

Iowa Farmers Union

Rural Organizer and Educator

Job Description

OVERVIEW

The Iowa Farmers Union (IFU) is a progressive grassroots-based nonpartisan general farm organization that promotes family farming, sustainable agriculture, and vibrant rural communities.

The Rural Organizer will report to and receive direction from the President of the Iowa Farmers Union, the Membership & Fundraising Director and the Communications and Education Director.

The Rural Organizer will have three main responsibilities:

1. To work with other staff and leadership- national and state - to build a stronger base of support in order to achieve our legislative, advocacy and educational programming goals;
2. To work with other staff to develop a strong organizing and education strategy for rural Iowa;
3. To work with other staff to build IFU's presence and membership numbers in Iowa.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Rural Organizing

- Build a strong base of individuals who support the mission and work of Iowa Farmers Union. This base will include members, volunteers and event attendees.
- Work with existing staff and committee and board members to develop strategic campaign plans including long- and short-term goals, strategies and tactics
- Work closely with a team and partner organizations, when applicable, to develop and implement joint strategies.
- Participate in coalitions on particular issues and implement grassroots organizing and public education activities.
- Speak at public events, forums and other venues, serving as a representative of Iowa Farmers Union to the public.
- Work with existing staff to build the capacity and leadership of member/volunteers by offering training and organizing support.
- Maintain familiarity with a diverse set of issues including IFU Policy Priorities and communication, education, and outreach program, as well as IFU's membership database.
- Respond to information and support requests from members, prospective members and organizational allies.
- Specifically, work with the Membership & Fundraising Director in the recruitment of new members and fundraising involving IFU members.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the essential role of our members and supporters

and consistently serve as an ambassador for IFU and our work.

- Participate in or attend events and other activities as appropriate that are organized for supporters and donors. Be cognizant of fundraising opportunities and share contacts and information that will help build and sustain IFU.
- Duties will sometimes require travel throughout the state of Iowa (and perhaps beyond) to carry out the above duties. At times this will require overnight stays and/or work outside regular office hours. Remuneration of mileage and lodging costs will be made. Hours worked beyond an employee's regular works hours are paid back through compensatory hours, familiarly known as 'comp time'.
- Work under the direct supervision of the Iowa Farmers Union President. Assist in creating reports for IFU Board of Directors meetings. All staff are under the supervision and direction of the IFU President.
- Carry out or assist with other duties, as assigned.

Event Planning and Evaluation

- Assist with designing programming and resources to achieve IFU's education and membership development goals.
- Identify topics, presenters, and delivery methods that provide valuable and accessible education to program participants.
- Coordinate pre-event logistical support, including scheduling, participant travel booking, vendor coordination, and agenda drafting.
- Represent IFU by hosting both in-person and virtual programming aimed towards furthering IFU's mission.
- Attend and support IFU educational meetings and events.
- Develop strategies for evaluating and improving programming with respect to participant satisfaction, achievement of educational objectives, and DEI goals.
- Facilitate post-event follow-up and engagement to increase participants' involvement in Farmers Union and related leadership opportunities.

Communications and Outreach

- Coordinate with Communications Director to effectively communicate IFU program information, including overarching goals, content, and target audience.
- Assist with the creation and drafting of web-based content, handouts, and other resources used for outreach and educational purposes.

Partner Management and Operational Support

- Identify and develop strategies to evaluate organizational data and methods to more effectively retain members and educational program participants.
- Assist with marketing of IFU educational programs.
- Maintain relationships with organizational partners and identify opportunities for collaboration in areas beyond existing work.
- Represent IFU at partner meetings and events.
- Attend meetings and events hosted by prospective partners to identify opportunities to expand scope of work and reach underserved groups.

QUALIFICATIONS

To perform this job successfully, the person in this position is expected to have and/or

develop a complete understanding of IFU's strategic organizing model and an ability to balance multiple strategic campaigns and targets simultaneously. The employee will be expected to work closely with the Membership & Fundraising Director, Communications and Education Director, volunteers and organizational allies to ensure campaigns move forward to achieve programmatic goals.

It is essential that the candidate has a valid driver's license; a good driving record; and a reliable vehicle up to travel on all roads. Travel and in-person engagement is a significant part of this position.

The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and ability required to fill the role of Organizer and Educator. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

COMPETENCIES:

- ***Education and Experience:*** Bachelor's degree or relevant and equivalent work experience is required along with a demonstrated success with program or project management. Candidates must have a strong familiarity with progressive agriculture and rural issues.
- ***Computer Skills:*** The candidate for position of Rural Organizer and Educator should be able to work in a computerized environment and have adequate knowledge of word processing, email, internet and spreadsheet software and should have skills in zoom meeting and webinar management. Programs include: Microsoft Word, Pages, Excel and Power Point, as well as proficiency with working with a database. (IFU currently uses CiviCRM.)
- ***Interpersonal Skills:*** Ability to meet and converse with a wide variety of people; ability to represent IFU in a positive way in terms of attitude and appearance; maintains confidentiality as required; remains open to others' ideas; and exhibits a willingness to take direction from others, as well as a willingness to try new ways of doing things.
- ***Oral Communication:*** Speaks clearly and persuasively in positive or negative situations; listens and gets clarification when needed.
- ***Written Communication:*** Writes clearly and informatively; edits work for spelling and possesses excellent grammar and proofreading skills; presents numerical data effectively; and is able to read and interpret written information.
- ***Planning / Organizing:*** Prioritizes and plans work activities; uses time efficiently and develops realistic action plans; meets deadlines and adheres to specific time lines; tracks multiple processes to meet goals for timeliness.
- ***Quality Control:*** Demonstrates accuracy and thoroughness and looks for ways to improve and promote the quality of their own work; promotes and upholds office policies and procedures.
- ***Adaptability:*** As no two work days will be exactly alike, the candidate must possess the ability to adapt to changes in the work environment; handle several projects concurrently; be able to deal with frequent change, delays or unexpected events.
- ***Problem Solving:*** Identifies and resolves problems in a timely manner; gathers and analyzes information skillfully.

- **Judgement:** Displays a willingness to make timely decisions; exhibits high-level, sound and accurate judgement.
- **Safety and Security:** Actively promotes and personally observes safety and security procedures; uses equipment and materials properly.
- **Teamwork:** Contributes to building a positive team spirit; puts success of team above personal interests; supports everyone's efforts to succeed; provides excellent internal and external support to members, prospective members, co-workers, allies and board members.
- **Diversity:** Shows respect and sensitivity for cultural differences; promotes a safe work environment for all.
- **Ethics:** Treats people with respect and dignity; works with integrity and ethically upholds the mission and values of Iowa Farmers Union.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The physical demands described below are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee will regularly be required to verbally and non-verbally. The employee will frequently be required to sit for varying lengths of time and use her/his hands. Some lifting of boxes containing IFU materials, as well as transporting tables and foldable chairs will be required in order to prepare tables or booths at conferences, meetings, etc. Local, regional and (rarely national) travel will be required.

Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform essential functions.

WORK ENVIRONMENT: The work environment is a combination of a typical office setting and environments you may encounter during travels throughout the state of Iowa in performance of the work duties described in this document. If difficulties in the work environment arise, it is expected that the employee will report to a senior staff member first and then the President of IFU.

COMPENSATION: Compensation is expected to be in the range of \$32,000-40,000 per annum. Compensation will be commensurate with skills and experience. Health benefits or stipend may be available.