

JOB POSTING: Director of Strategic Partnerships



ILLINOIS BLACK ADVOCACY INITIATIVE BACKGROUND

In 2021, the Illinois Black Advocacy Initiative (IBAI), a Project of Forefront was founded due to the current heightened sense of urgency to create and advance a statewide Black Advocacy agenda in Illinois. Although catalyzed by the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Black lives, the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Chicagoan Laquan McDonald and other attacks on the safety, well-being, and quality of life for Black people have driven

momentum. This critical body of work acknowledges and builds upon a long pre-existing desire and early efforts to launch a unified agenda.

In May 2020, a peer group of philanthropic organizations delivered a presentation on the COVID 19 pandemic and its resulting impact on Black communities in Illinois. This event attracted more than 500 registrants and signaled a profound interest among stakeholders and partners in a deeper understanding of the needs and priorities of Black communities throughout the state and most importantly the need for systemic solutions to address and remove structural root causes.

This same group commissioned a landscape analysis to investigate these questions. The analysis built the case for a race conscious approach to advocacy in Illinois and a call for specific actions that could be taken to support this endeavor and that can result in a socially and economically stronger state. One of the key recommendations that emerged from the landscape analysis was the establishment of a Black-led, Black-focused, statewide advocacy organization. IBAI provides the important opportunity to align the landscape's assets towards a common agenda, narrative, and strategy. IBAI is deeply committed to working with Illinois' Black-led and centered, grassroots advocacy organizations & advocates.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

This is a new and exciting opportunity for a strategic, dynamic, and thoughtful leader with a history of building relationships and partnerships with community members and leaders, elected officials and advocates. The Director of Strategic Partnerships primary responsibilities are to cultivate partnerships and maintain relationships with Illinois grassroots and community-based organizations and advocacy leaders and to build a robust and diverse statewide base for

collective advocacy. The ideal candidate is an experienced organizer with demonstrated success on advocacy campaigns and movement building, with a critical analysis of Black liberation. The candidate should have experience using base building tools that decrease barriers to participation for grassroots organizations and individuals.

The Director of Strategic Partnerships will work closely with the Executive Director, and be instrumental in implementing their vision. They will provide guidance on organization-wide decisions and develop and maintain a healthy organizational culture. While the Executive Director is responsible for the organizational vision, the Director of Strategic Partnerships has the opportunity to develop and implement a vision for their work that is consistent with the organizational vision. The ideal candidate is a self-starter that both works well on their own and with a team. They are transparent and proactive in communication, collectively oriented and minded, open to growth and feedback, contribute innovative and fresh strategies, and possess strong interpersonal & relationship building skills. This position reports to the Executive Director.

IBAI is a fiscally sponsored, start-up organization with a developing infrastructure. The ideal candidate is flexible and comfortable working within a growing organization, while maintaining their substantive work (“build the plane while flying the plane”).

Job responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Build and sustain a statewide base of individual advocates and organizations. The Director of Strategic Partnership will be responsible for designing and implementing an outreach strategy that centers Black-led and centered organizations and advocates, to support their efforts and to facilitate the creation of a common agenda;
- Develop an engagement strategy that will sustain IBAI’s core constituency (Black-led & centered organizations and advocates). This engagement strategy will require both virtual and in-person meetings to build community, relationships and trust amongst people and organizations. The Director of Strategic Partnerships will be the main conduit for communication between IBAI and its partners;
- Use data management tools to track engagement, including demographic, geographic, frequency and type of contact, to measure progress according to strategy, metrics and timeline;
- Attend regular staff meetings, retreats, funder events, and other gatherings as needed;
- Develop power analyses, participate in developing a media strategy, and when necessary, engage with elected officials;

- Engage with allied organizations and individuals;
- IBAI is growing partnerships around the state, this position requires travel to out-of-town meetings & convenings and work occasional evenings and weekends.

Relevant skills, knowledge, and experience (there is no expectation that any person possess all of these, so please don't let the following discourage you from applying):

- We are seeking someone with a demonstrated commitment to Black people and the community. This person must be aware and informed of both Black triumph and struggle and the intentional and institutionalized racism that plagues the Black community. The position will require a clear analysis of structures and systemic barriers that sustain the status quo and alternative strategies to build economically, politically, vibrant, and sustainable Black communities;
- Strong belief in the mission of the organization and experience with visioning and imagining a better and more liberated future for Black people (radical imagination);
- Experience in social justice and social movements/organizing;
- Experience with an issue-based campaign(s), including campaign strategy and tactics;
- Demonstrated commitment to thinking through social justice issues with an intersectional analysis;
- A strong commitment to collaboration across disciplines as well as evidence of leading successful partnerships with a variety of stakeholders;
- Experience navigating different opinions, ideas and/or mediating conflict;
- Highly effective interpersonal, leadership, consensus-building, and coalition-building skills, and the ability to forge new relationships and foster existing ones;
- An understanding of the role that communications and media play in advocacy;
- Experience using technology like Google Suite, Microsoft Suite, Mailchimp, etc.
- Compelling oral and written communications skills.

COMPENSATION

Exempt, full-time position. The salary range for the Director of Strategic Partnerships is \$80,000 - \$90,000 based on experience. IBAI offers a generous full benefits package including a 4% contribution in addition to up to 4% match.

INQUIRY AND APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications should be submitted electronically via email to info@ilblackadvocacy.org and include a:

- Cover letter introducing yourself & your values, describing your interest in the position, and how your lived experiences have prepared you for this position (take care not to share the same exact information that can be found on your resume), and
- Resume.

Please include “Director of Strategic Partnerships” in the subject line of your email. This position will remain open until filled.

Note: Currently, IBAI is a remote office with access to a co-working space in Chicago, Illinois. The Executive Director is based in Chicago. All staff must live in Illinois within 6 months of hiring. If you are invited for an interview, the interview may be held over video conference.

The Illinois Black Advocacy Initiative is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. All qualified persons are encouraged to apply, regardless of race, color, creed, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, age, height, weight, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, marital or domestic partner status, former incarceration or religious affiliation.