



Position Specification

Wellspring Climate Initiative

Program Director

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Wellspring Climate Initiative

Our Client

Wellspring Climate Initiative seeks to avoid the worst impacts of climate change by dramatically reducing global greenhouse gas emissions and accelerating the transition to a clean energy future. The Climate Initiative's investments are aimed at decarbonizing the world economy as quickly as possible and are focused on the strategies and venues where philanthropy can have the highest impact. Wellspring Climate Initiative (WCI) is active in multiple geographies based on opportunities for cost-effective mitigation. WCI believes that solving climate change requires the adoption of ambitious, evidence-based policy solutions that transform markets, advance clean technology and lead to large-scale change. WCI is dedicated to building the political will and powerful coalitions needed to achieve these bold policy solutions. WCI was recently launched and is actively building its senior management team. WCI is based in Irvine, California.

Wellspring Climate Initiative is part of the Wellspring Philanthropies and an initiative of Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, which opened its doors in 2001 with a mission to improve the realization of human rights and social and economic justice for all people. The organization is supported by donors who share a common belief in and respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Further information can be found here: <https://wpfund.org/>.

The Role

As a recognized subject-matter expert, the Program Director will develop cutting edge, impactful, and evidence-based strategies and plans that achieve transformational change. They will be directly responsible for several grantmaking portfolios across WCI. They will report to the WCI Executive Director and serve as a member of the WCI senior management team. They will communicate openly, engage directly and manage productive relationships with grantees. The Program Director will work closely with Wellspring's Executive Director and WCI leadership to contribute to research, portfolio development, and management related to grantmaking. They will be based in Irvine.

In terms of the specific responsibilities of this position, we would highlight the following:

Program development, delivery, and performance

- Develop, direct, implement, manage and monitor results-based grantmaking portfolios of the WCI, including setting out a theory of change, clear goals, and applicable metrics.
- Work with the Director, M&E, to put in place processes necessary to enable the timely use of evidence to support program design and develop / deliver effective verification and evaluation systems.
- Write strategy recommendations and background papers, as well as present proposed grantees for funding.
- Advise on and participate in the strategic direction of WCI, including long-term planning.
- Develop and implement an annual operational plan, to ensure effective in-year prioritization of resources and activities.

- Undertake initial screening of potential grantees; manage grantee relationships; analyze and assess background information; conduct site visits; solicit and develop funding proposals; determine appropriate funding levels; prepare docket materials; monitor active grants and review progress reports.
- Ensure adherence to internal grantmaking processes via appropriate documentation, grant budgeting, and reporting.

Sector knowledge and profile-building

- Proactively maintain extensive external networks with experts and opinion-formers within the climate change and sector-specific community to identify potential grantees and ensure decision-making is shaped by up-to-date insights and research.
- Monitor developments in the field to identify emerging needs, gaps, and opportunities.
- Undertake or commission sector-relevant research and analysis to inform the effective development, delivery and evaluation of programs and initiatives.
- Provide leadership to the wider philanthropic and bilateral donor community on the relevant subject areas.

External relations

- Manage WCI portfolios: identify new partners, conduct site visits, manage relationships, and perform due diligence, evaluation, and measurement.
- Engage with the community of aligned donors and practitioners working to advance the goals of WCI.
- Identify appropriate partners and collaborations to advance grantmaking strategies including, as appropriate, active participation in collaboratives, conferences and workshops.
- Represent WCI at conferences and meetings with NGOs, funders, experts, and consultants; ensure follow-up, as needed. This may include international or domestic travel.

Financial stewardship, supervision and management

- Recruit and manage direct reports, which will include hiring new staff as needed, supervise and work integrally with staff in accomplishing tasks, evaluate staff on an ongoing basis, make decisions around working conditions of staff, and support staff in their professional development.
- Support the development of an annual administrative budget to anticipate and plan for programmatic expenses.
- Prepare and lead the relevant WCI presentations.
- Perform other duties and responsibilities as requested.

Candidate Profile

WCI seeks an accomplished, seasoned leader who will be implicitly driven by the urgent need to mitigate the worst impacts of climate change by dramatically reducing global greenhouse gas emissions and accelerating the transition to a clean energy future. The Program Director will possess at least 10 years of experience in the climate change field, demonstrated leadership and management experience, and the ability to engage in and incubate a variety of programs at any given time. They will have deep experience in one or more sectors (e.g. power sector, transport, etc.) with a corresponding robust network. Experience working with one or more of the large emitters would be an advantage.

In terms of the performance and personal competencies required for the position, we would highlight the following:

Setting Strategy

- Demonstrated record of developing and executing sophisticated strategy, including the effective allocation of set resources to achieve ambitious goals.
- Intellectual agility and the ability to analyze, think critically, and understand emerging issues and opportunities in accelerating the transition to a clean energy future.
- Ability to weigh the risks of big bets against the potential for lasting results, making decisions accordingly and effectively evaluating constraints and making critical trade-offs.
- An entrepreneurial and creative approach to developing new, innovative ideas that will stretch the organization and push the boundaries within the field.
- Lifelong learner, who is inquisitive and solves problems with bold thinking and innovation and displays a strong intellectual curiosity.

Executing for Results

- Adept at setting clear and challenging goals, and committing the organization to improved performance, coupled with a willingness to be accountable for the oversight of implementation.
- Tenacious and accountable in driving results, yet flexible and open-minded to new approaches.
- Experienced in developing an organizational results-oriented learning culture.
- Comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty; the ability to adapt nimbly and lead others through complex situations.
- Exceptional project management, prioritization and planning skills, with demonstrated success producing high-quality deliverables on time and within budget.
- A leader who is viewed by others as having a high degree of integrity and forethought in their approach to making decisions; the ability to act in a transparent and consistent manner while always taking into account what is best for the organization and mission.

Leading Teams

- The ability to attract and recruit top talent, motivate a nimble team, delegate effectively and manage performance; widely viewed as a strong developer of others.
- The ability to persevere in the face of challenges, and exhibit a steadfast resolve and relentless commitment to higher standards, which commands respect from followers.
- A leader who is self-reflective and aware of their own limitations; leads by example and drives their team's performance with an attitude of continuous improvement by being open to feedback and self-improvement.
- Demonstrated commitment to principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Understands and embodies Wellspring values (<https://wpfund.org/about-us/>), including humility and teamwork.

Relationships, Influence and Communications

- Naturally connects and builds strong relationships with diverse internal and external audiences, demonstrating strong emotional intelligence and an ability to communicate clearly and persuasively.
- An ability to inspire trust and followership in others through compelling influence, charisma, passion in their beliefs, and active drive and ability to convene and convince others to act on compelling logic and common best interests.
- Capacity to initiate and foster strategic partnerships with key external constituencies -- including governmental, philanthropic, media, academic, civic, and business institutions and leaders -- to advance the thematic goals of WCI.
- Highly collaborative with a partnership mindset. Encourages others to share the spotlight and visibly celebrates and supports the success of the team, external partners, and grantees.

Wellspring's Institutional Culture of Respect, Equity and Inclusion

WCI and Wellspring Philanthropic Fund believe they are strengthened by the diversity of their staff, and welcome such diversity including race, gender identity or expression, educational attainment, disability, veteran status, and personal experience with the criminal justice system. They welcome applications from people of all cultures, backgrounds, and experiences, and they strongly encourage people of color and persons with disabilities to apply. They actively cultivate an institutional culture that reflects the values of respect, equity and inclusion that they seek through their work to amplify in the larger world.

Wellspring hires, promotes and retains employees based on their professional qualifications, demonstrated abilities and work performance, as well as on the degree to which these qualities are required in the employment positions made available by the Foundation's service needs and business requirements. All personnel decisions, including but not limited to recruitment, hiring, compensation, assignment, training, promotion, discipline and discharge, are made without discrimination based on any protected characteristic as defined by law, e.g., race, color, religion, national origin, citizenship, ancestry, age, disability, gender identity or expression, sex, sexual orientation, marital or familial status, domestic partner status, veteran or military status, genetic predisposition or carrier status, and prior criminal convictions, as well as educational attainment.

Wellspring offers a very generous benefits package including payment of 100% of the health insurance premiums for employees (and 80% of the premiums for spouses, domestic partners and qualified family members). Wellspring also offers other benefits including life insurance, long-term disability protection, a group 401(k) retirement plan (with an employer match), support for continuing education, up to \$5,250 in annual student loan repayment OR college savings assistance for qualified dependents, and is committed to providing transgender-inclusive healthcare.

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Contact

For further information on or to express an interest in this opportunity, please contact Russell Reynolds Associates at WCI@RussellReynolds.com.

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