

Director, Policy & Advocacy

The Partnership for College Completion (PCC) seeks a dynamic and visionary organizational leader, public policy professional, strong advocate, and people manager to guide the public policy and advocacy work of the organization. The Director of Policy & Advocacy will have a demonstrated commitment to advancing racial equity, substantial public policy or legislative experience, experience in working with local, state, and national partner organizations, and demonstrated experience leading teams to deliver on ambitious goals.

The PCC is a young nonprofit organization founded in 2016 to champion policies and practices that increase college completion and eliminate degree completion disparities for low-income, first generation, and students of color in Illinois - particularly Black and Latinx students. PCC envisions a state where equitable opportunities to access and complete a college education lead to greater degree attainment, racial equity, and socioeconomic mobility for Illinoisans.

With its vision for system-level reform and institutional change, the PCC executes a unique three-part strategy in pursuit of its goals:

- Supporting colleges and universities directly in their institutional equity change efforts
- Advocating for effective local, state, and national legislation & policy
- Elevating data and research to increase public dialogue on equity in college outcomes

Summary Statement of Primary Duties and Responsibilities

At this key stage of organizational growth, the PCC's first Director of Policy & Advocacy will serve as both the primary manager of a (current) team of four, leading internal projects and initiatives, as well as serve as an external representative of the organization to elected officials, college and university leaders, PCC Board and Investors, and other organizational partners in the development and execution of the organization's policy agenda. The Director of Policy & Advocacy will possess both a big picture vision and the attention to detail necessary to further the organization's existing strong foundation of relationships and policy initiatives.

Reporting to the organization's Executive Director, the Director of Policy & Advocacy works collaboratively across the organization to execute PCC's ambitious goal to eliminate disparities in degree completion along racial and socioeconomic lines. The Director of Policy & Advocacy will serve as a significant voice in shaping the overall direction of the organization consistent with the priorities of the Board of Directors and Executive Director.

Key Duties & Responsibilities

- Build and oversee PCC's state policy agenda designed to fulfill the outcomes and priorities outlined in the strategic plan. Provide guidance on public policy advocacy, legislative engagement, and lobbying efforts aligned with organizational priorities.
- Supervise, mentor, and cultivate advocacy, research, and leadership skills within all members of the policy team, supporting their successful accomplishment of individual and team KPIs.

- Collaborate with the college and university partnerships and communications teams to achieve goals. Work closely with partner organizations, state agencies, coalitions, and higher education stakeholders to support public policy advocacy.
- Cultivate relationships with key elected and appointed officials, policymakers, and related governmental bodies and leaders.
- Develop respectful and productive relationships and coordinate advocacy efforts with impacted populations and partners.
- Assist with the development and support of coalitions. Provide support to the Community Engagement Manager to engage and mobilize stakeholders.
- Advocate for the organization's position through meetings with lawmakers, position papers, public testimony, grassroots efforts, and other effective advocacy methods.
- Help guide research and analysis on policy issues to inform policy positions and trends.
- Prepare, review, and edit research memos, briefs, reports, projects, and presentations in a variety of formats to engage a diverse range of constituents.
- Prepare and edit policy and advocacy materials in collaboration with the communications team, including action alerts, talking points, issue briefs, letters, press statements, opinion editorials, website updates, and legislative and public policy reports.
- Provide reliable, timely analysis, and strategic advice on key initiatives and legislative actions to the Executive Director, Managing Director, and other staff.
- Engage in public speaking, and effective communication with co-workers, constituents, and outside agencies.
- Attend conferences and other networking events relative to the organization's mission and public policy.

Qualifications

- Strong commitment to and alignment with PCC's mission.
- Commitment to PCC core values:
 - All students can succeed when given the right opportunities, tools, and supports
 - Equity in higher education is an urgent civil rights challenge
 - Solutions and resources exist to eliminate racial and socioeconomic inequities in higher education
- Bachelor's degree required.
- A minimum of 8-10 years of experience in a similar position, or in positions of increasing responsibility, or an equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Generative and able to work successfully individually and in teams to advance mission-centered priorities in a lean, highly collaborative, high volume, and entrepreneurial environment.
- At least 5 years of experience managing people doing lobbying or policy advocacy for social justice, racial justice, or within an educational organization.

- Strong ability to build relationships and effectively work with a wide range of people in complex and sensitive political environments.
- Excellent written and verbal communications skills and ability to create and present information clearly and effectively for a variety of audiences.
- Ability to work with diverse constituent groups, including staff and other stakeholders from all backgrounds and cultures.
- Ability to travel within Illinois, including frequently to the State Capitol during the legislative session.
- Ability to work and lead a team effectively in a hybrid office environment.

Commitment to Diversity

The Partnership for College Completion is an equal opportunity employer with a commitment to engaging the skills and leadership of people of color, low-income persons, LGBTQ+ persons, differently-abled people, and other people from diverse backgrounds. People from these and other historically marginalized backgrounds and communities are strongly encouraged to apply.

Compensation

The salary range for the Director of Policy and Advocacy is \$110,000- \$120,000 annually, commensurate with experience, along with a generous benefits plan that includes health/dental/vision insurance; 403B plan with a company match; a number of other elective benefits; holiday, vacation, and sick accrual; flexible, hybrid work schedule; annual professional development budget; and other competitive benefits.

To Apply

Please send resume/CV and personalized cover letter to apply@partnershipfcc.org with the subject line **Director, Policy & Advocacy**. Resumes will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled.