December 2014

STAR Communities
Technical Specialist position
Washington, DC

Background

STAR Communities is a nonprofit organization that works to evaluate, improve and certify sustainable communities. Technical experts, sustainability leaders and local government officials developed the STAR Community Rating System (STAR) to provide a transparent and data-driven mechanism for cities, towns and counties to achieve a healthy environment, a strong economy and well-being for their residents. Nearly 90 communities representing 40 million people are actively using STAR; 20 communities have received a STAR Community Rating, including Washington, DC; Cleveland, OH; Austin, TX; Northampton, MA; and Seattle, WA. For a complete listing of STAR Member Communities and our partners, please visit our website at www.STARcommunities.org.

Position Overview

STAR Communities is seeking a Technical Specialist to work with the organization’s technical team. Our technical team consists of sustainability professionals that are involved in developing and facilitating changes to the procedural components of the STAR Community Rating System and its companion tools. They are also responsible for the review and verification of applications from cities, towns and counties seeking a STAR Community Rating.

Reporting to the Technical Manager, the Technical Specialist is responsible for helping facilitate updates to technical guidance, researching new tools and methodologies, and providing administrative support for the Rating System’s Technical Advisory Group and On-Call Advisors. Ideally, the candidate will also have knowledge and experience in relational databases (i.e. MySQL) and website design and development.

This is a full-time position that includes STAR Communities’ competitive benefits package and is based in Washington, DC. Well-qualified candidates working remotely will be considered.

Technical Specialist Job Responsibilities

Under the direction of the Technical Manager, the successful candidate will be involved in the following tasks:

Research & Development

• Research new data sources, methods and tools associated with the STAR framework of 7 goals and 44 objectives;

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• Reach out to representatives of organizations and agencies responsible for data sources, methods and tools associated with the STAR framework;
• Draft recommendations to the governance and technical committees for improvements or amendments to the Rating System; and
• Modify metrics and methods associated with STAR’s evaluation measures, per guidance approved by technical and governance committees and based on the organization’s Continuous Improvement Process for the Rating System.

**Verification of Applications**
• Support the Technical Manager in the timely review and coordination of the verification process;
• Provide specialized reviews in one or more of STAR’s goal areas; and
• Respond to issues associated with the initial and final verification process as needed.

**Committee Coordination**
• Help manage external partnerships and networks of subject experts;
• Prepare slide decks and materials for quarterly meetings;
• Support meeting facilitation, including attendance, GoToMeeting technical issues, and the recording of meeting minutes; and
• Assist the Technical Manager in other record keeping and related administrative needs.

**Web, Software & Tool Development**
• Use custom online tools to verify community reports, present information, and manage STAR applications for certification;
• Provide our tool developer regular feedback about the system’s use and function; and
• Support the development and evolution of our Online Reporting Tool and associated web-based tools.

**Other Duties**
• Provide general technical support and other related duties, as assigned.

**Qualifications & Requirements**

• Bachelor’s degree (Master’s degree preferred) in a field of study related to one or more of the following specialties:
  o Planning (urban/transportation/community/environmental)
  o Environmental or Sustainability Science (ecology, biology, environmental management)
  o Management or Public Administration
  o Civil Engineering
  o Geography, Sociology, Public Policy or Economics
• Minimum 1-2 years direct professional experience working with local governments; experience with local government sustainability initiatives preferred.

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• Knowledge of current urban sustainability trends and topics, such as health equity, infrastructure planning, climate resilience, food policy, district energy, behavior change, and social engagement.
• Ability to read, understand and interpret trend line data, planning documents, zoning maps, formal city policies and land use maps.

**Other Desired Skills and Qualifications**

• Experience working with performance metrics and data analytics;
• Excellent analytical, organizational, and verbal communication skills;
• Experience working in or with the local government sector;
• High level of proficiency in spreadsheet applications;
• Experience with MySQL;
• Experience with web design or development;
• Excellent writing and communication skills with strong attention to detail;
• Understanding of technical aspects of sustainability and strategies required;
• Ability to manage multiple priority projects in a fast-paced, decentralized professional environment, while maintaining a positive attitude; and
• Ability to interact effectively and collaboratively with volunteers, technical experts, partner organizations, board members and fellow STAR Communities’ staff members.

**Compensation:** The salary range for this position is from $45,000 to $55,000/annually with a competitive and generous benefits package included.

**Location:** This job is based in Washington, DC. Well-qualified candidates working remotely will be considered.

**To Apply:** To apply, submit a brief cover letter, resume or CV that details your related experience, qualifications, and availability. Use the subject line Technical Specialist Search_Last Name via email to:

STAR Communities
jobs@starcommunities.org
Subject: Technical Specialist Search_Last Name

The application deadline for priority consideration is January 23, 2015. Position will be filled and begin work no later than March 2015. No phone calls please.

**STAR Communities is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Women, people of color, veterans, and members of other underrepresented groups are strongly encouraged to apply.**

For more information on STAR Communities, visit www.STARcommunities.org!