

# Placemaking Fellow – 15-month term

At Rural Innovation Strategies, Inc (RISI), we believe in rural ingenuity and small-town potential, which is why we work closely with our sister organization, the Center On Rural Innovation (CORI), to advance inclusive economic prosperity and investment in rural America.

Guided by a strong belief in rural ingenuity and small-town potential, CORI and its collaborating organization, Rural Innovation Strategies, Inc. (RISI), provide strategic support to rural communities wanting to develop inclusive, resilient digital ecosystems. Our systems approach to digital economy ecosystems involves building a nationwide network of local economic change agents; increasing the digital workforce and access to digital jobs both local to rural areas and remote; using mapping and data to highlight rural opportunities; making direct investments in underserved rural entrepreneurs, and closing the digital divide so all Americans can participate in the 21st-century digital economy. We are currently working with 25 towns across 18 states in the Rural Innovation Network to execute this model.

Rural America is home to 15% of the workforce overall, but just 5% of the tech workforce. Smaller populations and lack of broadband in rural areas have historically translated into inequities in access to training in fast-growing tech careers, leading rural employers to outsource their tech demand to the urban market. This has led to a vicious cycle in which there is never enough demand to justify tech training in rural areas, and because training is not available, employers continue to outsource their tech needs. CORI aims to break this cycle by showing that digital economy jobs and tech talent can exist in rural areas, and we are seizing the moment to create a more equitable distribution of accessible future-proof jobs. RISI and CORI are headquartered in a historic general store building in the village of Hartland, Vermont, part of the Upper Valley and greater Dartmouth College region.

## **Job Summary:**

The Placemaking Fellow is responsible for a new initiative bringing placemaking strategies to micropolitan downtowns together with efforts to build vibrant technology economies. The Placemaking Fellow will execute community outreach, engagement, and planning to support communities in the Rural Innovation Network (RIN) to invigorate public spaces and innovation hubs. Through April 2024, the primary responsibility will be aiding the scope of work outlined in a USDA Rural Placemaking Innovation Challenge grant awarded to Rural Innovation Strategies, Inc. (RISI) for work in three rural communities. This is a grant-funded position and is contingent on continued support. The position will collaborate closely with the technology-based economic ecosystem development team at CORI/RISI and produce placemaking plans for innovation hubs as a focal point for rural community engagement and tech ecosystem support.

## **Duties/Responsibilities:**

- Develops outreach and engagement plans and independently engage community leaders
- Prepare and execute project plans
- Prepare and present quantitative data analysis of the community's conditions and opportunities
- Develop placemaking plans and summary reports containing recommendations for placemaking projects that advance CORI/RISI's mission and community goals and objectives
- Develop and communicate placemaking plans with exemplary written and graphic content

- Design and report outcome measures for placemaking activities
- Collaborate with community members, partner organizations, and members of the CORI/RISI team to achieve objectives

**Required Skills/Attributes:**

- Knowledge and skills necessary to lead planning and design initiatives aligned with the CORI/RISI mission
- Demonstrated leadership and collaboration experience
- Communication skills that include written and graphic content
- Ability to organize and prioritize multiple tasks/projects in a fast-paced and entrepreneurial environment
- Experience with facilitating meetings and workshops and/or giving presentations
- Strong computer skills, including use of Google Suite, web based collaboration and project management tools, and virtual presentation platforms
- Committed to the belief that rural America provides real economic opportunity and that sustainable, future-focused development is necessary to bridging geographic and economic divides facing our country

**Education and Experience:**

- A professional degree in urban design, architecture, landscape architecture, planning or a related field from an accredited university; or 3 years experience developing placemaking plans
- A portfolio of similar work demonstrating experience in related planning and design initiatives
- Experience in economic development, downtown redevelopment, or real estate development preferred

**Physical Requirements:**

- Prolonged periods of sitting at a desk and working on a computer.

**Location:**

- This is a remote position. However, periodic travel is required to assigned rural communities across the United States and to the CORI/RISI headquarters in Vermont.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

- Please make sure your application materials are tailored to showcase your ability to succeed in this specific role.
- Cover letters are required. If you are applying via a platform that does not have a cover letter field, please include one in your resume file. Otherwise, your application will not be considered.
- Due to the pace of this search, candidates are strongly encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

RISI will manage the application and review process using our Workable platform. Please direct all inquiries through this system. We are unable to respond to phone inquiries at this time.

**BENEFITS**

- Personal and professional development opportunities
- Health, dental, and short-term disability insurance
- Employer matched 401k
- We offer competitive compensation. The salary for this position is \$70,000-85,000, depending on experience.

This position is scheduled to start January 2023

Must be authorized to work in the US - no sponsorship offered at this time.

Candidates are requested to apply here:

<https://apply.workable.com/ruralinnovation/j/C067ADCAEE/>

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