

Director, Restoration Economy Center

Summary

We are at the start of a Restoration Century during which we will see expanded efforts to restore the landscapes, air and water that have been damaged throughout centuries of development, resource extraction and carelessness. As we transition away from fossil fuels, the patterns of decline in America's natural systems will not recover on their own. We need to grow our capacity to mitigate centuries of damage and restore broad swaths of our natural areas, which serve as critical habitats for wildlife, create an important buffer for our natural systems from human development, provide resilience to the impacts of climate change, and ensure an important source for our nation's drinking water supplies.

One of our goals is to speed up the pace and scale of restoration in the U.S. so that it can match the need for carbon-storing offsets created by climate policies, increase our resilience to the effects of climate change, and offset new or previous impacts, both public and private, to natural resources. Among the best and fastest ways to achieve these outcomes is to increase the ability of private finance and private restoration capacity to deliver a higher volume and scale of restoration than America has ever seen. Our work on restoration aims to shift how restoration work is permitted and procured such that it can happen faster, more efficiently and cheaply, with broad political support through state and federal funding programs that define restoration as distinctly different from development and prioritize it over development.

EPIC is launching a 2-year campaign to support a) a focus on new or amended federal policies, including those related to procurement of restoration services and projects b) launch of a business/conservation 'restoration economy coalition,' and c) state-level work to support development of in-state working groups that include state agencies and are focused on ideas to make conservation priorities of those states more investable by the private sector.

We have an opening for a director who can help us achieve these goals. The position has significant flexibility in roles and responsibilities, depending on the skills, experience, and interest of the successful candidate.

Before applying, please read the Senior Manager position description which has many similar tasks and responsibilities that can potentially be interchangeable between positions based upon candidates' respective skills and experience.

About EPIC

The Environmental Policy Innovation Center (EPIC) builds policies that deliver spectacular improvement in the speed and scale of environmental progress. A nonprofit start-up, EPIC is committed to finding and highlighting the best approaches to scaling up results quickly. EPIC focuses on clean water, endangered species, environmental markets and the use of data and technology in producing environmental and public health outcomes. Our largest program is focused on delivering better, safer and more affordable water infrastructure to disadvantaged and historically underinvested communities. EPIC operates through a fiscal sponsorship with the Sand County Foundation.

Position Description

EPIC seeks a Director, Restoration Economy Center. The Director, working on contract or as a full-time employee, will create, advocate, collaborate, and advance projects that contribute to a growing and sustained restoration economy. We are looking for someone with experience with state and federal

policy, engagement with government environmental agencies, conservation finance, coalition-building and conservation thought leadership. We seek candidates who can quickly develop strong positions on issues, work independently, build programs within a small organizational structure and build momentum working with public, nonprofit and private sector partners.

The Director, Restoration Economy Center will be responsible for designing and carrying out key research projects on what is working and isn't working in mitigation, restoration, and green infrastructure deployment. However, this is not a pure research position. The Director will also be advocating for policy changes and helping build a coalition. The Center will produce research, white papers, webinars, blog posts and host convenings to generate support for restoration economy policy that streamlines restoration permitting and procurement and raises the profile of restoration in public policy conversations.

Responsibilities

Lead our strategy for expanding the Restoration and Mitigation economy and markets, reducing permitting times, and raising the profile of restoration in public policy conversations:

- Lead EPIC's effort to develop and house a Restoration Economy Center to carry out research, analysis, communications and host a coalition focused on thought leadership on ecological restoration and mitigation.
- Design and carry out legal and/or policy research into what is and is not working in mitigation, restoration and green infrastructure development.
- Build out and execute on a strategy to speed up federal restoration permitting and procurement.
- Lead work to engage states in expanding their restoration and mitigation programs, and conservation finance and procurement strategies.
- Track and take advantage of federal policy opportunities to drive more funding to and generally support more ecological restoration programs for coastal resiliency, flood resilience, and stream and wetland restoration.
- Develop policy proposals to improve upon existing compensatory mitigation and offset programs, including with tribes.
- Identify and participate in industry working groups, associations, and nonprofit collaborations.
- Participate in webinars, convenings and public events to highlight prominent issues and solutions.

Qualifications

Candidates must have:

- Bachelor's degree required. Graduate degree (MBA, MS, MEM, MF, MPA or JD) preferred.
- 5+ years' experience in one or more of the following areas: restoration and mitigation sector or permitting, including wetland mitigation banking and/or conservation banking, mitigation policy work, coalition-building, environmental law, conservation finance, ecological restoration. We will also consider time pursuing a graduate degree toward the 5+ years of experience.
- Empathy for people and ability to craft policy and program solutions that reflect the realities of everyday life.
- Experience leading initiatives that require quick decision-making, carrying forward a vision and forming and sharing opinions on policy and strategic direction.
- Excellent communications skills.

We will prioritize candidates who can bring:

- Strong people and program management skills; this position might have one or more direct reports.
- Creative thinking.
- Expertise with federal and state-level environmental laws, regulations, requirements, and programs such as Clean Water Act, state and federal water permits, compensatory mitigation programs and restoration procurement/permitting.
- A network of contacts within restoration organizations and government agencies.
- Experience with innovative conservation finance and private sector investment strategies in sustainability.
- Track record of successful fundraising.

Location

Depending on pandemic-related conditions, this position normally requires occasional travel to meetings, conferences, and other events. Work other than travel is done either in an office environment at EPIC’s Washington, DC office or at the candidate’s home office.

Compensation and time commitment

EPIC offers competitive compensation commensurate with experience as well as a generous benefits package.

Applying

Qualified candidates should send an email to Phoebe Higgins (Director of Markets) at phiggins@policyinnovation.org with “Director, Restoration Economy Center” in the subject line. Please include a resume and a cover letter. Please also provide any supporting documents we should consider in evaluating your candidacy (e.g., writing samples).

As we describe above, we know **there is not one ideal candidate who has all these traits** so if you have a mix of interests, skills, and experience related to the above – and a passion for this work – **please don’t let a gap in your strengths for this role stop you from applying or reaching out.** We currently have two open positions, for the Director and the Senior Manager of the Restoration Economy Center. You may see that you have strengths and skills that are a fit for both positions. We are open to redefining the roles and priorities across the two positions based upon who applies and qualifies for these two roles. Thanks for your interest in working with EPIC.