



Position Description: Preschool Development Grant Communications Coordinator

Classification: Temporary Grant Position

Organization

Created by the SC General Assembly in 1999, South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness is the state's comprehensive early childhood education agency and a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. SC First Steps (SCFS) takes a holistic approach to accomplishing our mission of preparing all kids for success in school, work and life, offering services that improve children's health, strengthen families, expand access to quality child care, increase participation in four-year-old kindergarten (4K) programs and help transition rising kindergartners into school. Through a network of 46 affiliates, called "local partnerships," SCFS reaches children 0-5 and their families in every county of the state. With funding from the state, annually, SCFS provides over 2200 four-year-olds with access to Pre-K 4 across 64 school districts. SCFS is a public-private partnership with the ability to leverage state, federal and private funds to accomplish our state-wide mission. In addition to developing, funding and supporting programs and initiatives statewide, South Carolina First Steps also operates as a connector and convener serving as the Early Childhood Advisory Council for the state of South Carolina. In this capacity, the work of First Steps includes integrating government and private systems to ensure all children begin school ready to success. The diverse workforce that makes up the 50+ member team at SCFS includes salaried and hourly positions and is governed by a State Board of Trustees. Our office is in downtown Columbia, SC. As SCFS is a state-wide organization, some positions are remote, and some require travel.

Team: Administrative – Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five

The SC First Steps Administrative Team integrates core, cross-cutting functions including communications, strategy, evaluation, data management, human resources, fundraising, grants management and compliance across the organization with local partnerships, 4K providers and with other agencies and systems. The Preschool Development Grant (PDG) is a federally funded grant program designed to aid states in conducting a comprehensive statewide birth through five needs assessment, followed by in-depth strategic planning, while enhancing parent choice and expanding the current mixed delivery system consisting of a wide range of provider types and early childhood stakeholders. The implementation of the Preschool Development Grant is a collaborative function organized by the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) and primarily staffed through SC First Steps and the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS).

Position Description

The ECAC Communications Coordinator reports to the SC First Steps ECAC Program Manager in support of South Carolina's collaborative effort in the field of early childhood and all aspects of the PDG including: communications and public affairs, development of digital and print communications, speaking engagements, and public and media relations. The PDG Communications Coordinator is responsible for working collectively with all ECAC members, grant partners, and interested parties. A key

venture of the grant will be development, coordination, implementation, and evaluation of a variety of web portals to facilitate client awareness and ease of access to early childhood programs and services for the benefit of children and families. The Communications Coordinator must be a self-starter who is able to work independently as this is a new position focused on a major grant with a short timeline - which requires the candidate to be able to innovate, learn on the job, and develop new systems, processes, and projects. As a temporary grant position, the tenure of this assignment will be dependent upon the annual renewal of the PDG in South Carolina. This position is located at 1300 Sumter Street, Columbia, SC.

Responsibilities

Communication

- In conjunction with the ECAC Program Manager, works with state, regional, and local grant partners, among other interested parties, to support communication needs surrounding the one year planning and implementation phase of the Preschool Development Grant. This includes the design and development of online resources, social media content, and printed materials as needed.
- Assists with the development and distribution of all print collateral including: newsletters, brochures, posters, post cards and mailers; as well as the collection and development of high-quality photographs, videos, and written stories of early childhood clients, programs, and initiatives.
- Shapes the overall collaborative capacity of the organization and its partners through outreach and excellent communication.
- Coordinates with SCFS staff and agency partners regarding development and implementation of web portals.
- Track and measure the levels of engagement with web and social media channels over time; using data to identify strategies for optimizing online reach and engagement.
- Develops and executes an internal communications plan that ensures open and consistent flow of information between and amongst grant partners and SCFS staff.
- Oversee the establishment and ongoing maintenance of contact databases for all PDG and ECAC activities.
- Assists in planning and execution of meetings and events in support of grant activities.
- Other duties as assigned.

Community Engagement

- Ensure that stakeholders are consistently included in the development and distribution of content.
- Ensure that published content and research is reflective of the needs and interests of stakeholders and the public.
- Plan and execute meetings and events to engage people in ECAC/PDG activities.
- Ensure SC First Steps is well represented at events in the community.
- Ability to speak on behalf of SC First Steps at community functions and coordinate the appearances of other SC First Steps team members, partners, supporters, and clients.
- Build relationships with current and potential supporters and facilitate engagement with grant and agency activities.

Qualifications

- Minimum of a bachelor's degree in communications or a related field from an accredited college or university.
- 3-5 years of relevant professional experience.
- Experience developing and implementing communications and/or public relations strategies.
- Proficient experience with digital and computer skills, for example experience with database management, graphic design, communications software applications, social media, website maintenance, etc.
- Experience working with diverse people, organizations and projects.
- Exceptional written and verbal communication skills.
- High energy, maturity, and leadership skills with the ability to serve as a unifying force and to position communications discussions at both the strategic and tactical levels.
- Sincere commitment to work collaboratively with all constituent groups, including: staff, board members, local affiliates (partnerships), childcare partners, volunteers, donors, and clients.
- Self-starter capable of working independently in adherence with agency and program goals
- Must be trustworthy, hard-working, positive, a team-player, and dedicated to the mission of SC First Steps.

Other Requirements

- Must possess a valid driver's license and vehicle to use in performance of job. Position requires some travel within South Carolina.
- Must be able to pass criminal background and child and adult maltreatment screens.
- Must be able to pass a pre-employment drug screen.
- Ability to lift up to 25 pounds

Benefits:

This position is eligible for a variety of benefits that may include a comprehensive health and dental insurance program, generous annual and sick leave policies, and enrollment in the state managed retirement system.

SC First Steps is an equal opportunity employer.

SC First Steps is a drug-free workplace.

To apply, submit your cover letter and resume to Samantha Ingram at HR@scfirststeps.org.