**Job Description: Land Policy Grassroots Specialist**

**POSITION TITLE**: Land Policy Grassroots Specialist

**LOCATION:** Greenville (hybrid-remote schedule)

**I. POSITION SUMMARY**

The Land Policy Grassroots Specialist will support the Land Planning & Policy Program in achieving Upstate Forever’s vision and goals for the Upstate. The Land Policy Grassroots Specialist is responsible for community engagement and outreach efforts to mobilize citizens to advocate for land policies that balance economic development with other community priorities, including access to safe green spaces and clean water, expanded housing and mobility options, and/or more equitable outcomes for all Upstate residents. This is a full-time position based in Upstate Forever’s Greenville office. While Greenville is a primary area of focus for the Land Policy Grassroots Specialist, travel throughout the Upstate region will be necessary.

**II. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Community engagement programs and outreach initiatives to support Upstate Forever’s strategic goals related to land policy, including expanded collaboration with community partners, neighborhood leaders, and residents — especially in communities of color — to enact policies that better protect urban tree canopy, green spaces, and water quality; expand housing and mobility choices; and build healthy, inclusive communities in rapidly urbanizing areas.

1. **Community Engagement & Mobilization**—plan and implement programs that inform, educate, equip, and mobilize residents and community partners, including the following:

* Citizens Planning Academies — educational series for residents and other stakeholders to become more effective participants in local planning and land use policy efforts.
* Advocacy Trainings & Workshops — focused on key issues, target audiences, and how to effectively frame and deliver messages that help advance Upstate Forever's local policy advocacy priorities.
* Grassroots mobilization — collective action by members of the local community to effect change on local land policy issues.
* Educational presentations/events — improve public understanding of the impacts of local land use policies on daily life routines.

1. **Community Relationship Building, Collaboration, & Collective Advocacy**—plan and implement outreach initiatives based on the following objectives:

* Cultivate and strengthen relationships with neighborhood leaders and residents, local community partners, and equity advocates and identify opportunities for collaboration and collective advocacy.
* Prioritize grassroots outreach, collaboration, and advocacy partnerships with a focus on communities of color and equitable participation in local decision making.

1. **Related Core Program Responsibilities—**in coordination with other Land Planning & Policy program staff:

* Leverage community engagement and advocacy skills and land policy knowledge to support local stakeholders working collectively to balance economic development with other community priorities including access to safe green spaces and clean water, expanded housing and mobility options, and/or more equitable outcomes for all Upstate residents.
* Monitor and analyze local land planning initiatives and policy proposals; draft and submit written comments; and present oral comments to advance UF’s land policy advocacy priorities.
* Draft and distribute e-blasts and action alerts approved by the Land Policy Director and Communications Team to provide timely information to citizens on key issues, activate citizen advocacy actions, and work to steadily increase the number and diversity of digital subscribers.
* Assist the Land Policy Director and Communications Team with relevant content for UF social media, e-newsletters, blog posts, Op Eds, etc.
* Respond to land use related citizen inquiries/concerns on key topics as needed.

1. **Administrative and other responsibilities**

* Research funding opportunities, prepare grant applications, manage grant deadlines, and compile required reports as needed.
* Assist with other UF outreach efforts, education & advocacy events, and volunteer projects.
* Complete other work assigned by the Land Policy Director as needed.
* Promote Upstate Forever and help recruit new members.

**III. Essential Education, EXPERIENCE, Skills, Abilities**

**Education and experience** – minimum of a bachelor’s degree in a relevant field and at least one year experience in grassroots community engagement, organizing, and mobilization, or 4 years of work experience with demonstrated success in grassroots community engagement, organizing, and mobilization to effect community change, or equivalent.

**Technical skills** – proficient with general office and computer skills and willing/able to learn and adapt to new technologies as needed. Currently, Upstate Forever uses Microsoft365 Word, Excel, Teams, Outlook, Constant Contact, PowerPoint, Adobe Reader, and GoTo.

**People skills** – demonstrated ability to engage, collaborate, and partner with diverse community stakeholders; neighborhood and community leaders; and local government officials, staff, and influencers; and to interact with individuals from different backgrounds, ages, and socio-economic groups in a manner that positively reflects the values of Upstate Forever. In group settings, builds rapport and works well with others, respects all team members, is a good listener and able to foster and maintain an enjoyable, rewarding, and productive work environment.

**Self-Motivated Learner and Effective Problem Solver –** ability to work independently and on multiple projects simultaneously; quickly grasp, analyze, and synthesize new information; and think strategically to identify and advance solutions. Strong organizational and time management skills and a commitment to accuracy and integrity in all aspects of the job.

**Communication** – strong verbal, nonverbal, and written communication skills, including the ability to succinctly communicate complex or technical issues and effectively engage different audiences in public and private settings with confidence, self-assurance, and appropriate sensitivity and humility.

**Travel** – capable of independent travel around Upstate Forever’s ten-county region. Must have a reliable automobile, a valid driver’s license, and appropriate vehicle insurance. Must be able to work occasional weekday evenings as needed. Weekend work is only necessary on rare occasions, and overnight travel is limited primarily to conferences and professional development opportunities.

**IV. PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS**

A minimum of a bachelor’s degree in a relevant field (such as public advocacy and/or policy, community planning and/or development, sustainability and/or political science, public administration, sociology, or communications and at least 2 years of work experience with demonstrated success in grassroots engagement, organizing, and mobilizing to effect community change. Applicants that possess the **Essential Qualifications** but do not have the **Preferred Qualifications** listed here should not be discouraged from applying as this scenario will not disqualify applicants from consideration for this position.

**IV. COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS**

* $50,000 starting salary – negotiable depending on experience.
* Benefits include health and dental insurance, paid time off/paid holidays, and a Simple IRA with employer contribution.
* Flexible workplace and scheduling (in accordance with company policy – the normal expectation is that staff are available during the standard workday for meetings and responses to time-sensitive requests).
* Civic Days (up to 16 paid hours per year for civic and/or community service)

**To apply, upload a cover letter and resume to the job posting at XXXXXXXXXXXX by 5:00 p.m. on March 31, 2023. No phone calls, please.** Upstate Forever contracts with The Hayes Approach to facilitate the hiring process, including acknowledging applicant submissions. A limited number of candidates will be interviewed, tentatively scheduled to take place in April. A hiring decision is anticipated in early May to accommodate a desired start date by June 1.

**Remote work policy:** Subject to coordination with and approval by the Manager, an employee may regularly work remotely up to four days per week and is required to work from the office one day per week, in addition to attending necessary internal and external in-person meetings. When working remotely, employees must clearly communicate their availability and means of being contacted. Likewise, employees must be reasonably accessible and responsive to internal and external communication. Employees are responsible for their own phone and internet expenses enabling remote work.

**COVID-19 precautions:**To protect the safety of our employees considering the recommendations from the State and Federal Governments because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Upstate Forever strongly encourages all employees to receive COVID-19 vaccinations.

**DEI commitment**: Upstate Forever is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We are taking deliberate steps to build authentic community partnerships and cultivate new leaders at all levels of our organization – from our membership to our staff to our board – to ensure that we better represent the community we serve.

Upstate Forever is an equal opportunity employer.

*Upstate Forever is a nonprofit conservation organization that protects the critical lands, waters, and unique character of Upstate South Carolina.*