



Job Announcement

Strategic Partnerships Associate

The Heartland Fund, part of the [Rural Democracy Initiative](#), is seeking a passionate and collaborative colleague to serve as our Strategic Partnerships Associate. The Strategic Partnerships Associate will join a rapidly growing new funding collaborative dedicated to rural civic engagement and climate solutions.

This is an exciting and dynamic position with opportunities for advancement and leadership. The successful candidate will be well organized and highly productive, an excellent communicator and writer, and able to manage multiple priorities and competing deadlines. We are looking for an upbeat team player who shares our vision of connecting diverse leaders and funders to build powerful civic and political infrastructure and advance transformative climate solutions and justice in rural areas.

Applications will be reviewed and considered on a rolling basis, with interviews anticipated to start in December 2022. The desired start date is before February 15, 2023.

Salary range: \$60,000 - \$70,000

[APPLY ONLINE](#)

About the Organization

The Heartland Fund, part of the **Rural Democracy Initiative**, is a funding collaborative that connects rural leaders with funders to build powerful, permanent civic infrastructure in small towns, small cities, and rural areas. Our coalition of rural innovators and aligned funders is working in 20 states across diverse regions. We challenge the stereotype of the conservative white rural voter, and instead center racial justice and partner with groups working in rural communities of color and modeling groundbreaking anti-racist organizing in majority-white communities.

Why RDI

Small town, small city, and rural voters maintain disproportionate power to shape national politics. The progressive movement was built on a strong coalition of rural farmers and urban laborers. But in recent decades, progressive leadership and funding infrastructure has largely withdrawn from non-metro areas.

At the same time, regressive interests have invested heavily in rural voters. They've built organizing, policy, and communications machines to spread disinformation and ignite fears among rural electorates, promoting their own political agendas to deepen urban-rural divides.

Progressives are winning again in small towns and rural communities. 2018 and 2020 made clear that with focused organizing progressives can win in rural communities. Even though rural areas voted overwhelmingly for Trump, rural Democratic gains in the 2018 midterms and 2020 presidential election were actually larger than the gains made in urban and in many suburban areas, and were decisive in the battleground states. With small, grassroots investments in strategic rural engagement, a motivated coalition comprised largely of rural women, people of color, and younger voters fueled a historic progressive bounce-back in small cities, towns, and rural areas.

The Heartland / RDI approach

The Heartland Fund is a 501c3 grantmaking and power-building organization that, alongside the 501c4 Rural Victory Fund, comprises the Rural Democracy Initiative. RDI invests in civic infrastructure in small towns and rural areas. Building power in these communities is essential to establishing an enduring progressive, multiracial national majority, and to implementing the policies required for rural and small city communities to have vibrant, thriving futures. For example, our **Rural Climate Partnership** invests in rural-led climate solutions such as clean energy deployment, sustainable rural electric cooperatives, and regenerative agriculture to support a just transition.

Primary Duties and Responsibilities

The Strategic Partnerships Associate will report to the Deputy Director and work in close collaboration with the Rural Climate Partnership Director, Development Director, Communications Director, and funding partners to raise \$20-30M each year. The Strategic Partnerships Associate will hold the following responsibilities:

Donor Cultivation Strategies & Stewardship

- Identify, research, and prioritize funder prospects, including institutional philanthropy, donor-advised funds, and individual donors.

- Lead scheduling and logistical coordination of individual donor cultivation and fundraising meetings and events.
- Provide logistical and planning support for advisory and steering committee meetings, philanthropic conferences, funder affinity group meetings, and other funder learning convenings.

Communications

- Create and disseminate donor newsletters, website updates, and other communications.
- Collect, summarize, and write grantee stories of success to motivate giving.
- Work collaboratively with program staff to understand and translate program plans and outcomes into compelling proposals and reports, one-pagers, program talking points, articles, fundraising decks, and website copy.

Fundraising Tracking & Materials

- Manage internal processes to meet grant deadlines.
- Draft and edit grant proposals and report materials in accordance with funder guidelines.
- Review grant agreements and ensure that they are executed.
- Communicate with funders, sharing donation instructions and preparing letters of acknowledgment for contributions, grants, and other funds received.
- Work closely with the Deputy Director and fiscal sponsor to reconcile fundraising data between tracking and financial management systems.

Data Management

- Work closely with the Development Director and our fiscal sponsor to refine the process for tracking fundraising activities and information (e.g. donations, grant requirements, reporting deadlines, etc.) in Bloomerang and other platforms.
- Process and manage donor information, keeping donor distribution lists updated, and communicating upcoming next steps with each funder.

Examples of Growth and Development Opportunities could include:

- Continuous learning about current grantmaking, philanthropy, civic engagement, and political best practices.
- Increasing leadership roles in development strategy and funder relationships.
- In-depth learning about multi-state political strategy, rural policy and trends, rural climate solutions, and social change organizations.

Qualifications

Minimum

- Excellent writing and editing skills for diverse audiences.
- Strong data management skills and comfort with technology.
- Exceptional attention to detail.
- Demonstrated success managing and prioritizing multiple projects with competing deadlines.
- Strong work ethic, initiative, follow-through, and good judgment.
- Excellent interpersonal and relationship management skills.
- Personal or professional connection to and passion for our rural mission.
- Strong commitment to racial justice and fluency with equity and anti-racist practices.

Desired

- Experience working in fundraising and development.
- An understanding of rural and small town America derived from either lived, professional, and/or volunteer experience.
- Experience with a variety of CRM databases and collaborative platforms.
- Familiarity with a broad range of digital tools, social media channels, and email communications platforms.
- Experience working with fiscal sponsors.

Compensation and Job Design

This is a permanent, full time exempt staff position. The organization is virtual, and the Strategic Partnerships Associate position may work remotely from their home city within the United States. As COVID allows, the position will require travel across the United States. Expected compensation will be based on skills and experience, with an approximate salary range of \$60,000 - \$70,000 per year. Our comprehensive benefits package includes employer-paid health, dental, and vision insurance, up to 6% employer match on 401k contributions, cell phone reimbursement, fitness benefits, and paid holidays, vacation, sick, and volunteer time off.

Heartland Fund is a fiscally sponsored project of Windward Fund, a 501(c)(3) public charity that incubates new and innovative public-interest projects and grantmaking programs. Windward Fund is an equal opportunity employer. People of color, LGBTQ people, and women are strongly encouraged to apply. We believe that a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace culture enhances our ability to fulfill our mission. Employment and promotional opportunities are based upon individual capabilities and qualifications without regard to race, color, religion, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, sexual orientation, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, disability, veteran status or any other protected characteristic as established under law.

To center the safety and well-being of its employees, Windward Fund requires that any employee who is required to conduct in-person activities for their job must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 within four weeks of their start date. Accommodations may be sought and approved in accordance with the law by contacting human resources at HR@windwardfund.org.

The person holding this position will also work part-time for a coordinated project, Rural Victory Fund (RVF), under a resource sharing agreement between the Windward Fund and RVF fiscal sponsor Sixteen Thirty Fund. The responsibilities under that position will be overseen by Sixteen Thirty Fund.

To Apply

Applications will be reviewed and considered on a rolling basis with interviews anticipated to start December 2022. Desired start date by February 15, 2023. Apply by submitting a cover letter and resume to <https://cloversearchworks.hire.trakstar.com/jobs/fk025oq>

The Rural Democracy Initiative is partnering with Clover Search Works on this search. Questions regarding this opportunity are welcomed and can be directed to Eva McMullen at eva@cloversearchworks.com.