JOB DESCRIPTION: POLICY ASSOCIATE

Job Title: Policy Associate
Supervised by: Director of Policy
Classifiction: Exempt, fulltime

ORGANIZATION SUMMARY:
The Steans Family Foundation concentrates its grant making and programs in North Lawndale, a community on Chicago’s west side, North Chicago, a city forty miles north of Chicago, and on aligned policy and ecosystem initiatives. By dedicating time, resources, and skills, the foundation works in partnership with residents and institutions to build and enhance both communities. The foundation’s work supports the idea that effective revitalization can occur within the embedded social and economic networks that create and sustain communities.

The Steans Family Foundation observes the model of “place-based” giving. This means that rather than focusing on a particular set of issues, the Foundation focuses on communities. It engages with those communities – listening to their concerns and needs – and then pursues opportunities to further the interests of the communities, always in close partnership with “on the ground” stakeholders.

In addition to its substantive place-based work, the Foundation also supports aligned policy initiatives that advance innovation and address local and statewide systemic issues that impede or support the healthy development of individuals and communities.

For more information on the Foundation, visit http://www.steansfamilyfoundation.org/.

POSITION SUMMARY:
The Policy Associate reports to the Director of Policy and supports a portfolio of policy and ecosystem work across multiple issue areas including education, employment, and community development. The Associate will manage aspects of the grant making process, including proposal review, diligence, and oversight of the portfolio. The Associate will also help shape the direction of the Policy portfolio by conducting desk research and monitoring local and national policy developments, and serves as a key thought partner to the Director of Policy in developing strategy and new funding opportunities.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Tracks national and local trends, research and best practices that impact and inform SFF’s strategic direction as well advance the knowledge and practices of partners
- Stays current on relevant issues, policies, exemplary programs, resources and information in SFF’s fields of interest
- Conducts additional research, analysis and literature reviews and prepares summaries and policy briefs as needed
- Represents SFF at convenings, strategic discussions, conferences, committee/workgroup meetings, or other tables as requested.
- Reviews grant application materials and reports including analyzing organization and program goals, outcomes, measures, budgets and financial data, and other relevant information; drafting grant reviews and recommendations; conducting site visits; communicate clearly with successful grantees as well as organizations that do not receive support
- Regularly communicates with grantees and partners to monitor success of existing grantees and projects and identify additional supports or opportunities to strengthen initiatives
- Builds relationships that enhance SFF’s knowledge, partnerships, and ability to sense strategic opportunities or barriers across a range of issues, environments, and communities.
- Collaborates cross-departmentally to help identify policy priorities
- Performs administrative and other tasks in support of the goals and objectives of the Policy work
- Attends all trainings and internal and external meetings as required
- Conducts themselves as an excellent steward of the Steans family name, modeling the values that the family holds true
- Other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS:
- Bachelor’s degree required, Master’s degree in a related field a plus
- Four years minimum work experience in related field, knowledge of or experience in early childhood & education, employment, criminal justice reform, or economic mobility a plus
- Solid understanding of the relationship between public policy & government systems and the experience of vulnerable communities
- Previous experience conducting research, summarizing data and information, and developing written reports and PowerPoint presentations
- Proven project coordination and management track record with ability to develop and implement multiple projects independently and meet required deadlines
- Excellent writing and verbal communication skills
- Strong interpersonal skills, and ability to build successful partnerships/collaborations, including working well with networks of potential partners
- Demonstrated passion for creating positive social change
- Commitment to inclusivity and diversity and interest in being part of a multicultural team
- Strong work ethic and integrity
- Sound judgement and decision-making skills
- Entrepreneurial mindset and a high level of self-motivation
- Positive, solution-oriented professional
- Sense of humor
- Ability to embrace and incorporate direct feedback

WORK ENVIRONMENT:
- This position operates primarily in a professional office environment that is accessible. Some travel to off-site locations in the Chicago metro area is required. Some of those sites may not be accessible
- This is a full-time position.
- This role routinely uses standard office equipment such as computers, phones, photocopiers, scanners, filing cabinets. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is required to talk, hear, and use hands to operate office equipment. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move objects up to twenty-five pounds
- Workplace is a smoke- and drug-free environment
- Equal Opportunity Employer. Decisions and criteria governing the employment relationship with all employees are made in a non-discriminatory manner, without regard to race, ethnicity, creed, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, national origin, citizenship status, military service and/or marital status, order of protection status, handicap, disability, or any other factor determined to be unlawful by federal, state, or local statutes.

While employed in this position, the employee may be required to perform other assignment not listed in this job description. The employee is an employee at will, meaning that either party may terminate the employment relationship at any time by written notice to the other. Nothing in this job description creates a contract of employment for a specific period.

Interested candidates should email both a resume and cover letter to Marissa Filippo at mfilippo@fic-sff.com.