Project Manager

Downtown Wichita | Wichita, KS | Full-Time

About Downtown Wichita

Downtown Wichita is an independent 501c3 organization dedicated to creating a vibrant, thriving downtown through community engagement, placemaking, economic development, and strategic partnerships. Downtown Wichita manages a 100-block area defined by the Arkansas River, Kellogg, Washington, and Central. This area has experienced significant public and private investment over the past 15 years and continues to serve as a center for business, culture, entertainment, and community life. With a growing residential base and new investment in educational and cultural facilities, Downtown is poised for exponential growth over the next decade.

Position Summary

Downtown Wichita is seeking a Project Manager to join our expanding team. This key role is responsible for translating the organization's vision and priorities into executable plans and successful outcomes. The Project Manager will take ideas and strategic initiatives from concept through implementation by developing project plans, coordinating funding and other resources, engaging stakeholders, managing external partners, and maintaining momentum through project completion.

Working in a dynamic downtown environment, the Project Manager will support a diverse range of initiatives that support placemaking and streetscape activation, organizational initiatives, and other special projects. The successful candidate will be organized, detail-oriented, independent, and comfortable identifying solutions and creating structure around new ideas.

This position requires an energetic, adaptable self-starter who can balance multiple priorities, build productive and collaborative relationships, anticipate challenges, and move projects forward with limited day-to-day direction. This position reports to the Executive Director.

Key Responsibilities

Project & Program Management

- Develop, guide, and implement projects and programs that support Downtown Wichita as a vibrant urban center.
- Partner with the Executive Director to translate organizational vision, priorities, and ideas into clear operational and project plans.
- Lead projects and initiatives from initial concept through planning, implementation, evaluation, and completion.
- Develop project scopes, goals, objectives, work plans, timelines, milestones, budgets, responsibilities, deliverables, and measures of success.
- Establish structure and processes for new initiatives.
- Manage multiple projects and priorities simultaneously while maintaining attention to deadlines, details, and desired outcomes.
- Track project progress, identify potential obstacles, and proactively develop solutions to maintain momentum.
- Regularly communicate project status, upcoming decisions, risks, and resource needs to the Executive Director and other stakeholders.
- Evaluate completed initiatives and identify lessons learned and opportunities for improvement.
- Analyze and tailor processes to improve efficiency in annual programs.

Strategic & Operational Support

- Serve as an implementation partner to the Executive Director by helping move strategic priorities from ideas to action.
- Gather and synthesize information from multiple sources and translate findings into practical recommendations and next steps.
- Develop processes, tools, and systems that improve project execution and organizational effectiveness.
- Identify gaps, ask thoughtful questions, and seek the information necessary to understand project needs, challenges, and desired outcomes.
- Respond to changing priorities and emerging opportunities with flexibility and sound judgment.
- Collaborate with internal staff in a collegial and supportive work environment.

Partner & Contractor Coordination

- Hire and coordinate the work of consultants, contractors, vendors, and other third-party partners supporting organizational projects.

- Develop clear expectations, deliverables, timelines, and communication processes for external partners.
- Monitor contractor and consultant progress and follow up on commitments, deadlines, and deliverables.
- Support procurement, proposal review, contracting, and vendor selection processes as appropriate.
- Build and maintain productive working relationships with community partners, including government staff, civic organizations, and other stakeholders.
- Coordinate meetings and project teams involving internal and external stakeholders and maintain accountability for agreed-upon next steps.

Programs & Special Initiatives

- Plan and execute events, programs, and other special initiatives as assigned.
- Develop project plans and coordinate logistics, vendors, partners, communications, budgets, and timelines associated with events and special projects.
- Work collaboratively with internal and external partners to deliver initiatives that support organizational and downtown priorities.
- Research best practices from other communities and adapt into implementation plans for downtown Wichita initiatives.
- Provide hands-on support when necessary to successfully implement high-priority projects and events.

Required Skills and Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in urban planning, urban design, landscape architecture, public administration, public policy, business administration, economic development, community development, project management, or related field.
- Minimum of five years of progressively responsible professional experience in project management, program management, urban planning, grants management, economic or community development, nonprofit management, public administration, or a related field.
- Demonstrated experience collaborating with and managing a diverse mix of stakeholders to deliver programs and completed projects.
- Experience coordinating consultants, contractors, vendors, or other external partners.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Excellent interpersonal and relationship-building skills.

- Demonstrated ability to organize complex information, establish priorities, and manage multiple projects simultaneously.
- Detail-oriented, persevering, and skilled problem solver.

Preferred Skills and Qualifications

- Master's degree in urban planning, public administration, public policy, economic development, business administration, or related discipline.
- Previous experience working for or closely with a downtown organization, economic development organization, business improvement district, community development organization, local government, chamber of commerce, or similar organization.
- Knowledge of downtown development, economic development, placemaking, community engagement, or urban planning practices.
- Professional experience and established relationships within Wichita and the surrounding community.
- Experience coordinating public-private or cross-sector initiatives.
- Experience planning and executing community events, programs, or activations.

Work Environment / Physical Requirements

Works tasks are generally performed in a controlled office environment using computers and other office equipment, as well as regular work outside of the office visiting partner organizations and coordinating indoor and outdoor events. The role requires the employee to:

- Stand and walk indoors and outdoors on a daily basis
- Sit or stand for long periods of time
- Occasionally bend, stoop, squat, and twist
- Occasionally lift and carry up to 40 pounds and push or pull up to 50 pounds
- Visualize a computer screen on a daily basis
- Talk with and listen to others on a daily basis

Other Requirements

- Work in person in downtown Wichita, 8am – 5pm Monday through Friday. Work outside of core business office hours as needed, including occasional evenings and weekends.

- Frequent local travel is required within the downtown area. Employee must have the ability to transport self within the regional area. If driving for work, employee must have a valid driver's license and meet organizational insurance requirements.
- Occasional travel is required beyond the downtown area, including annual conference out of state or out of country.

Compensation & Benefits

- Salary: Minimum $75,000; range commensurate with experience.
- Benefits include:
    - Medical, dental, vision insurance
    - Life insurance
    - Retirement benefits
    - Paid time off

Application Instructions

Qualified applicants should submit:

- Resume
- Cover letter

Please email materials to Heather Schroeder, Executive Director, at heather@downtownwichita.org, with the subject line "Project Manager."

Please note: Applications submitted without a cover letter will not be reviewed.