



RGISC.ORG
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JOB LISTING

Position: Community Engagement and Partnerships Manager

Location: Laredo, Texas

Hours: 40 hours, exempt

Starting Range: \$58,000+, commensurate with experience

Benefits: 2% employer contribution into a Simple IRA, employee health plan reimbursement, paid holidays, 10 days earned sick leave per calendar year, 10 days paid vacation per calendar year, escalating with years of service

This position is primarily supported through a three-year grant from the Texas A&M Forest Service.

ABOUT RGISC

Founded in 1994, the Rio Grande International Study Center is a hard-hitting and fast-moving environmental advocacy group whose mission is to protect and preserve our only source of drinking water, the Rio Grande, and our regional environment for present lives and future generations. Our focus areas include water security, river restoration, air quality, habitat protection, community engagement, and climate justice. We seek to protect our South Texas region from the impacts of climate change by restoring nature and natural systems. Choices we make today, combined with RGISC's efforts to conserve this vital river ecosystem and the biodiversity that it sustains, will directly impact its survival and our community's well-being for years to come.

PRIMARY JOB FUNCTIONS

The Community Engagement and Partnerships Manager (CEPM) will be responsible for driving strong partnerships and in-depth community involvement for three grant programs related to groundbreaking urban forestry and community air monitoring projects for Laredo, with a focus on transforming urban spaces and promoting environmental justice. The ideal candidate must have a track record of leading community outreach and engagement efforts, building and maintaining relationships with diverse stakeholders, and ensuring the successful implementation of community-driven projects. Our objective is to improve environmental awareness and conservation by educating the community on extreme heat, poor air quality, urban tree canopy, carbon sequestration, urban forest literacy, and climate resilience in South Texas.

The Manager will work to build trust and foster strong relationships with residents and decision-makers to ensure successful project outcomes and provide valuable insights for future initiatives. Key responsibilities include formulating and carrying out a comprehensive community engagement strategy that includes residents and decision-makers from Laredo and Nuevo Laredo. The

ideal candidate will embrace the creation of a strategy that involves vibrant outreach programs; identifying and recruiting community and neighborhood leaders and volunteers; organizing educational and awareness campaigns; hosting special events, workshops, and meetings; door-knocking and survey campaigns; and using creative methods to engage residents, such as community art projects and local storytelling, especially in targeted underserved neighborhoods for these three grant projects.

Project 1: Adelante con Arboles (Urban Forestry)

This project is a three-year collaboration with Laredo ISD and the Texas A&M Forest Service to design and maintain school yard forests at eight LISD campuses. The CEPM will serve as the RGISC liaison between Laredo ISD and the A&M Forest Service to integrate learning materials and resources that impact student learning of forest literacy and nature-based climate solutions via hands-on outdoor activities and educational trips. The CEPM will organize workshops, programs and activities involving student families in the surrounding neighborhoods that boost local knowledge, skills, and ability to design, plant, maintain, and evaluate high quality treescapes. Lastly, the CEPM will devise creative paths and vibrant material to engage community members and media outlets on discussions about climate change, urban heat island, and air quality.

Project 2: Walk, Breathe, Connect (Urban Forestry and Community Air Monitoring)

This is a two-year partnership with the City of Laredo, US Environmental Protection Agency, and other local stakeholders that involves the installation of native trees and air sensors next to a high traffic downtown port of entry as part of an effort to monitor air quality, create a new public green space, improve neighborhood-downtown connectivity, and mitigate extreme urban heat island effect. The CEPM will focus on incorporating the lived experiences of residents from two nearby marginalized neighborhoods into the redevelopment and downtown revitalization process and engage community members in identifying and addressing root issues of economic stagnation and social neglect, as well as participating in planting native trees and understanding air quality. The CEPM will collaborate closely with local health experts and college students and faculty to conduct surveys and formulate relevant research projects. The CEPM will ensure that the community's voice is central to the decision-making process, thereby promoting equitable and sustainable urban development.

Project 3: Sensing Air Quality for Environmental Justice in Los Dos Laredos (Community Air Monitoring)

This one-year partnership with the NADBank, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and stakeholders from Laredo and Nuevo Laredo involves the launch of our border community's first hyperlocal air sensors network at two high traffic ports-of-entry and the launch of a binational community air council for Laredo and Nuevo Laredo. The CEPM will engage with community members, decision makers, and private sector officials to create awareness and understanding of air pollution and how it is distributed different parts of the city. The CEPM will work with partners to oversee the creation of an online data hub and coordinate a series of trainings and workshops around air quality data, both online and in-person, in Laredo and Nuevo Laredo. The goal is to deepen community understanding of air quality issues, promote community-led solutions, and empower residents to participate actively in project goals.

Overall, the CEPM will work closely with RGISC executive staff, a dedicated Project Manager, and key participants to help develop annual and final project reports, ensuring that lessons learned are documented and best practices are shared for future projects.

The individual in this role must possess a deep passion for environmental conservation and build-

ing community. Through educational outreach and strategic community interactions, the CEPM will elevate local understanding of forest literacy and community air monitoring principles, promote the benefits of urban tree canopies, and drive discussions in Laredo on climate resilience and sustainable urban development.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Lead the development and execution of community outreach strategies to engage targeted neighborhood residents, decision-makers, and industry leaders to meet grant deliverables and achieve RGISC's strategic goals.
- Organize and facilitate workshops, meetings, and public outreach events to inform and involve community members in Laredo and Nuevo Laredo.
- Develop user friendly bilingual outreach materials that effectively communicate project goals, progress, and benefits,
- Coordinate door-knocking campaigns and other community events to build trust and foster strong relationships with residents, and gather input from community members, to address their concerns, and integrate their feedback into project strategies.
- Establish and maintain partnerships with local government agencies, community organizations, academic institutions, and other stakeholders.
- Coordinate with key RGISC executive staff and project partners to define objectives, deliverables, and roles for collaborative efforts.
- Collaborate with local health experts and academic faculty and students to conduct baseline health impact assessments or related climate research projects.
- Develop and track climate-related public health indicators, such as heat stress index and air quality index.
- Facilitate the involvement of community members in the visioning and goal-setting process for project initiatives.
- Work to identify and prepare proposals for other funding sources to leverage and deepen these new programs.
- Perform other relevant work duties, as assigned by the Executive Director.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science, Public Health, Urban Planning, Community Development, Marketing, or a related field; Master's degree preferred.
- Minimum of 3 years of experience in community engagement, partnership development, or project management, preferably in environmental or public health projects
- Proven experience working with underserved populations and fostering community involvement and engagement in the decision-making process.
- Strong understanding of environmental justice principles.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills, both verbal and written
- Extroverted with exceptional people skills and demonstrated ability to work with diverse individuals; careful and observant listening skills.
- Fluency in Spanish and English, both written and spoken
- Ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously and work effectively with diverse stakeholders.
- Familiarity with grant writing and grant reporting requirements
- Experience in educational outreach and the development of learning materials is highly desirable.
- Excellent oral and written communications skills in English and Spanish

- Experience with Microsoft and Google suites: Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Google Drive.
- Experience with online technology and meeting applications (Zoom, Webex, Teams)
- Ability to multi-task, prioritize and meet deadlines.
- Ability to work occasional weekends or evening hours.
- Ability to travel locally and out of state as needed.
- Maintain a valid Texas Driver's License, valid insurance, and reliable transportation.

DESIRED PERSONALITY TRAITS

- Passionate about environmental justice and community empowerment
- Self-driven and able to work collaboratively with a team.
- Highly motivated self-starter
- Excellent people skills; warm, approachable, professional, and diplomatic when engaging with residents, community members, government officials, volunteers, funders, project stakeholders and media outlets.
- Ability to work calmly and accurately under pressure in stressful situations with short timelines and compressed deadlines.
- Ability to defuse tension and internal group conflicts.
- Detail-oriented and highly organized.
- Adaptable and able to work in a fast-paced, dynamic environment.
- Creative problem solver with the ability to think strategically.
- Collaborative and able to build strong relationships with diverse groups.
- Resilient and able to navigate challenges and setbacks effectively.
- Demonstrate creative and strategic problem-solving skills.
- Excellent organization, planning, and time management skills
- See tasks through to completion in a timely and detailed manner.

HOW TO APPLY

- **Email:** Cover letter, resume (maximum 3 pages), and contact information for three references to: info@rgisc.org
- **Important:** Please save your documents in one file with the following format: **YourName_CEPM_DATE**
- Accepting applications until **July 31, 2024.**

RGISC is an equal opportunity employer where an applicant's qualifications are considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other basis prohibited by law.

