Job Announcement: Special Projects and Partnerships Director

Job Title: Special Projects and Partnerships Director
Application Due Date: August 27, 2021
Start Date: October 4, 2021
Location: Telework is allowed with this position. Travel to Ankeny, Iowa, may be required quarterly. Travel to Washington, DC, and partner meetings and events to represent SWCS and present on project findings is a requirement of this position. Approximately six trips a year are anticipated in addition to quarterly travel to Ankeny, Iowa.

Position Description

This is an exempt position under the supervision of the CEO. This individual is responsible for development and implementation of special projects to advance the Society's mission with emphasis on conservation science and supporting conservation professionals.

This person is responsible for understanding the needs of conservation professionals and the producers and other stakeholder they serve. This person facilitates grant discernment processes with staff and board, creates project activities and timelines, recruits partners, identifies grant and other funding sources for projects, and writes, implements, and manages grants. This position manages SWCS's entire grant portfolio, strategizing how grants can best fulfill the mission and provide income to SWCS.

This person coordinates the dissemination of project results through reports, SWCS position statements, presentations, and other outreach activities. This person serves as a technical resource for SWCS and represents SWCS at meetings and to partners.

Major Duties and Responsibilities

Development: Developing ideas for special projects and relationships with potential partners and funders to achieve the mission of SWCS will be KEY to the sustainability of this position. Drafting concept papers, developing grant proposals, and assisting the CEO with fundraising for special projects across the nation will be an initial and major responsibility of this position. Staying up to date on best grant management tactics for nonprofit associations will be a requirement of this individual.

Project Management: Direct implementation of SWCS special projects. Ensure projects are completed on time, within budget, and meet obligations and purposes of funders. Prepare, disburse, and monitor project budgets. Monitor and maintain good relationships with project partners and funders. Complete progress reports according to specifications of sponsors.

Outreach: Disseminate and communicate results of special projects. Maintain and update information through existing SWCS communications channels and externally to partners.
**Policy Coordination:** Develop and maintain SWCS position statements. Work with CEO, Board of Directors, and member committees to identify issues needing development as position statements. Update and revise existing statements as needed.

**Technical Resource Support:** Provide technical support on conservation science and policy to enhance ongoing activities of the Society including professional development, annual conferences, and publications. Serve as resource person for staff and the Board of Directors.

**Team Membership:** Assist, as needed, with all aspects of the organization including, but not limited to, events; policy; member and chapter relations; communications; fundraising; and board, committee, budget, and organizational development.

**Partnership Development:** This position is responsible for identifying and building relationships with partners to advance the mission of SWCS and serve our members. This employee may be asked to travel occasionally. Represent SWCS at meetings to partners, at times in place of the CEO. Relationships include:

- **Partners and Members:** High contact with project partners and members. Interacts with partners and members to coordinate special projects, provide support, and share special projects and SWCS positions and activities in conservation science and public affairs.

- **Governing Structure:** Interacts directly with the CEO, staff, and SWCS standing committees to carry out major duties.

- **Government and Grantors:** Prepares information for submission to relevant agencies, foundations, corporations, and other organizations providing financial support to SWCS projects. Answers questions, as appropriate, through direct contact with financial sponsors of SWCS programs and projects.

- **Public:** Interacts with representatives of conservation organizations, professional societies, and other groups whose missions are compatible with that of SWCS. Responds to requests from the public and organizations interested in the Society's work in public affairs and conservation science.

- **Leadership:** This position assists in translating lessons learned through partner and member relationships and special project to elected, appointed, and career leaders with the means of advancing soil and water conservation. This position is responsible for taking the voices of conservation professionals from the field to the desks of leadership.

**Qualifications**

Candidates should have the following minimum qualifications to apply:

- Bachelor’s degree in agriculture, natural resources, or related field
- An understanding of and interest in soil and water conservation practices, programs, and policies
- Experience in grant writing and reporting
- Experience and confidence public speaking
- Strong written and verbal communications skills, as the majority of duties involve interacting with partners
- Time management and multitasking skills
**Problem-solving and critical thinking skills**
**Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail**
**Ability to work as part of a team as well as independently**

**About the Soil and Water Conservation Society**

For 76 years, the Soil and Water Conservation Society has been the premier international organization for professionals who practice and advance the science and art of natural resource conservation. We believe sustainable land and water management is essential to the continued security of the earth and its people. Our goal is to cultivate an organization of informed, dynamic individuals whose contributions create a bright future for agriculture, the environment, and society. The Soil and Water Conservation Society is headquartered in Ankeny, Iowa, with chapters across the United States and Canada. For more information, go to [www.swcs.org](http://www.swcs.org).

**Our Office Culture**

At SWCS, we are a small (but mighty), tight-knit team of individuals who are passionate about soil and water conservation. We care deeply about our work to support the world’s natural resources and serve our community of conservation professionals.

We are as committed to helping each other succeed as we are to our mission. We recognize that when one of us succeeds, it is a win for our natural resources. We also appreciate that each individual brings different perspectives and strengths to the table, and we embrace growth and learning while respecting people’s values and interests. (We start our staff meetings with fun opportunities to share!) We listen to one another and allow space for everyone’s voice to be heard.

We use every problem or challenge as an opportunity to be creative and innovate. We have a positive, collaborative, and solutions-oriented work environment. When we present barriers, we also present solutions.

Within the last year, we’ve embraced remote work and are moving toward a hybrid work experience. Each team member must be resourceful and have the ability to run with things with a high level of autonomy and independence. We don’t hold excessive meetings, but are ready to assist one another when needed.

**Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**

The Soil and Water Conservation Society denounces the systemic racism, discrimination, and inequality that exist today. Racism, discrimination, and inequality of any kind oppose SWCS’s core values, which include respect for people and cultures, and the unification of people with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and ideas. SWCS seeks diverse voices, actively listens, engages in dialogue, thinks critically, and takes meaningful action toward creating institutions and systems that serve and value people equally. Our goals for the world’s soil, water, and other natural resources cannot be realized without justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. We expect justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion to be a component of all projects.

**Salary and Benefits**

Competitive salary commensurate with experience. Range is $60,000 to $80,000. Attractive benefit package.
Duration

All positions are dependent on funding and performance. This position is grant funded. Employee will be responsible for identifying and pursing grants and funding with support from the CEO. Potential to continually maintain position is strong. However, this position, like all positions at the Society, is at-will. Either the Society or the employee may discontinue the employment relationship at any time.

How to Apply

Applications are due **August 27, 2021**. Interviews will be conducted the week of September 13, 2021. October 4, 2021, is the anticipated start date. Please submit the following materials to courtney.allen@swcs.org:

- Resume
- Cover letter
- 3 references
- A writing sample that addresses the following question, not to exceed one page: At SWCS, we would like to expand the geographic scope of our special projects. Aligning with our office culture and mission, what would be the first three steps you would take to accomplish this goal?