



JOB DESCRIPTION

Chief Program + Policy Officer

ABOUT RED HOOK INITIATIVE (RHI)

[Red Hook Initiative](#) (RHI) is a community-based nonprofit working to improve the lives of the more than 6,500 residents of Red Hook Houses, Brooklyn's largest public housing complex. RHI believes that the social change to overcome systemic inequities begins with empowered youth, and that change in communities should come from within. In partnership with community adults, we nurture young people in Red Hook to be inspired, resilient, and healthy, and to envision themselves as co-creators of their lives, community, and society.

Youth development, community building, and community hiring are at the core of RHI's approach to strengthen Red Hook's future. Our model gives young people and residents the tools, resources, and opportunities they need to interrupt the systems and barriers that perpetuate historic inequities for the community. Residents lead the way toward a more equitable, hopeful future.

RHI's programs include:

- **Youth Development:** RHI engages over 450 adolescents each year, from middle school through young adulthood, endeavoring to interrupt cycles of injustice and to build hope.
- **Building Community:** Working with Red Hook youth and adults to organize, exercise leadership to drive positive change for the community, and increase social cohesion to build a more resilient neighborhood.
- **Investing in Residents:** RHI hires locally and invests in residents who will improve their lives and the community in which they live. More than \$1.5M was earned in the last year by people from Red Hook.
- **Red Hook Farms:** A youth-centered urban agriculture and food justice program operating one of Brooklyn's original and largest farms. Red Hook Farms cultivates affordable, fresh produce and provides STEM and nutrition education, leadership development, and employment opportunities for local youth and residents.

Over our 20-year history, RHI's model and dedicated team have been nationally recognized for its innovative, place-based approach to social change.

Learn more about our mission, programs, and impact:

[RHI's 2021 Impact Report](#) further highlights our work with neighborhood allies to bring Covid-19 resources into the Red Hook community through a recovery plan that is rooted in healing and aims to improve outcomes across health, education, economic mobility, and food access.

THE OPPORTUNITY

RHI is seeking a skilled and experienced human service leader to help set a strategic vision for and provide overall direction of a diverse portfolio of youth development and community building programs ensuring that Red Hook youth participating in RHI's programs have increased access to opportunities, challenge social inequities and achieve successful employment and educational outcomes. The Chief Program + Policy Officer (CPPO) will report to the Executive Director and work closely with the senior leadership team and program staff to lead RHI into a new phase of programmatic excellence including leveraging synergy across the portfolio of RHI programs, expanded reach and strengthening systems-level impact through policy and advocacy.

The Leadership Team recently developed a draft Theory of Change and Intended Impact Statement, which serves to guide our organizational development decisions and effective management of our programs in service of our ultimate social goal to promote Red Hook as a thriving organizing community that is rooted in individual and collective self-determination and power. The Chief Program + Policy Officer will put their stamp on these documents and then use them as a guidepost to drive the work.



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The ideal candidate for this leadership role will be a seasoned people-manager, strategic thinker, and effective problem solver who responds to challenges with sound judgment, empathy, high-integrity, and a sense of humor. The Chief Program + Policy Officer should have a natural ability to inspire and foster the development of staff, and expertise managing a diverse portfolio of projects supporting community-based work in a fast-paced and growing organization committed to innovation and excellence.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Vision, Strategy + Leadership

- Set a clear and compelling vision and actionable long-term strategic plan guiding the delivery of all program services and measuring all programmatic outcomes.
- Serve as a thought partner and provide leadership support to the Executive Director to help plan a larger economic development and recovery plan for the Red Hook community connecting the policy domains of health, education, and housing. Help manage organization culture issues and navigate the continuing transition and impact of the pandemic including RHI's return to work and crisis response.
- As an integral member of the organization's senior leadership team, contribute to the planning, program design, and decision-making that helps increase program capacity, improves program outcomes, and moves the organization forward.
- Provide inspiring leadership to a diverse team of approximately 30 youth and community development professionals including the program leadership team comprised of the Director of Adolescent Programs, Director of Youth Programs, Director of Community Building, Director of Red Hook Farms, Clinical Counseling Manager as well as the Database and Evaluation Coordinator. Provide hands-on supervision and coaching of staff, including guiding professional development goals, performance, and organizational learning - modeling behavior and setting the tone for the organizational culture.
- Serve as liaison to the Board Program Committee providing support on program and policy-related issues and goals including communicating updates and incorporating feedback from board members.
- Lead staff meetings and drive increased collaboration across teams, integrating best practice, team feedback and setting clear expectations about accountability, program and contractual compliance, and decision-making processes.
- Contribute to the development of compelling grant proposals to prospective funders and supporters. Manage program teams to ensure the completion and compliance with all required grant deliverables and audits. Maintain streamlined communication in these areas with the Development team.

Program Development, Oversight + Evaluation

- Oversee RHI's youth development, urban farming, and community building work including all program budgets, performance, and policy-related goals, and lead the team accountable for these core pillars.
- In partnership with the Program Directors, provide support in program design and refinement, with the goal of increasing youth engagement in Red Hook and in support of RHI's other education, wellness, and employment goals.
- Work with board and staff to advance annual goals and strategic initiatives, including strategic planning retreats.



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- Establish, direct, and maintain a performance management culture and learning management system that ensures effective programming outcomes:
 - Collaborate with the Database & Evaluation Coordinator to ensure design and delivery of high-quality program evaluation.
 - Lead staff in continuous program monitoring, leveraging multiple data types to inform program modifications, and conducting annual program review and long-term program planning to effectively respond to changing client needs.
 - Ensure that program strategy has clear outputs and outcome targets and that managers take ownership for evaluating their programs and implementing RHI's theory of change.

Policy, Advocacy + External Relations

- With support from the Executive Director, develop policy agendas that serve RHI's mission and deepen its systems-level impact, especially in the areas of academic opportunity, economic mobility and employment, health and wellness, and public housing.
- Serve as a spokesperson and bridge-builder on RHI's advocacy and policy work. Steward relationships with government staff – at agencies and in elected office – to ensure RHI's best interests are represented and to determine channels of support for RHI's community-building campaigns.
- In partnership with Program Managers, provide strategic guidance and oversight of our community-driven campaigns on pressing local issues.
- Identify key stakeholders and community partners to achieve collective impact and strengthen our advocacy work with similar communities and citywide campaigns.
- Represent RHI at local events, community gatherings, workshops and trainings, conferences, and other relevant meetings with external stakeholders.

May be assigned other responsibilities as determined by the Executive Director.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

The Chief Program + Policy Officer should possess the following competencies, skills, and personal attributes:

- **Strategic + Entrepreneurial Leader**
A big-picture and strategic thinker able to set a long-term view and build a shared vision with staff. A track record of achieving organizational objectives with ability to focus on near and long-term goals. Entrepreneurial, resilient, and flexible with a willingness to lead in uncharted territory.
- **Subject Matter Expert**
A deep understanding of youth development and engaging communities in programming informed by best practice in the field and prior work experiences. Familiarity with the unique political, economic, housing and community issues of Red Hook, Brooklyn or other NYC communities similarly situated and facing common issues and challenges.
- **Relationship Builder + Effective Communicator**
Superior interpersonal skills with a natural ability to effectively communicate and build authentic and positive relationships among a variety of constituents with diverse backgrounds including youth, parents, school leaders, community members, local and citywide CBOs, and other stakeholders across RHI's work.
- **Team Builder + Collaborator**
Demonstrate commitment to an interdisciplinary, collaborative, and accountable team approach to work. Possess the skills, sensitivity, and personal confidence to tap into the power that each member of the team brings to the mission, lead with empathy and develop a performance culture among a diverse group of individuals.



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- **Change + Project Management**
Adept at applying sound change management practices to help team members embrace change and succeed through periods of transition. Able to effectively manage and balance multiple projects and competing priorities and to remain flexible and adaptable to changing events and circumstances.
- **Decision-Maker + Problem Solver**
Able to envision and implement proactive measures to mitigate conflicts and intervene in helping team members find positive solutions to diffuse a broad range of difficult and/or complex situations.
- **Deep Social Justice Values**
A belief in community-driven change, equity, and inclusion; fluency with related concepts of racial equity, redlining, and systemic discrimination; and the ability to facilitate complex conversations about historic inequities.
- **Commitment to RHI's Mission + Organization Values**
Passion for supporting the organization's mission and maintaining programmatic excellence for the benefit of the Red Hook community. Demonstrate a strong alignment with RHI's core values and commitment to DEI and engage in practices that promote a positive work environment, respects differing opinions and perspectives, and ensures the fair and equitable treatment of staff in all interactions and employment matters.
- **Ethics + Integrity**
Demonstrate a strong commitment to high standards of honesty, ethics, and integrity in all areas of RHI's work.

Experience + Education

- Bachelor's degree required; Master's degree in public administration, education, social work, or related field preferred.
- 10-12 years of progressively responsible leadership experience in a non-profit organization, government agency, school, or philanthropy of which at least seven (7) were at a senior leadership level overseeing a relatively large and diverse team of managers and professional staff, as well as a diverse portfolio of programs and/or contracts serving low-income youth and/or communities.
- Extensive experience working directly with youth and/or community development or grassroots organizations.
- A background in community organizing, advocacy, or political campaigns, and/or experience building coalitions among a diverse range of stakeholders.

COMMITMENT TO DEI + EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

RHI actively engages individuals from all backgrounds and is committed to embracing diversity across all areas and aspects of the organization. We firmly believe that an atmosphere of civility and mutual respect towards individual differences and embracing an inclusive and equitable environment is indispensable to building a successful organization, contributing to a positive and meaningful employment experience for staff, and advancing the best possible outcomes for the clients served by RHI's programs. We are also committed to community hiring and supporting the job prospects of Red Hook residents.

As an equal opportunity employer, RHI is committed to providing employment opportunities to all qualified individuals and does not discriminate against any employee or applicant on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, disability, age, marital status, military status, veteran status, pregnancy, parental status, genetic information, or any other characteristic or basis prohibited by applicable law.



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COMPENSATION + BENEFITS

RHI strives to offer employees a competitive compensation and benefits package that reflects its core values and commitment to its staff. The salary range for this leadership role is \$125K - \$135K commensurate with the candidate's competencies and experience. Additionally, RHI provides a comprehensive benefits package which includes - medical, dental and vision coverage; 403b retirement plan; flexible spending accounts for out-of-pocket health, dependent and commuter expenses; life insurance and 24 PTO days.

This leadership role is based on-site at RHI's main program office in Red Hook, Brooklyn. The ideal candidate should be in reasonable commuting distance to our main program office or a resident of Red Hook or one of its neighboring Brooklyn communities.

TO APPLY

Please email a cover letter, resume and salary requirements to: apply@rhicenter.org with '**Chief Program + Policy Officer**' in the subject line.