Highlight best practices among SSPs and others through quarterly meetings of the WDTAI Advisory Committee.

Manage 1 or 2 program staff to ensure attainment of project goals.

Conduct program evaluation activities.

Conduct all above listed duties, and more, in service of the overarching goal of raising the profile of careers in construction and increasing the number of historically underrepresented individuals who enter apprenticeships and other quality employment in skilled trade occupations that are prevalent within the Illinois Tollway.

**Minimum Qualifications:**

- MBA, MPP, MPA or other relevant professional degree, a Bachelor's degree, or a minimum of eight years’ project management experience, a Project Management Professional (PMP) or Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) credential OR
- Five years of progressively responsible professional experience, preferably in workforce development, sector strategies, consulting, government management, construction management, non-profit management, public administration, public policy, or social services; AND
- Demonstrated experience managing a team of individuals to successful program outcomes; AND
- Knowledge of the construction sector, locally and nationally, including occupations, employers, career pathways, industry trends, challenges and opportunities.
Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Other Characteristics:

- Strong strategic thinking skills.
- Flexible, self-directed and ability to manage and supervise relationships with co-workers, sub-grantees, and contractors.
- Project management expertise, including the ability to manage multiple work streams and contractors simultaneously.
- Ability to produce concise and effective communications in prose (Microsoft Word), presentation (Microsoft PowerPoint), or spreadsheet (Microsoft Excel) format. Applicants may be asked to provide sample work product at the interview.
- 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.
- Excellent verbal communication skills.
- 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 write reports, business correspondence and procedural manuals.
- Ability to effectively present information and respond to questions from groups of managers, clients, customers and the general public.
- Good and effective relationship building skills.
- Ability to read, analyze and interpret general business periodicals, trade and professional journals, technical procedures or governmental regulations.
- Competency in the ability to use the Internet for research.
- Ability to travel to various cities throughout the country.
- A vehicle, current driver’s license and auto insurance.

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.