

VERMONT HOUSING AND CONSERVATION BOARD
Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program

Job Description

Position: Program Assistant

Reports to: Viability Program Director

Classification: Regular, full-time, non-exempt; one-year minimum

Description:

The Program Assistant supports the administration and outreach for VHCB's Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program which provides business planning and technical assistance to farm, food and forest-products entrepreneurs to enhance profitability, viability and long term success. This is an administrative position working collaboratively with the Program Manager, Outreach Coordinator, and other VHCB administrative and finance staff to provide: outreach, application and enrollment coordination, data management, grants and contracts administration, and other administrative support as needed. It is a one-year minimum position, with the possibility of extension. This position involves working with farmers and forest products entrepreneurs at a time when the program is expanding to take on several new initiatives. There will be a mix of primarily office work with some work in the field, meeting entrepreneur clients and collecting information for reporting and outreach.

Responsibilities:

1. Coordination of Client and Grantee Applications

Assist Program Manager to design and maintain application forms and procedures for business planning enrollment and grants, and assess all applications for compliance with eligibility standards.

Assist Program staff to coordinate grant applications, prepare materials for board committees for review, and contact applicants to ensure application materials are complete.

2. Grant and Contract Administration

Review invoices and grantee requests for disbursement to ensure compliance with grant and contract conditions.

Assist Program Manager to develop and monitor grant agreements with farmers.

Assist Program Manager in procuring services: soliciting scopes of work from consultants, following procurement policies, and completing procurement paperwork.

3. Data Collection and Management

Maintain a system for tracking progress of participants and grantees, and for deliverables such as business plans and technical assistance reports.

Maintain a database to track data from applications, business plans, evaluations and grant reports.

Assist program staff to implement evaluations of business planning clients to gather data on program impact.

Assist program staff to visit and monitor farms and other businesses receiving grants to assure compliance and gather data and content for outreach materials and reporting.

Assist conservation staff with data management and outreach tasks on farmland conservation or other activities as needed.

4. Program Outreach

Assist Outreach Coordinator to conduct outreach and publicity about the program to potential applicants and to maintain social media and website content.

Assist program staff in using data and content for drafting press releases and writing reports that demonstrate program impact.

Assist program staff to plan special events and meetings.

5. Administrative Support

Provide support to office manager and administrative assistance to other VHCB staff as needed.

Compensation:

This is a full-time position with comprehensive benefits. Salary range is \$35,000-\$38,000 depending on experience.

Qualifications:

VHCB seeks a self-directed person who has strong communication, writing, organizational, and numeracy skills and excels in administrative work. Data management experience and attention to detail are a must; experience with Excel, databases and familiarity with accounting systems is preferred. An interest or knowledge of Vermont agricultural and/or forestry practices and related institutions is a plus. In-state travel required.

Organization Description:

The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board was established by the Vermont legislature in 1987 to create affordable housing and to conserve agricultural, forest and recreational lands, historic properties, and natural areas. VHCB makes grants and loans to nonprofit organizations, housing co-ops, municipalities, and qualifying state agencies. The Viability Program provides one-on-one, in-depth business assistance for working lands business owners, including business and strategic planning, feasibility and financial analysis, marketing, and management coaching. The program also provides grants to farmers for water quality projects and other types of on-farm improvements. The Viability Program assists approximately 100 farm, food and forest products businesses per year through contracts with a network of nonprofit organizations and independent consultants including UVM Extension, the Intervale Center, NOFA-VT, Land for Good, DairyVision VT and the Center for an Agricultural Economy.

To Apply: Please send letter of interest and resumé to Laurie Graves, VHCB, 58 E. State St., Montpelier, VT 05602 by June 30, 2017.