

Pennsylvania CDFI Network

Position Profile - Executive Director

The Opportunity

The Pennsylvania CDFI Network (PA CDFI Network), a membership organization of 17 Pennsylvania-based federally certified community development financial institutions, is seeking its first full-time Executive Director. The Network came about when the federal and state governments began to seek ways to support small businesses throughout the state that were heavily impacted by public health restrictions brought about by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in the spring of 2020. The ideal candidate will combine solid organizational and coalition leadership experience, substantial track record in program design, management and implementation, with a history of engagement with community development advocacy.

Background

CDFIs are essential players in the financial services industry. They are well positioned to play a vital role in the efforts to recover, relaunch and rebuild the Pennsylvania economy once the COVID-19 pandemic subsides.

There are more than 30 PA CDFIs serving rural and urban communities throughout the State. Over the past 30 years, Pennsylvania CDFIs have lent billions of dollars to a broad range of community projects, including small "mom and pop" businesses and historically disadvantaged businesses-the backbone of local and neighborhood economies. Banks typically consider these businesses too small and too risky, often forcing the businesses to rely on high-cost and predatory financing options.

When the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on local economies and businesses began to be recognized, governments at all levels began to seek ways to mitigate the damage and preserve many of the businesses that were in danger of closing. As these realities loomed, a group of the leaders of the Pennsylvania Microenterprise Coalition (PMC), a 20-year-old trade association for organizations engaged in supporting microenterprise in the state, convened and began to engage in intensive liaison with government officials, developing both program ideas and plans for a delivery system. It was through the early activities of the PMC between late 2019 and May 2020 that the Pennsylvania CDFI Network was formed and \$225 million in COVID-related funding was allocated.

In May 2020, the PA CDFI Network successfully worked with the State of Pennsylvania to create a COVID-19 grant relief fund totaling \$225 million from Pennsylvania's allocation of CARES money. \$200 million was allocated for grants to small businesses ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000. The allocation is broken down as follows:

- \$100 million allocated for historically disadvantaged businesses
- \$100 million allocated for main street businesses
- \$25 million was allocated to Pennsylvania CDFI Network members for support of loan loss reserves and to provide principal and interest payments for clients in respective member loan portfolios.

In 2020, 62,465 applications were received requesting over \$1 billion. Two rounds of applications have been held and funding of the businesses was completed by the end of December 2020. In addition to the \$225 million, the Network has obtained additional funding: \$27.5 from Philadelphia County, \$20 million from Allegheny County, and \$2.75 million from Lackawanna County. In total, this will allow the Network to fund 11,000- 12,000 businesses.

In the course of just one year, the PA CDFI Network has proven that it can effectively administer a large-scale project-the largest of its kind in the US and a model for other states. It has successfully conducted outreach and marketing to ensure small, vulnerable and disadvantaged businesses have access to the grant application platform. Its member CDFIs have provided technical assistance to business owners during the application process and online submission.

The need for broad scale, coordinated assistance will continue. Building on established and new relationships developed during the pandemic and the deep knowledge and experience that practitioners bring to the table; the Network will optimize its operations and identify the best ways to continue to help its constituencies. Continuing support for small businesses, will be critical to the economic recovery of Pennsylvania. In recognition of this ongoing need, the Network has secured \$700k in operational funding for two years to give the ED and Board leadership time to develop additional programs and secure ongoing revenue sources.

At present, the Network is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of senior leadership of the member CDFIs.

The Position

After completing a very successful initial year with part time consulting staff support and extensive operational support from Network members and their staffs, the Network has launched the search for an experienced leader to serve as its first full time Executive Director. The ED will have two primary roles: 1) government relations, advocacy and fundraising, and 2) program design and implementation as/when opportunities arise - all while strengthening Network partnerships and member capacity. This work will be carried out under the general direction of the Board of Directors and will be guided by the Network's Strategic Plan, currently under development.

Key Responsibilities

The ED reports to the Board of Directors and carries the full range of responsibilities generally associated with a chief executive officer role, as well as an appetite for program execution and coordination. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to, external relations, strategic planning, member relationships, resource development and program implementation.

The ED is the primary spokesperson for the PA CDFI Network and represents the Network to a broad range of public audiences throughout the state and beyond. These audiences include member CDFIs, small businesses and business advocacy organizations, and county and local governments throughout Pennsylvania, the general public, and other public, private and nonprofit partners throughout the state. This includes an active role providing testimony to legislative bodies at both the state and local levels, and working closely with government agencies with responsibilities for business and economic

development as the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and the US Small Business Administration and the US CDFI Fund.

In the area of strategic planning, the ED will work closely with the Board to shape the organization's direction. This includes both the identification and assessment of new strategies and initiatives that build upon the Network's work to date and planning for the careful utilization and deployment of both human and financial resources. Annual program and financial plans need to be developed and implemented, with an eye toward not only carrying out the Network's mission objectives, but strengthening its capacity and sustainability.

A third major responsibility for the ED is the development of resources for the organization, its members, and the cause(s) of the people and places that the Network members serve in Pennsylvania. In this role, he/she will work closely with the Board to maintain positive relations with current partners and funders and to identify and develop new sources of annual support. The ED plays a key role in communicating with and nurturing governmental, private and philanthropic funders, even as he/she pursues other potential sources of grant and loan support that are needed by the state's disadvantaged businesses and communities.

The ED is the Network's chief administrator, with responsibility for building both program and management systems. This requires maintaining a solid understanding of the financial condition of the organization, and the ability to communicate that condition clearly to the Board of Directors, external partners and funders through financial reports and appropriate commentary.

Experience and Attributes

The ideal candidate for this position will be trusted, strategic, tenacious, and passionate, and will share the organization's commitment to strengthening communities and businesses in Pennsylvania, assisting its member CDFIs to better serve their clients and stakeholders, and expanding the landscape of opportunity for low- and moderate-income people.

Candidates must bring high levels of creativity, integrity, and vision, as well as a work ethic of openness and transparency, including (order is not prioritized):

- A minimum of 5 years senior-level organizational and financial leadership, management and decision-making experience, preferably in a similar-sized or larger organization or association.
- 5+ years of experience in program management.
- A demonstrated track record in legislative/public policy advocacy and fundraising, with experience working on small business/economic development/poverty alleviation issues preferred.
- Knowledge of government affairs, including the budget process and grants management. Knowledge of CDFI industry, economic development and community development.
- The ability to think strategically and critically, synthesize complex issues and information, and be a creative problem solver using technology and capacity from within the Network.
- Experience working with a diverse board of directors and managing a variety of interests and perspectives.
- A history of advocating on behalf of disadvantaged populations, and building and managing strategic, cross-organizational, bipartisan relationships to achieve these ends.

- An inspiring and inclusive leadership style with a successful track record of managing, building and supporting high-functioning teams and coalitions.
- Excellent organizational and personnel management skills, with experience working with racially and culturally diverse partners and collaborators.
- Effective and professional written and oral communication skills for diverse audiences. Bachelor's degree is required.
- Certified Association Executive (CAE) credential is a plus.

Compensation

The position offers a competitive salary and benefits package.

How to Apply

To apply, send resume and cover letter to our search consultant, David Erickson-Pearson, at epdavid@earthlink.net. He is also able to respond to questions, and can be reached at 303-703-6165.