



Program Director – Chicago

[Uptima Entrepreneur Cooperative](#) provides holistic and culturally relevant education, advising, and community to support diverse entrepreneurs in creating thriving businesses in service to their communities. Our programs support entrepreneurs throughout their journey of starting, planning, growing, funding, leading, and keeping their businesses in their communities. We are very different from other business support organizations – as a cooperative, entrepreneurs and workers are a part of a real community that shares in our profits and has a say in how our programs are run.

Position Description

Uptima seeks a Program Director in Chicago who shares our vision, values, and commitment to creating a community of resilient, thriving entrepreneurs and businesses that are economically, socially, and environmentally just. At Uptima, you will perform within an innovative culture that's focused on redefining the field of entrepreneurship support by centering the experiences and needs of entrepreneurs of color and shifting how education, advising, and capital flow and support flow to our businesses.

The Program Director role leads the marketing, enrollment, and management of our entrepreneurship programs and partnership with [RUNWAY](#) in Chicago. The Program Director will also work collaboratively to develop sustainable practices for the expansion of our entrepreneurship programs to other geographies. Ideal candidates should be passionate about supporting entrepreneurs of color, challenging traditional business support practices, and re-imagining the ways we do business to build a just economy for all.

This is a full-time position within a cooperative work environment. Must be located in Chicago and able to work remotely with a national team.

Responsibilities

Program Development & Management

- Lead the implementation of our entrepreneurship programs in Chicago
- Responsible for managing entrepreneurship education, advising, and access to capital programs
- Support hiring, onboarding, training, and scheduling of Business Instructors & Advisors
- Build and nurture relationships with local entrepreneurship ecosystem partners
- Collaborate and regularly engage with key partners, such as [RUNWAY](#)

Pipeline Development

- Collaborate with the marketing team on the development and launch of marketing and pipeline development strategies for our entrepreneurship programs
- Lead information sessions to inform the community about our entrepreneurship programs
- Represent our entrepreneurship programs at local community events, including meetings, conferences, and tabling at fairs and festivals
- Guide entrepreneurs through the application and enrollment processes for our entrepreneurship programs, including reviewing applications, completing enrollment consultations, and determining which program is a good fit for each entrepreneur's stage of business and needs
- Ensure timely and supportive hand-off of enrollments for education, advising, and access to capital services

Business Assistance

- Conduct regular team and individual meetings with Business Instructors & Advisors to ensure quality and consistency of program delivery
- Provide some direct business assistance, which may include facilitating classes, customized one-on-one advising, and holding peer support circles when needed
- Complete entrepreneurship education and advising outcome documentation

Community Management

- Collaborate with the community management team to engage entrepreneurs in online and offline community activities, such as social media group, advanced training workshops, and community mixers
- Provide education on our cooperative structure and enroll eligible entrepreneurs and workers as cooperative members
- Support implementation and maintenance of cooperative governance practices

Fundraising

- Collaborate with the fundraising team to support organization-wide fundraising strategies to ensure our programs remain financially accessible to entrepreneurs of color
- Identify and develop local funding opportunities, such as government contracts, philanthropic capital, and investment capital

Tracking & Reporting

- Assist in the tracking and reporting of entrepreneur outcomes
- Provide periodic reporting to key partners
- Assist in the development of annual impact reports

Administrative

- Participate in weekly staff meetings to support collaboration and decision-making that affects our programs, operations, and finances
- Troubleshoot any issues or conflicts that arise in local programs
- Collaborate on the development of processes and systems to support our strategic and operational goals
- Work collaboratively with other staff to develop sustainable practices for the expansion of our entrepreneurship programs to other geographies

Qualifications

- Passionate about challenging traditional business support practices, disrupting extractive economies, and supporting new economic models that build community wealth for people of color
- Experience as a business owner starting and scaling a business, a program manager or advisor for an entrepreneurship program, or in a capacity as a microlender for small businesses in Chicago
- Generalist business advising experience across disciplines of marketing, sales, operations, finance, human resources, organizational development, and leadership
- Experience advising creative and social enterprises
- Ability to break down business concepts into “bite-sized” pieces
- Exceptional interpersonal skills, collaboration, and service orientation
- Effective communication skills in written and verbal feedback, including active listening and the ability to deliver developmental feedback
- Extremely organized, strong project and time management skills and attention to detail
- Can handle sensitive information with the highest degree of integrity and confidentiality
- Willingness to be authentic and vulnerable, and to support others in kind
- Experience working in the growth phase of startup or small business environment
- Desire to contribute to a cooperative workplace by participating in the development of processes and systems to support organizational effectiveness
- Proficient in Microsoft Office products, email, internet, Zoom, and online learning environments
- Bachelor’s degree or higher
- Coaching certification is a plus

This is a full-time position with a fixed salary of \$85,000 per year. We offer flexible work schedule, learning opportunities through our entrepreneurship programs, and potential to become a member-owner of our cooperative. The Program Director will be required to participate in an intensive 16-month training on our strategy, programs, practices, and partnerships from September 2022 -December 2023. Start date is September 6, 2022.



Due to anticipated volume of responses, we will contact only those candidates who most closely share our vision and match our qualifications. Only local candidates in the Chicago will be considered.

How to Apply

Please send cover letter and resume to jobs@uptimacoop.com by **July 31, 2022**.

Uptima Entrepreneur Cooperative is an equal opportunity employer and prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, creed, gender, religion, marital status, registered domestic partner status, age, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition including genetic characteristics, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, personal appearance, protected veteran status, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, or local laws. It also prohibits unlawful discrimination against a person who is perceived to have any of those characteristics or is associated with a person who has or is perceived as having any of those characteristics. African American and other People of Color are strongly encouraged to apply.