

The Market Entry Fund

Position Description

Title: Director of Program Operations
Classification: Full-Time

The Market Entry Fund is a growing nonprofit that enables micro manufacturing and CPG food startups in Minnesota. Founded in 2019, its core mission is to enable traditionally marginalized and underrepresented entrepreneurs with a CPG food startup to enter and thrive in this industry. To do so, MEF collaborates with entrepreneurs, retailers, and other organizations to deploy needed business and technical assistance, microgrants, and advocacy services. Entrepreneurship is rapidly growing across all industries, including in CPG food among diverse communities. MEF is looking for an entrepreneurial and culturally agile individual to join the execution team that will steer the organization into the next level of growth and impact.

Position Overview

The Director of Program Operations is the primary person to oversee the nonprofit's operations, manage its community engagement, develop and/or manage initiatives, programs, research, and strategic activities that support MEF's mission and community. MEF contracts with external organizations and individuals, retailers, industry experts, and nonprofits to administer some programs, while other programs are administered in-house. Currently, MEF currently offers three programs: 1) 100K Accelerator Campaign (contract); 2) Co-retailing Program (contract); and 3) the Micro Grants Program (in-house). MEF plans to grow these existing programs, while building new ones in the next several years.

Key Responsibilities

- Organize, manage, and build on existing programs, initiatives, and partnerships, including:
 - The 100K Retail Accelerator Campaign – an accelerator retail program that helps drive revenue for CPG food brands/businesses that are ready.
 - The Co-retailing Access Program – helps cover membership dues for the brands/businesses (typically start up or newer brands) to get their food products on consumers shelves for the first time, or to grow higher margins in the initial stages.
 - The Micro Grants Program – provides grants to food entrepreneurs who can demonstrate that the grant amount can help make a true break through on a specific and existing challenge in the business.
- Oversee the daily operations – including:
 - Direct administrative functions, including but not limited to, grantmaking, managing contracts and consultants, managing financials/bookkeeping, reporting and other fundamental functions of nonprofit management.
 - Organize community learning programs and engagement activities with and for key stakeholders (e.g., food entrepreneurs, funders, government agencies, community leaders and more).

- Gather and synthesize data and research about impact and/or topics related to the industry and the field, and then disseminate and share findings.
- Represent MEF in the community. Build and maintain close relationships with leaders and entrepreneurs in the local food and beverage industry, connecting them to MEF's work and resources.
- Partner closely with the President and Board to support the mission of the organization through the following key activities:
 - Fundraising strategies and grant writing opportunities.
 - Building and maintaining donor and community relations, including donor reporting.
 - Managing all fiscal-sponsored activities and/or accounting functions including reporting, disbursements, and documentations to MEF's fiscal sponsor or key stakeholders as needed.
 - Supporting infrastructure, systems and capacity building efforts, including financial and HR systems to operate programs and services that further MEF's mission.

Working Conditions

The Director of Program Operations reports to the President of The Market Entry Fund, who is the founding board member and current president of the Board. MEF anticipates that the bulk of the work may be done remotely – with 1-2 days onsite, and whenever impact and/or engagement would be best for all involved to be done in-person – such arrangements will be required. MEF continues to assess Covid19 conditions and work arrangements.

Qualifications

- At least 5 years of experience in program development and management in a nonprofit or social business setting – with exposure to grant management and fundraising. A plus having collaborated with entrepreneurs, startups, and small businesses.
- Excellent synthesizing and writing skills, with an ability to tell stories of people and their passions (persuasive writing – connecting to data and evidence).
- Effective and adaptable, cross-cultural communication, customer services and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to effectively use social media and Microsoft programs (Excel, Word, PowerPoint) and other relevant tools.
- Curious, open, and comfortable asking questions and asking for assistance.
- Appetite for learning new and different areas, experiences, and communities.
- Adept in fluid and dynamic, sometimes ambiguous, settings – understanding the nature of startups and small businesses.

Compensation

This position starts with an annual compensation of \$51,000 and has great potential for high growth depending on performance after the first year. The position contributes between 36-40 hours/week, with paid vacation/sick leave, and a monetary contribution to help cover health insurance if needed.

To Apply please submit your cover letter and resume with desired salary range to Kayla Yang-Best, Board President at kayla.yangbest@marketentryfund.org. Email inquiries are welcome.