Tribal Partnerships Manager

Summary
The Infrastructure and Investment Act’s $13.4 billion in new funding for tribes and Inflation Reduction Act’s $722 million specifically for tribes (and another $400B+ they are eligible to apply for) have the potential to drive enormous benefits for tribes by preserving and delivering clean drinking water, repairing damaged ecosystems like streams and rivers, addressing dam safety, and helping tribes develop in-house capacity for even more such projects and programs.

This level of investment in, and attention to, tribes is an opportunity to shift in the dynamics of how the federal government interacts with tribes toward collaboration and respect for tribal sovereignty and leadership.

Our goal is to help tribes and agencies integrate their priorities in new ways. EPIC serves as an intermediary, facilitator, and funding navigator. Our intent is for these solutions and relationships to provide a model for how the federal government can work with and support tribal governments and groups in a way that leverages this once-in-a-generation IIJA and IRA funding for a lasting shift in tribal power in relation to the federal agencies that should be supporting them.

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. This job is a part of the restoration team, and would collaborate with members of the technology policy and water infrastructure teams. For more information on the restoration program at EPIC, see this link.

Position Description
EPIC seeks a Tribal Partnerships Manager to serve as a connector, facilitator, and promoter for tribal environmental restoration initiatives. The successful applicant will engage with federal leadership (Council on Environmental Quality, Office of Science and Technology Policy, Department of Interior, Indian Health Services, BIA Office of Strategic Partnerships and Environmental Protection Agency), agencies, and tribes for intentional partnership building. The Tribal Partnerships Manager will also be working on identifying areas of need for sharing tribal intentions with outside partners, while strengthening the existing relationships EPIC has to tribes. The position will be focused on expanding support for tribes to connect with resources, identify capacity needs and fill those, connect tribal leaders to key federal staff, and generally take a holistic view of how to ensure tribes can maximize their use of federal restoration programs. An example of a successful outcome for this position would be that tribes are accessing millions of dollars in new or increased federal funding relative to the past, and tribes who’ve not previously accessed IJJA funds at all are receiving funding.
**Responsibilities**

- Serve as a connector, facilitator, and promoter for a collaborative effort (that is envisioned to be with a cohort of stakeholders) to reset tribal-federal relationships.
- Coordinates EPIC’s tribal relationship building through engagement, regular meetings, site visits, and attending conferences and workshops that advance tribal interests.
- Identifies tribal needs and opportunities to engage with tribes and tribally affiliated organizations, especially related to federal funding applications (i.e., funding navigation) for water resources restoration efforts.
- Fosters respectful, positive relationships to facilitate effective communication between tribes and government agencies, including work to establish shared objectives.
- Help drive changes in how restoration work is contracted and permitted through government agencies so that it is more streamlined, considers tribal sovereignty and becomes a helpful model for how tribes use federal funds for restoration.
- Employ innovation and creative problem-solving skills to identify relationship challenges and adaptive solutions, and map out and complement stakeholder roles and contributions.
- Identifies and promotes best practices from existing tribal outreach programs, and also lessons learned from international government to government (G2G) relationships with indigenous groups.
- Facilitate Zoom meetings and other engagements to directly connect federal agency leaders (including those who are tribal members themselves) with tribes for better government-to-government engagements and stronger relationships.
- Continue and build upon earlier conversations between tribes, agency leadership, and non-government organizations that include a range of topics, from funding decisions to new program design.
- Work with partners to solve or at least identify solutions to tribal capacity limitations.
- Develop and draft program recommendations that advance tribal relationships with federal, state and local partners.
- Promote challenges, solutions, and successes via blog posts, website updates, and social media posts.
- Occasionally support tribes and affiliated organizations on data collection efforts related to clean water and service area boundaries.

**Qualifications**

- Bachelor’s degree required. Graduate degree (MBA, M.S., MEM, MF, MPA, or J.D.) preferred.
- At least three years experience directly working with, or coordinating with tribes or tribal organizations.
- Strong interpersonal skills and a passion for bringing together disparate parties with potentially conflicting priorities and perspectives.
- Direct experience with federal agency funding programs for tribes.
- Familiarity with the history of tribal-federal relationships, limitations, and challenges.
- Direct experience with federal infrastructure or water resource grant application and approval process, and specifically federally-funded tribal projects.
- Project management experience and ability to manage time well, set deadlines, and follow through on projects.
- Ability to initiate new project plans, reach out to new partners, think creatively and strategically and manage projects from start to finish.
- Excellent meeting facilitation skills and strong written communication skills.
**Salary Range**
$85,000-105,000 annually, based on experience and qualifications.

**Location**
Western U.S. region, or remote. This position may require occasional travel to meetings, conferences, and other events. Work other than travel is done at the candidate’s home office or at the EPIC office in the D.C. metro area.

**Benefits**
EPIC offers a generous benefits package including health, dental and vision care, 401k contributions and four weeks of paid time off.

**Applying**
Qualified candidates, who are also authorized to work lawfully in the United States, can apply by sending an email by **March 4, 2024** to Garrett Altmann, Western Restoration Program Manager at garrett@policyinnovation.org with an email subject of “Tribal Partnerships Manager”. Please include a resume and a cover letter labeled with your last name, followed by the document type (e.g. “[Last Name]_Resume”). You may also provide any supporting documents we should consider in evaluating your candidacy (e.g., writing samples, references).

We believe that including more people from a broad diversity of backgrounds, including people of color, people from working class backgrounds, women, and LGBTQ people, is essential for achieving our vision. Applicants with tribal membership, affiliation or from historically underrepresented communities are strongly encouraged to apply.

Additionally, 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. Thanks for your interest in the position.