POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT:
MEETING PLANNER & ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Program/Role: Administration/Meeting & Event Planning
Location: Minneapolis Office: 2801 21st Avenue South, Suite 220
Reports to: Event Planner & Administrative Manager
Type of Position: Position Description assumes a full-time position
Compensation: Competitive

INTRODUCTION:

GPI's Vision & Working Culture
The Great Plains Institute sees energy as the “master resource,” and believes that access to affordable, reliable, increasingly clean and carbon-neutral energy is a prerequisite to a high quality of life for all people. Thus our mission is to transform the way we produce, distribute and consume energy to be economically and environmentally sustainable. Our vision for the world is that people meet their energy needs increasingly through energy efficiency and zero- or low-carbon energy sources, they are able to choose freely what kind of energy they use and can produce their own energy if they wish as long as they are paying their fair share to maintain a reliable system overall. Since we don't believe we will regulate our way to a sustainable energy system, we envision harnessing market forces in service of our mission and believe that energy policy and regulation should make it economically attractive to achieve a sustainable energy system.

Our vision for GPI as an organization is that it continues to build on its nearly 20-year track record of brokering novel energy solutions among disparate interests, and catalyzing the deployment of the most promising clean energy technologies and practices. We see GPI’s reach and impact continuing to grow locally, nationally and internationally, and expect the Institute to be among the most influential NGOs in the energy space.

To achieve our audacious mission and vision, GPI has purposely created a fast-paced entrepreneurial culture in which people enjoy both great freedom and great responsibility. People who thrive in this culture take personal responsibility for seeing what needs doing and getting it done. They are self-starters, problem-solvers, and quick to help others. They work hard because they believe in the mission and get to spend most of their time at the intersection of what they love to do and are good at. It’s a working environment in which performance is judged more on results than on time spent in a particular chair. We aspire to make this the best job anyone has ever had.
THIS POSITION: Meeting Planner & Administrative Assistant

To further support our audacious mission and vision, GPI is looking for an experienced and talented Meeting Planner & Administrative Assistant to assist program and development activity under the direction of the Administrative Manager & Event Planner. The Meeting Planner & Administrative Assistant must be creative and enjoy working within an ever-changing environment that is mission-driven and consensus oriented. The ideal candidate will have the ability to exercise good judgment in a variety of situations, maintain a realistic balance among multiple priorities, utilize effective methods for time management and prioritization of tasks, and possess the ability to identify and address urgent and important needs in a dynamic, fast-paced events environment. The skills sought in a Meeting Planner & Administrative Assistant include excellent written, verbal, and interactive communication and organizational skills, strong administrative skills, the ability to work independently on projects from conception to completion, and the ability to work under pressure at times to handle a wide variety of activities and confidential matters with discretion. Hours may be flexible and are typically Monday through Friday during the business day; some nights and weekends will be required.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES include but are not limited to:

A. Take the lead in planning GPI’s program-related meetings at the direction of the Administrative Manager & Event Planner and assigned program staff. GPI meetings can range from two-hour affairs to multi-day events in other states. The successful candidate will:
   a. Meet with relevant program staff to understand their meeting objectives and requirements
   b. Assist GPI’s program staff with project logistics
   c. Identify and secure suitable venues for meetings
   d. Coordinate with staff at the chosen meeting site to coordinate details
   e. Whenever practical, inspect the meeting facilities in advance (in person or via the Web) to ensure that they conform to GPI’s needs
   f. Take care of other event logistics including:
      i. Travel and lodging for participants/speakers
      ii. Food/catering
      iii. Handouts and meeting packets
      iv. Signage and other displays if needed
      v. Special needs requirements
      vi. Printing
      vii. The availability of audio-visual equipment
      viii. Preparation of PowerPoint and/or other meeting materials
   g. Serve as the point of contact for participants regarding their logistical needs
   h. Serve as the point of contact for speakers regarding their logistical needs
   i. Staff meetings and events as needed
   j. Organize registration of event participants, which may include working with an online service such as Eventbrite
   k. Create invitation materials related to meetings, which may include working with an online service such as MailChimp
   l. Review event bills for accuracy, and recommend payment to the Chief Administrative Officer
m. Evaluate and help select providers of services according to requirements from Program Staff
n. Coordinate tasks with others who may be assisting with a given meeting
o. Maintain records of event aspects, including financial details
p. Work with program staff to update the GPI website with event information, and updates following the event, such as outcomes and post event materials
q. Systematically capture the names and contact information of people engaged in GPI’s work and ensure that that information makes it into the appropriate GPI database for use in communications, fundraising and advocacy (databases include Outlook, LittleGreenLight and MailChimp)
r. Conduct post-event evaluations to determine how future events could be improved
s. Help solicit sponsorships for meetings where appropriate
t. Work with GPI’s communications staff to implement efforts to publicize events and promote sponsorships.

B. **Take the lead on various aspects of planning and executing GPI’s annual Energy Innovation Celebration and related events at the direction of the Administrative Manager & Event Planner.** The annual Celebration is a full-day event with an attendance of about 400, culminating in a dinner and program. Related events may include committee and consultant meetings as well as networking, fundraising, educational, and marketing events. The successful candidate will:
   a. Organize and schedule planning committee meetings comprised of GPI staff, Board of Directors members, and others
   b. Record, distribute, and file meeting notes
   c. Negotiate, plan, and manage projects in coordination with GPI staff, Board of Directors members, and outside contractors and consultants
   d. Assist with fundraising efforts, which may include developing fundraising materials, research, telephone and email communication, data management, and progress reporting
   e. Work with others to project, record, and manage expenses and revenue in the event budget
   f. Oversee sponsor and guest relations, communications, and event seating
   g. Lead or assist with other event logistics at the direction of the Administrative Manager & Event Planner, which may include but are not limited to the tasks listed under responsibility A, above.

C. **Provide administrative support to GPI and staff at the direction of the Event Planner & Administrative Manager.** The successful candidate will:
   a. Maintain records from meetings and events
   b. Ensure names and contact information captured at events are captured in the appropriate GPI database(s)
   c. Schedule and coordinate conference calls and webinars
   d. Employ project management skills, tools, and software to ensure staff, contractors, and consultants working on a project have access to meeting notes and planning and event materials
   e. Read trade publications, attend seminars, and consult with other meeting professionals to keep abreast of meeting management standards and trends
   f. Assist GPI colleagues with administrative aspects of their projects (copies, mailings, etc.)
   g. Other duties as assigned.
REPORTING STRUCTURE

a. This person will report to and take direction from the Administrative Manager & Event Planner, who will coordinate this position’s work and interaction with the rest of the GPI administrative team and program staff.
b. For specific meetings and events led by program staff, this person will take direction directly from those individuals in coordination and consultation with the Administrative Manager & Event Planner.
c. Performance reviews will be conducted by the Administrative Manager with input from other staff with whom the Meeting Planner & Administrative Assistant has worked throughout the performance period.

WORK EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS REQUIREMENTS

1. Commitment to the mission and goals of the Great Plains Institute
2. At least 2 years demonstrated event planning experience
3. Ability to work for many different people, juggle multiple tasks in an organized way, and manage expectations and tasks with individuals at all organizational levels to ensure that you are effective in your role
4. Detail-oriented and able to work independently, accurately and with minimal direction
5. Excellent time and deadline management, project management and team relationship skills
6. Excellent written, verbal, and interactive communication and typing skills
7. Fluent in relevant computer programs in a Microsoft environment, including Microsoft Outlook, Excel, Word, PowerPoint, etc., as well as experience with common customer relationship management databases, fundraising and communication platforms, online email marketing software, web-based project management and event registration/ticketing software, and web content management systems. Adobe software experience preferred.

HOW TO APPLY: Send your application materials including a one page cover letter, resume, and writing sample via email in Portable Document Format (pdf) to nschanzenbach@gpisd.net with subject line: “MPAA-[your surname]”. Optional materials could include a writing sample, professional references, and salary requirement. A single pdf of all materials is preferred. Deadline for application is January 15th, 2015 at 9:00 A.M. Central.

BACKGROUND ON GREAT PLAINS INSTITUTE: The Great Plains Institute (GPI) is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation based in Minneapolis, dedicated to transforming the way we produce, distribute, and consume energy to be both environmentally and economically sustainable. We specialize in using consensus-based strategies to solve our energy and climate change challenges. Through research and analysis, consensus policy development, technology acceleration and local action, we are leading the transition to clean, efficient, and secure energy: www.betterenergy.org.

The Great Plains Institute is an Equal Opportunity Employer