US Green Building Council / Center for Green Schools

Project Director, School Decarbonization

Contract Position

Reports to: Director, Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council
Grade: Contract position
Hours: 30-35 hrs/wk
Date: January 2024 – October 2024 (10 months, contract will be extended pending funding)
Location: Remote position
Salary: $90,000 - $115,000 (10-month position)

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is a global, nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C., working to improve human health, sustainability, and resilience in the built environment through its programs and standards including LEED, the most widely used green building rating system in the world. Today, people in over 150 countries and territories live, work, and learn in LEED certified buildings, communities and cities that protect health, climate and natural resources and enhance quality of life.

The Center for Green Schools is a global leader in advancing green schools and providing schools with what they need to create sustainable, healthy, resilient, and equitable learning environments. We believe that all students deserve to attend sustainable schools that enhance their health and wellness, prepare them for green careers, and support a thriving planet. Our mission is to support and train those implementing sustainability in school systems. www.centerforgreenschools.org

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Center for Green Schools is an award winner of the Department of Energy’s BuildingsUP prize, and we’re seeking a program manager to lead the proposed work over the next two to five years. The successful candidate will play a pivotal role in ensuring the Center’s proposed program titled “Electrify America’s Schools” advances through the various BuildingsUP phases, delivering on our goals, and securing additional monies at each phase.

Our “Electrify America’s Schools” program seeks to accelerate weatherization and energy technology upgrades in Colorado and North Carolina schools, using paid for savings financing models that reduce upfront cost burden for K-12 school while simultaneously improving occupant health, building energy performance and environmental impact. We believe that energy savings performance contracts (ESPCs)
offer a proven financing and project delivery model for achieving these goals in both small and large districts. However, we acknowledge that the success of this model for a school system hinges on having a trusted partner. Our program addresses this reality, by focusing on capacity building at the state level and providing technical assistance support, local trainings, and education, and awareness-building for k-12 school staff. Our learnings will be compiled in a comprehensive "playbook" that can serve as a valuable resource for implementing similar initiatives in other states.

Objectives of the program, as included in the BuildingsUP proposal:

1. Create and utilize tailored messaging and outreach to school facilities staff, especially those in disadvantaged and rural districts, to engage around ESPC’s and electric heating and cooling equipment.
2. Create, launch, and manage a comprehensive decarbonization training program to build technical capacity among school district staff, directly addressing the challenge of lack of familiarity with the technology.
3. Stand up a robust and coordinated K-12 electrification support program at the state level, centered around using ESPCs to drive down upfront costs and secure capital for energy efficiency and electrification.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Project Leadership:
- Lead the execution of the BuildingsUP plan, coordinating with Center for Green Schools staff, and trusted state-level advisors.
- Provide strategic guidance, effective project, and budget management to ensure successful project delivery and achievement of established goals.
- Evaluate and adapt strategies based on the unique challenges and opportunities in each region.

Stakeholder & Community Engagement:
- Collaborate with school districts, energy and construction firms, state government, local utilities and other relevant community stakeholders to foster partnerships and understand barriers to ESPC and low-carbon HVAC technology adoption.
- Act as a trusted advisor, dedicating time to educate and guide school districts throughout the ESPC process.

Education:
- Develop and implement educational programs, in partnership with local and national partners, to raise awareness about ESPCs and their benefits within the K-12 school community.
- Create and deliver training sessions to school district personnel on the advantages and intricacies of ESPCs and on low-carbon HVAC technologies.
- Facilitate a peer-learning cohort with program participants in North Carolina and Colorado.
TIMELINE OF DELIVERABLES
Listed below is a high-level timeline of this 10 month contract, outlining the key areas of work and specific deliverables.

January – March, 2024:
Overall objective: Relationship building, stakeholder engagement, and opportunity mapping
- Understand, meet, and map state-level energy, education, and other related offices in North Carolina and Colorado.
- Understand, meet, and map related state-level associations and advocacy groups in North Carolina and Colorado.
- Meet with local school district representatives to understand their needs and challenges related to electrification and ESPC utilization.
- Research and participate in existing meetings, events, and conferences where stakeholder input can be gathered, and relationships can be strengthened in the pilot states and on the national level.
- By March 20: Draft outline of key participants and strategies in each state to achieve the program’s objectives, including resources that will be needed to execute. Initial proposed strategies and tactics should have been vetted through stakeholder engagement with a diverse group of school districts.

March – May, 2024:
Overall objective: Create a robust plan for submission to DOE and test strategies and tactics as possible
- Utilize technical assistance from the U.S. Department of Energy to understand what they will be looking for in a strong Phase 2 proposal.
- Research and participate in existing meetings, events, and conferences where stakeholder input can be gathered, and relationships can be strengthened in the pilot states and on the national level.
- Pursue meetings with key stakeholders and host stakeholder engagement events/meetings where relevant parties can assist in the development of a strong plan.
- Refine detailed program plan with several rounds of feedback from state offices, state associations and advocates, and school district staff.

June, 2024:
Overall objective: Finalize a robust Phase 2 submission to DOE.
- By June 1: Finalize the Phase 2 proposal to DOE, including the development of a Tech Demo Plan, Community Outreach Assessment.
- Submit final submission by June 17, 2024.

July– September, 2024:
Overall objective: Put the pilot program into motion.
• Respond to questions and feedback from reviewers regarding Phase 2 submission. Resubmit Phase 2 submission to DOE, as necessary.
• If awarded, plan for the launch of the proposed pilot “Phase 3” in North Carolina and Colorado, including communications coordination, meeting logistics, materials development, and state-level coordination of relevant parties.
• Other work related to the Center for Green Schools’ mission may be assigned during periods when the DOE program is on hold (such as when the application is being reviewed).

EDUCATION & TRAINING REQUIREMENTS
• Bachelor’s degree in environmental science, engineering, construction or business management, or a related field.
• Minimum of 5 years of project management experience, with a focus on commercial building energy efficiency, renewable energy, or facilities management.
• Familiarity with energy service performance contracting (ESPC) financing mechanisms.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS
• Advanced degree in energy engineering, construction or business management, sustainability, or a related discipline is preferred.
• LEED GA or AP accreditation, Certified Energy Manager accreditation or other similar certification.
• Comprehensive knowledge of and experience working with K-12 schools to implement building or energy improvement projects.

OTHER REQUIRED SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS
• Proven track record facilitating stakeholder engagement and community engagement conversations/events.
• Comprehensive understanding of energy service performance contracting (ESPC) financing mechanisms.
• Familiarity with federal and state-level energy policies and initiatives.
• Exceptional project management, budget management, and organizational skills.
• Strong interpersonal and communication skills.
• Demonstrated ability to think strategically and lead initiatives from conception to fruition.
• Passion for sustainability and commitment to advancing decarbonization and electrification in K-12 schools.

TRAVEL & WORK REQUIREMENTS/PREFERENCES
Candidate should be able and comfortable with occasional work travel for short durations attending conferences and meetings. In Q1 and Q2 of 2024, candidates should anticipate 1-2 monthly trips to North Carolina and Colorado.

HOW TO APPLY
The Center for Green Schools is an equal opportunity employer. We encourage applications from candidates of all backgrounds and experiences.

Interested candidates should submit a resume, cover letter, and a list of three professional references to Phoebe Beierle at schools@usgbc.org. Application deadline is January 22, 2024.