ACLS Leading Edge Fellowship

Position Title: Program Specialist, Public Sector Engagement
Organization: Project Equity
Location: Remote
Stipend: $62,500 in the first year, $65,000 in the second year, plus health insurance and professional development funding
Start Date: September 2022

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

Project Equity is a national leader in building an inclusive economy, specializing in employee ownership transitions. We provide hands-on consulting and support to companies that want to transition to employee ownership; raise awareness about employee ownership as an exit strategy for business owners and as an important approach for increasing employee engagement and wellbeing; and galvanize diverse stakeholders across the public, private and nonprofit sectors to normalize and mainstream employee ownership. For more information, please visit www.project-equity.org or read our four-page programs overview.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Project Equity is moving into a strategic scale phase, nearly eight years after our founding. Embedding employee ownership into public sector systems and funding streams — across economic development, small business support and workforce support entities and agencies — is a critical component of our path to scale. To date, Project Equity has successfully demonstrated and replicated several government engagement approaches at the local level, including partnerships and contracts with local governments, Small Business Development Centers, economic development agencies and Workforce Development Boards. We’ve explored policy advocacy by founding a statewide coalition in California, and assessed federal opportunities with the Small Business Administration, the Department of Commerce and others. We’ve partnered with employee ownership lobbying groups like The ESOP Association. We are now poised to expand this work as an organization committed to social justice, but first need to document best practices and identify key leverage points within the public sector, to then advance thoughtful programmatic engagements nationally.

The Program Specialist, Public Sector Engagement will significantly advance this work over a two year period through a two-pronged approach: 1) Document successful public sector stakeholder engagement (“best practices” of what has been done and driven positive impact) and document key barriers and opportunities for real impact; and 2) generate and execute a strategy focused on engaging key stakeholders within government at the local, state and federal levels and shaping and advocating for policies that can embed employee ownership into government programs.

The Program Specialist will report directly to Project Equity co-founder, Alison Lingane, and work closely with both co-founders, who lead work on government engagement and policy. The fellowship tenure is 24 consecutive months, with an expected time commitment of approximately 37.5 hours per week.

This position is only available through the Leading Edge Fellowship program. You may not contact the host institution to inquire about this position.
Responsibilities and tasks:

- Document successful public sector stakeholder engagement across cities, counties, and state and federally-funded agencies (including Workforce Development Boards, Small Business Development Centers, Manufacturing Extension Partnerships).
- Through interviews with staff at these localities and agencies and other research methods, capture key opportunities and barriers to embed employee ownership, including funding sources and mechanisms for employee ownership programs.
- Study and generate lessons from historical examples of successful policy initiatives and advocacy campaigns, learning from aligned movements such as ESG, CDFIs, Individual Development Accounts, the “Organic” foods certification, “Promise Neighborhoods,” etc.
- Research and build a database of engaged municipalities, think tanks, allied NGOs, and key research players that influence public sector actors and influence public policy thinking.
- Surface and catalog opportunities to connect with local, state, and federal initiatives, policies, and networks (National Governors Association, State Council of Legislators, etc.) that promote local economic resiliency, quality jobs, worker empowerment, and other relevant issue areas.
- Help Project Equity develop different strategies of government engagement by identifying the most important leverage points for embedding employee ownership into public sector systems.
- Track local, state, and federal funding and grant opportunities; assist Development team in grant writing and proposal development for relevant public sector funding opportunities.
- Gather, package and share out voices from frontline communities that directly speak to policy and government engagement needs.
- Track policy changes and formulate rapid responses; Incorporate Project Equity’s voice into coalition and advocacy opportunities as they arise.
- Identify and attend relevant conferences and events.

Qualifications:

- PhD in any field of the humanities or humanistic social sciences. Read more about eligible fields in our FAQ;
- Strong desire to build an inclusive economy;
- Research, mapping, and interviewing skills, and strong interpersonal skills;
- Strategic thinker, ability to identify patterns, interpret networks, ask great questions, and formulate work plans;
- Strong organizational skills and project management skills.

Preferred:

- Experience with government programs or advocacy, proposal development and grant writing, and/or alternative ownership models.

APPLICATIONS

- Information on the Leading Edge Fellowship Program: https://www.acls.org/competitions/acls-leading-edge-fellowships/
- All applications must be submitted through the ACLS Online Fellowship Application System (ofa.acls.org)
- Application deadline: March 28, 2022, 9pm EDT