



Job Description: Systems Change & Policy Strategy Manager

Location: Remote within Rural Oregon, Rural Washington, or Rural Idaho (with regular travel)

Position Type: Senior Management, Full-Time, Exempt

Hiring Range: \$70,000-90,000 annually

Reports to: Executive Director

About RDI

Rural Development Initiatives, Inc. (RDI) is a rural development hub organization serving rural communities across Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. We strengthen rural people, places, and economies by working alongside communities on leadership development, small business growth, economic development strategies, and civic engagement.

Our community-based work gives us a close understanding of the opportunities, challenges, and local leadership shaping rural communities. As a hub organization, we connect that local knowledge across communities and with the broader systems that influence rural opportunity. Through our programs, partnerships, and systems change work, we help rural communities build local capacity while strengthening their ability to inform and influence the policies, funding, and decisions that affect them.

Position Summary

The Systems Change & Policy Strategy Manager will help RDI strengthen its ability to understand, shape, and act on the policies and systems that influence rural opportunity. The position will work alongside RDI's programs, leadership, and external partners to identify emerging issues and opportunities, help shape RDI's rural policy and legislative priorities, and build the relationships, knowledge, and organizational capacity needed to advance these priorities.

The position will help strengthen the broader rural policy ecosystem across the Pacific Northwest by building strategic partnerships and coalitions, supporting rural civic and advocacy capacity, convening rural organizations and leaders, and helping develop a shared and broader rural voice. Additionally, this position will connect rural perspectives, stories, and experience to regional, state, and national conversations where policy, funding, and other rural decision-making takes place.

This Position Might Be Right for You If...

You are genuinely interested in public policy and how it shapes opportunity in rural communities. You are comfortable taking initiative, navigating complex work, and leading projects from idea to action. You build strong relationships with a variety of people across sectors, value local knowledge and leadership, and enjoy bringing people and ideas together. You communicate complex ideas clearly through conversation, presentations, training, and writing. You are energized by evolving work and want to help RDI grow its influence and impact on rural opportunity.

Key Responsibilities

1. Rural Policy & Systems Strategy, *RDI's priorities and internal capacity*

- Identify emerging issues and opportunities across RDI's work and help the Executive Director, staff, and board prioritize RDI's rural policy and legislative priorities.
- Develop and maintain a roadmap for advancing RDI's priorities, including objectives, opportunities, relationships, and strategies.
- Translate priorities into coordinated action across RDI and with external partners.
- Build RDI's policy capacity by helping staff, the Executive Director, and board understand emerging issues, assess policy opportunities, and clarify RDI's role.

2. Strategic Partnerships & Coalitions, *Building collective power to advance priorities*

- Build strategic relationships with organizations, elected and appointed officials, public agencies, funders, networks, and other institutions relevant to rural policy and opportunity.
- Build and participate in coalitions around shared rural priorities and convene rural organizations, leaders, and partners, including through Rural Legislative Days and other regional and state convenings.
- Identify where RDI can lead, contribute, or support collective action.
- Connect rural leaders and organizations to networks, resources, decision-makers, and opportunities, and represent RDI in regional, state, and national policy conversations.

3. Rural Advocacy & Civic Engagement Capacity, *Building rural's capacity to act*

- Develop strategies, tools, training, and opportunities that build rural leaders' and communities' knowledge, skills, relationships, and confidence to participate in advocacy and civic processes.
- Strengthen RDI's capacity to act on policy priorities through staff development, board engagement, policy education, and coordinated action.
- Develop a pipeline of rural leaders, organizations, and partners who can participate in advocacy over time.
- Support nonpartisan advocacy that brings rural perspectives into legislative, administrative, and funding decisions.

4. Rural Voice, Shared Narrative & Visibility, *Building power through voice and narrative*

- Help develop and advance a shared *Pacific Northwest Rural Agenda* reflecting priorities and experiences emerging from rural communities and organizations.
- Create opportunities to identify common ground, articulate a broader rural voice, and strengthen rural representation in regional, state, and national conversations.
- Lead or contribute to initiatives such as the *Rural Visibility Project* that surface rural insight, stories, and data and connect them to broader policy and systems conversations.
- Help translate diverse rural experiences into a clear narrative about rural communities, working with RDI's communications team to share it with broader audiences.

Qualifications

- 5+ years of experience managing programs or initiatives in rural development, community development, public systems, policy, civic engagement, or related fields.
- Strong understanding of rural communities, including the opportunities, challenges, and systems that shape rural economies and quality of life.
- Understanding of public policy, legislative processes, and public systems, with experience working with elected or appointed officials, advocacy, or civic engagement.
- Ability to synthesize complex information, identify patterns and priorities, and translate community insight, research, and emerging trends into clear strategy and action.
- Strong relationship-building skills across states, different levels of government, diverse communities, sectors, organizations, and institutions.
- Experience building or participating in coalitions, networks, or collaborative efforts to advance shared priorities.
- Ability to build policy and advocacy capacity among staff, board members, rural leaders, and community partners.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to communicate complex issues clearly to different audiences.
- Ability to contribute to resource development by identifying funding opportunities, supporting proposals and funder and donor relationships, and articulating the value and impact of RDI's rural policy and systems-change work.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively in an evolving area of organizational work, with good judgment about when to lead, when to convene, and when to support others.

Work Environment

This position can be based at RDI's office in Coburg, Oregon, or from a rural-based home office within RDI's Pacific Northwest region, ideally close to a regional airport or major highway. Work schedules are flexible within established hours, and RDI maintains a highly collaborative, primarily virtual environment. Regional or out-of-state travel is required, and the role may involve long days, evenings, or weekend hours to meet project deadlines. Physical requirements include the ability to bend, push, pull, grasp, lift up to 30 pounds, and sit or stand for extended periods.

What We Offer

RDI offers a 36-hour work week and comprehensive benefits, including health, vision, and dental insurance. Employees are eligible for employer 401(k) contributions after six months. Additional benefits include AAA Plus membership, travel child/pet care reimbursement, generous PTO, 11 paid holidays, and up to 12 weeks of paid family/medical leave through state programs and short-term disability. We provide on-the-job training, ongoing professional development, monthly phone/internet stipends, a 2.5% bilingual/cultural premium (Tribal or Spanish), and a sabbatical after ten years of service.

Terms of Employment

Successful candidates must provide proof of eligibility to work in the United States, comply with RDI's youth protection policy, including disclosure of any substantiated findings or ongoing investigations related to sexual misconduct as required by RCW 28B.112.080, and pass a criminal background check which will be considered in determining eligibility but does not automatically disqualify a candidate.

Application Process

Please submit by October 27, 2026, at 8:00am PST* (Incomplete applications not considered) • Cover letter • Resume • Professional writing samples	Email to: hr@rdiinc.org Mail to: 91017 S. Willamette St. Coburg, OR 97408
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*Please note that the application deadline is subject to change. The position may close sooner than the deadline listed based on the number of applicants.

In your cover letter and resume, please be specific about what draws you to this position and RDI's work. Share a specific experience that shaped your interest in rural communities, public policy, systems change, or related work. Applications will be accepted until **October 27, 2026, at 8:00 AM PST**, subject to change based on the number of applicants. RDI will conduct initial interviews via Zoom and final interviews in person with selected finalists. If you have questions or need assistance during the application or search process, please contact Bryan Baker at hr@rdiinc.org.

Requests for Reasonable Accommodations

We are committed to providing reasonable accommodation for pregnant people and individuals with disabilities, including in the application process. If you need reasonable accommodations to participate in the application or interview process, please send an email with the subject line "Reasonable Accommodation Request" to hr@rdiinc.org.

Commitment to Inclusive Hiring Practices

Research indicates that members of marginalized communities tend to underestimate their qualifications and only apply when they meet all the criteria in a job posting. If you are excited about this opportunity but are unsure if your experience aligns with the job description, we encourage you to apply. We would appreciate the opportunity to consider your application and how your talents and experience can bring value to this role.

Rural Development Initiatives is an equal opportunity employer. We do not discriminate in hiring or employment on the basis of race, color, religion or belief, gender, pregnancy, national origin, citizenship, marital or domestic partnership status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, military or veteran status, physical characteristics such as height and weight, or any characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.