

GRAND VICTORIA FOUNDATION

Location: Chicago, IL

Status: Full-time, exempt

Reports to: Executive Director

Start date: Spring 2019

Environment Program Officer

About the Foundation

Grand Victoria Foundation, with offices in Chicago and Elgin, is a private foundation that annually awards upwards of \$7M in grants and other support. The Foundation is in the midst of great change -- in addition to new leadership and team members, we have retooled our mission, vision and strategy to focus our philanthropy more deeply on supporting community-driven solutions to persistent challenges. Our vision is a strong, livable and equitable Illinois where every resident has an opportunity to thrive.

Our grantmaking focuses on creating change for and with communities closest to the need, with a goal to achieve equitable outcomes that reduce disparities and ensure fair access to resources in our areas of interest.

Our new grantmaking approach will:

1. develop and nurture individual leadership;
2. build and sustain strong and effective organizations;
3. support the development and execution of new ideas to address long standing systemic challenges;
4. offer opportunities for leaders and organizations to connect, share information and take collective action when necessary; and,
5. encourage and uplift civic engagement

The Environment Program Officer will join the Foundation during this time of big change. The Foundation seeks candidates who can help us reimagine how we view and fund conservation work, and expand the development of leaders of color within this field. We also are looking for candidates who are excited about helping us build a strong organizational culture that is aligned with our values, mission and vision.

The Role

The Environment Program Officer will help us embrace the exciting and diverse ways that conservation gets done by many people, in different ways and places within and outside of natural areas. We expect to tap into new opportunities that acknowledge the intersection between conservation efforts and local economic development.

The Foundation has a long history of supporting land conservation projects, typically through the protection of large landscape scale natural areas. The Environment Program Officer will need to review the work that we're currently doing in this field and determine the best way to advance this work while applying a broader conservation lens.

GRAND VICTORIA FOUNDATION

If this work is done successfully, examples of anticipated outcomes are:

- new environmental champions, especially people of color
- support of efforts that harness conservation as an economic development engine
- bold conservation efforts to transform and restore natural areas, agricultural lands, and urban and suburban areas are initiated

The strongest candidates for the Environment Program Officer role will be able to demonstrate their ability to thrive in the organization's emerging work norms:

- **Purpose-driven:** Grounded in the work, aware of the impact that is possible, and able to purposely engage and collaborate with others internally and externally to move the work forward
- **Innovation:** Able and eager to identify new opportunities, strategies and approaches to philanthropy within and outside of traditional systems and structures
- **Entrepreneurialism:** Able to grow the Foundation's education work and establish our identity in the field throughout the state
- **Ideas and inquiry:** Generate ideas, then test those ideas internally and externally to establish original methods and points of view
- **Comfort with ambiguity:** Possess the confidence and flexibility to successfully work in an environment where experimentation is encouraged

Responsibilities

The primary goals of the Environment Program Officer are as follows:

- Restructure the Foundation's conservation program to help the Foundation realize our goal of celebrating and supporting the diverse ways in which conservation manifests itself
- Manage the program budget, allocating resources to mission and vision aligned conservation projects; create new conservation grants criteria and application process
- Build relationships with community organizations doing conservation work, with a focus on bringing leaders and communities of color to the table
- Help the Foundation expand its definition of conservation outside of the traditional framework of natural lands to include other settings, including urban and suburban areas
- Help support internal efforts to build strong organizational culture at the Foundation that is rooted in equity and inclusion and aligned with our values and vision

Skills and Characteristics

The most competitive people for this role will have many of the following skills and/or characteristics:

- Progressively responsible experience working in the field of land conservation, environmental law/justice, urban planning, or related fields; preferably with experience doing this work at the community level;
- Understanding of land conservation, environment and strategies and levers used to make impact and/or change in this work
- Ability to manage up and across the Foundation to effectively engage colleagues and to keep important initiatives and programs moving forward
- Strategic, analytical problem solver, who identifies and leverages resources to advance grantmaking

GRAND VICTORIA FOUNDATION

Qualifications

- A belief in the Foundation's mission, vision and theory of change
- Bachelor's degree required; graduate degree preferred -- environmental (including law) and urban planning (land use) degrees are a plus
- At least 5 years of progressively responsible work experience working on issues related to conservation and/or the environment
- Experience facilitating productive collaborations among multiple parties, and designing and leading meetings to build consensus on problems and their solutions
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office applications and databases

Travel: A valid driver's license is needed, and occasional evening work and local and overnight travel is expected.

Compensation and benefits: Salary is competitive and based on qualifications. Benefits include health, dental, and life insurance, a 401K plan with employer-paid matching contribution, generous paid vacation and holidays, and professional development resources.

How to apply: Please apply using the following link: tinyurl.com/GVF-Environment. No phone calls please.

The Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and actively invites a diversity of candidates regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, or religion.

KLB Consulting: Grand Victoria Foundation has retained KLB Consulting to lead this search. KLB Consulting is an executive search consultancy that helps find highly qualified leaders for nonprofit organizations.