



ESMC Policy Director Position Description

Posting Date

1 September 2020. Position posting will remain open until the position is filled.

Position Description Summary

ESMC seeks to recruit and hire a talented Policy Director as part of a growing and dynamic team to develop and implement a strategic policy platform for ESMC. The policy platform will support a flourishing, viable, voluntary, and private market for ecosystem services that pays farmers and ranchers for their impacts. ESMC's mission- and impact-driven non-profit organization, operating as a public private partnership, offers a high-visibility high-impact opportunity for a leadership role working with the entire agricultural supply chain and value chain. ESMC is a change agent whose mission is to scale ecosystem service impacts from agriculture by enabling and building ambition across all marketplace actors, and by connecting buyers and sellers in the development and implementation of a national scale market.

ESMC Background

The Ecosystem Services Market Consortium (ESMC) is a public-private partnership of farmers and ranchers and agriculture commodity organizations, food and beverage companies, agribusinesses and non-profit organizations across the agricultural supply chain value chain to provide a science-based, standards-based program and full-service operation designed to scale beneficial environmental outcomes from agriculture by paying farmers and ranchers for their outcomes. ESMC's primary operating principle is that a market-based approach must work first and foremost for farmers and ranchers to achieve sustained ecosystem service impacts at scale. Additional principles guiding the Consortium are that: ecosystem services markets must consider regional differences in environment, culture and production practices; focus on producer Return on Investment (ROI); be science-based, credible, and meet market standards; show measurable impacts and outcomes; and be transparent to build trust in the full agricultural and food value chain.

The ESMC program incentivizes and rewards producers for their efforts in a national scale program conceived and designed to overcome past and current ecosystem market challenges. ESMC's strategy is to systematically de-risk the program and lower the cost of providing robust, science-based, credible outcomes. ESMC's investments in technologically sophisticated tools and infrastructure allows producers and corporations alike to meet goals for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions, improved water quality and water use conservation so that they need not make those investments themselves. Set to fully launch in 2022, ESMC offers a transparent accounting of outcomes to give producers an opportunity and capacity to improve environmental and economic outcomes while meeting corporate and societal demands. The program meets farm-gate needs and rewards producer ambition to combat climate change while improving corporate resolve to meet their own sustainability goals. Most importantly, ESMC provides the scientifically sound foundation necessary to establish this market.

A significant strength of the Consortium is its 50+ members and their investment and commitment to work collaboratively in a pre-competitive manner to fine-tune the market through enhanced

technological investments and by pilot-testing the entire operation prior to full launch. ESMC LLC is a not for profit organization.

Key Roles and Responsibilities of Position

The ESMC Policy Director will work in a close team environment with ESMC leadership and staff to support the continued success of the ESMC program. The Policy Director will be responsible for policy-related strategic development and implementation for ESMC, to include:

- Development of a strategic national policy plan for ESMC to support and align with ESMC's mission, vision, and national program buildout.
 - updates and revisions to the plan on a regular basis, but at least annually, to reflect ESMC needs and priorities.
- Development of a prioritized regional and state level strategic policy that reflects ESMC buildout and priority engagement across each of the 12 ESMC protocol regions. For example, the Mississippi river basin and the Midwest Corn and Soy regions are high priority operational regions for ESMC.
- Interface with and constructively engage with the administrative and legislative branches of the US to support achievement of ESMC's mission, vision, and national program buildout.
 - Within the US administrative branch, for example, the US Department and Agriculture, US Department of Energy ARPA-E, and US Environmental Protection Agency engagement are high priorities for ESMC federal level engagement.
 - Within the US Legislative Branch, responsiveness to and engagement of policymakers and their staff in the US Senate and the US House of Representatives are high priorities as well. Tracking legislation of relevance to ESMC, such as the Growing Climate Solutions Act in the US Senate will be important.
 - Monitoring the US Federal Register and Federal Agencies for relevant notices and open comment periods and developing appropriate submissions for ESMC in a timely fashion.
- Engage with ESMC members and stakeholders across the agricultural supply chain and value chain to solicit policy input and to share policy updates as appropriate and necessary to support ESMC's mission, vision, and program buildout. This may include alignment of ESMC policy priorities with other organizations at a high level.
- May require a need to commission specific work products to achieve organizational goals, in which case the Policy Director will lead development of RFPs describing the statement of work, assist in advertising the RFPs, reviewing and assessing proposals, identifying and awarding contracts for the work, and contractor oversight to ensure successful, timely implementation, delivery and receipt of work within budget.

ESMC Policy Priorities and Sphere of Influence

For purposes of this work, ESMC's focus is privately held working lands defined as agricultural production systems which include commodity crops, tree/nut/vine orchards, range land and pasture and silvopasture. Commercial forestry and urban agriculture landscapes are not included in our work to date. The geographic scope of our program is currently limited to the agricultural working lands of the lower 48 states.

ESMC seeks ultimately to identify the policy opportunities, obstacles, and barriers of a fully optimized ecosystem services market landscape - one that stores, builds and sequesters soil carbon, reduces net

GHG, and provides the benefits of enhanced water holding capacity and clean surface and ground water, and that enhances and restores biodiversity and natural habitat. Such a landscape supports resilient agricultural production systems based on resilient biological systems which ultimately protect our nation's supply of food, feed, and fiber by reducing the economic risks of farmers, ranchers, and their communities brought about by harsh and increasingly erratic climatic conditions.

The Policy Director will identify and prioritize national and state rules and regulations that can support or hinder the development of robust ecosystem markets for the agricultural sector, one component of which includes the advancement of soil health. The assessment should include an evaluation of tax policies that currently (or could) support the development of ecosystem markets. Once the assessment has been completed, the Policy Director will work with the ESMC team, Board of Directors, and members to identify short-, mid- and long-term policy recommendations to ensure a robust and vibrant market for ecosystem services from agriculture. Incorporating a theme of soil health, the policy assessment and recommendations shall include, but not be limited to, voluntary markets for carbon and GHGs, as well as voluntary and compliance markets for water quality and water quantity and biodiversity. The policy plan should anticipate opportunities to stack assets and credits or to segregate and sell them individually.

Policy engagement and execution will follow the completion of the policy assessment and its socialization and agreement within ESMC's team, Board of Directors, and members. In the engagement and execution phase, the Policy Director will work closely with the ESMC team and members to develop and implement an engagement strategy. The purpose of the engagement strategy is to establish a policy climate over the course of two years that is amenable to the implementation of market-based solutions to environmental challenges. A successful engagement strategy will engage conservative and liberal thought leaders in soil health, GHG, natural resource, and water policy arenas.

Desired Qualifications

Successful applicants will have relevant agricultural sector experience at the national policy level, preferable working in the US Administrative or Legislative Branches, for a minimum of 3 years. Experience in carbon markets or other environmental markets is desired but not necessary. Candidates should describe their:

- Past and current activities or expertise in assessing the policy implications of agricultural ecosystem services or work done in general in the agricultural ecosystem impacts and/or carbon/water markets sector.
- Relevant qualifications, experience and expertise that will enable federal and state policy tracking, review assessment, engagement, and execution. This will include regulatory as well as other policies.
- Relevant expertise in soil carbon, water quality, and water quantity markets, including with regards to market development or participation or other activities as relevant.
- Experience implementing policy development, outreach, and education strategies.

ESMC encourages applicants to describe innovative, collaborative, and team-based approaches they have experienced or will utilize to achieve the work.

Reporting Responsibilities and Requirements

- The contractor role will report directly to the Executive Director of ESMC/ESMRC.
- The role requires team leadership and day-to-day engagement, oversight, and coordination with other team members. This includes:
 - direct alignment and engagement with the Executive Director to ensure ESMC leadership roles are communicating and coordinated in a manner that best serves the entire ESMC team.
 - Engagement as necessary with ESMC/ESMRC Program Director and Project Managers.
 - Engagement with ESMC's Board of Directors, as necessary.

Workplace Requirements and Expectations

- FTE contractor is desired.
- Contractor is expected to complete all roles and responsibilities in a professional manner, and to be available as reasonable during normal work hours of 9 am to 5 pm Eastern Time.
- Contractor can work from a remote location, but will be required to participate regularly in ESMC / ESMRC team calls and in-person meetings as scheduled; as well as ESMC member calls and meetings, and external meetings as necessary and appropriate to successfully execute the requirements of the position.

Travel Requirements and Expectations

- The role may require regular travel (subject to ongoing uncertainty due to current COVID-19 travel restrictions), including for outreach and presentations on behalf of the organization; member meetings and conferences as required; and participation in ESMC/ESMRC in-person meetings as scheduled and necessary.
- Travel for work-related purposes may occur as frequently as to 2 times per month and may average 2-3 days per trip but will be variable and as needed.
- All travel-related costs and expenses will be reimbursed within organizational guidelines.

Compensation

- The position is a contract position.
- Monthly compensation is commensurate with experience.
- The contract agreement will be for a 12-month minimum, to include a 30-day termination clause if delivered in writing on behalf of either the contractor or the contracting organization.
- ESMC/ESMRC will reimburse all appropriate and necessary travel and other expenses as required for the position, with receipts required for any expenses of \$25.00 or more.

Up to 2 weeks per year personal and/or vacation time will be permitted under the contract.

To Apply

Please submit a 1-page cover letter expressing your interest in the position, along with a one-page summary of qualifications and a current resume, to info@ecosystems-services-market.org.