

Planning and Research Specialist

Are you passionate about driving initiatives that make a difference in our communities? Do you enjoy guiding strategies and actions to advance community planning and implementation priorities? Come join Metro Strategies Group as a Planning and Research Specialist!

Metro Strategies Group seeks to hire an experienced professional to support public sector planning and infrastructure projects. The position will assist local government clients with transportation, infrastructure, environmental, sustainability and economic development initiatives.

A core responsibility of this position is to support the firm's grants and funding services. Duties will include researching funding programs, developing funding plans for projects and preparing grant applications. Other responsibilities will include researching best practices, analyzing data, developing surveys, drafting white papers, creating presentations and facilitating meetings.

This position requires superior research, writing and communication skills with proven experience in producing quality deliverables. Experience working with the public sector on policy, programming, urban planning, transportation and community issues is preferred. Candidates must have the ability to travel to client locations throughout the metropolitan Chicago region.

Key Duties:

- Research planning and infrastructure funding opportunities.
- Provide guidance and recommendations on funding strategies for projects.
- Develop funding plans.
- Prepare and submit grant applications for various clients and projects.
- Write technical reports.
- Review, research and summarize best practices.
- Collect and analyze data.
- Plan, facilitate and implement stakeholder coordination and engagement strategies including surveys, interviews, focus groups and meetings.
- Develop strategic project plans, including timelines for implementation.
- Plan and facilitate internal and external project team meetings.
- Produce deliverables including fact sheets, project reports, research memorandums and other project-related materials.
- Ensure quality assurance and quality control on every project.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with partners, client staff and external stakeholders.
- Suggest new and innovative ideas for implementation.
- Execute all other project management duties that arise.

Required Skills:

- Excellent writing skills and ability to translate project technical terminology into clear, concise communications that is easily understandable to target audiences
- Strong interpersonal and verbal communication skills.
- Three-plus years of relevant work experience.

- Grant-writing or grant-management experience is strongly preferred.
- Knowledge of local and regional issues and urban planning is strongly preferred.
- Consulting experience is a plus.
- Proven experience in project management.
- Must be able to juggle and prioritize a variety of tasks and projects simultaneously.
- Ability to solve problems and recommend solutions to overcome challenges.
- Ability to be flexible, well-organized and self-sufficient in a fast-paced environment.
- A minimum of a bachelor's degree in urban planning, political science, public policy or equivalent related fields combined with relevant work experience. A master's degree is preferred.

Compensation and Benefits:

The starting salary range for this position is \$55,000 to \$75,000 depending on qualifications. The anticipated salary range for candidates with a minimum of 4+ years of relevant, **demonstrated** experience with increasing job responsibilities is \$75,000 to \$90,000. Benefits include paid time off (vacation, holidays, personal days and sick time), hybrid work schedule, professional development opportunities, group medical insurance, voluntary dental and vision insurance and an employer-sponsored 401k plan.

To Apply:

The following are required to apply for this position: cover letter, resume, at least three references and supporting materials such as work or writing sample(s). Please submit application materials to Seema Wadia at swadia@metrostratgroup.com.

About Metro Strategies Group, LLC

Metro Strategies Group, LLC is a WBE- and DBE-certified small business that works with government, private and non-profit entities in northeastern Illinois to implement thoughtful strategies to advance projects and priorities. The firm provides solutions for engaging stakeholders, strategic communications, public outreach, policy research and project funding. With a knowledge base spanning multiple industries from transportation and stormwater management to economic development and environmental issues, Metro Strategies Group brings a multi-disciplinary, focused approach to achieve successful outcomes. Metro Strategies Group is an equal opportunity employer, and all qualified applicants will be afforded equal opportunity without discrimination because of race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, veteran status, sexual orientation, age, marital status, familial status, source of income, disability, housing status, military discharge status, order of protection status, or physical or mental disabilities that do not impair ability to work.