

Executive Director, P-20 Council

THE MYFUTURENC/LAND OF SKY P-20 COUNCIL

The myFutureNC/Land of Sky P-20 Council is a newly created body committed to aligning and coordinating efforts across a four-county region to dramatically increase educational attainment that leads to gainful employment. The Council will be implemented by the Steering Committee of the myFutureNC/Land of Sky Educational and Workforce Attainment Collaborative. The Council's strategic goals are based on the efforts of workgroups that identified key strategies that transition individuals from Pre-K/Early Childhood Education, K-12 Educational Systems, and Postsecondary Education to gainful employment. The Council will work together to develop initiatives, programs, practices, and processes that enhance educational attainment.

This P-20 Council's work will be guided by the statewide myFutureNC initiative's visionary goal for North Carolina: 2 million North Carolinians with a high-quality postsecondary degree or credential by 2030. To accomplish this goal in the Land of Sky Region (Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania counties), the P-20 Council will catalyze local-level action that is data-driven, increase the public's understanding and ownership of the attainment goal and the evidence-based strategies it will take to achieve it, and continually monitor and evaluate the four-county region's progress toward the goal.

In June 2019, the John M. Belk Endowment (JMBE), one of myFutureNC's key funders, earmarked money for a year-long planning grant that helped the Land of Sky Collaborative spearhead an educational attainment pilot project intended to be a model for the state. All of the Land of Sky Region's institutions of higher education, K-12 systems, and economic developers supported for the initiative. The P-20 Council will be charged, through input from diverse stakeholders, to "future proof" the Land of Sky Region by strategically aligning educational outcomes with the needs of local employers. To this end, a specific action plan is being created that addresses educational attainment requirements and workforce needs, assesses the pilot project process, and confirms a set of metrics to monitor the plan's success.

The P-20 Council will be the governing body that is responsible for overall implementation, compliance, and reporting to accomplish the project's goals. The Council will make all decisions related to direction, management, and operations, and the Executive Director, reporting to the Council, will work to enact these decisions. The Council will be housed at Biltmore Park Town Square, with the Land of Sky Regional Council being the Fiscal Agent.

THE LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Together with the myFutureNC/Land of Sky P-20 Council, the Executive Director will help shape the direction of a plan of action that lives up to myFutureNC's principles, which include:

- **Collaboration:** Coordinated, cross-sector efforts and cooperation across education systems, local government, business leaders, and economic developers with existing structures engaged in education.
- **Alignment:** Aligned with the needs of the Land of Sky Region's economy, systematically engaging business and industry leaders to ensure that the credentials that will be attained in the region are relevant and high value.
- **Urgency:** Motivated by the urgent need to prepare all North Carolinians for the future, and create a plan that will continuously sustain momentum toward the goal.
- **Local ownership:** Efforts will be led and coordinated locally, with support from state leaders.

The myFutureNC/Land of Sky P-20 Council seeks a proven, passionate, transformational, entrepreneurial leader to plan a local initiative that will lend itself to fulfilling the region's portion of myFutureNC's statewide vision, and position the regional effort as a model for driving and convening high-impact work across North Carolina.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Executive Director of the myFutureNC/Land of Sky P-20 Council will lead the management and implementation of the Council's strategic goals. The Executive Director will serve as the primary point of contact for local partners serving on the Council and for the statewide myFutureNC organization. He or she will maintain a clear focus on catalyzing and supporting local-level cross-sector attainment and talent development initiatives aligned with the labor market needs in the Land of Sky region. Through the use of data and convening of local cross-sector partners, the Executive Director will ensure priorities and strategies are identified to reach local attainment goals and monitor impact and progress of implemented strategies.

In addition to working with local stakeholders, the Executive Director will actively participate in a statewide myFutureNC network by disseminating effective practices implemented locally and to learn and bring back promising practices from other collaboratives, so that they may be replicated locally, if appropriate.

The Executive Director will be a grant funded, one-year-long position that is responsible for working with the myFutureNC/Land of Sky P-20 Council to build the Council's capacity to deliver on its mission. This includes facilitating work across the education, business, and government sectors to foster a collective commitment to increasing educational attainment across the four-county region. The position's "deliverable" will be achieving the goals and metrics that are components of the Council's action plan. During the P-20 Council's first year of operation, continuation funding for the Executive Director position will be sought.

The Executive Director role requires a leader who understands the power of a high-quality education system to grow opportunity for individuals and build prosperity for communities. The successful candidate will possess an ability to gather and present information, convene diverse stakeholders with the intent of focusing on a single mission, and the capability to robustly research proven policies, practices, and quantifiable results. The position requires optimism and patience, determination, and the ability to work within a complex, four-county geographical region, as well as the ability to inspire others to think creatively and pledge support for future endeavors.

Core Responsibilities

The Executive Director's primary responsibilities include:

- Working with the Council to set the direction for the Council's work, which will be based upon the strategic initiatives developed by the Land of Sky Educational Attainment and Workforce Collaborative. This will include regularly convening the Council to advance strategic direction and priorities, and to inform members of progress and accomplishments.
- Convening cross-sector leaders to support ideas for innovation and foster collaboration, including representatives from Pre-K education, K-12 districts, community colleges, the UNC system and independent colleges, to work in collaboration with each other as well as with key stakeholders from business, industry, and economic development within the four counties.
- Supporting Council members in aligning their institutions' work with that of myFutureNC.
- Maintaining on-going communications with the cross-sector partners to ensure buy-in, commitment, and successful progress of the Council's strategies and priorities.
- Creating a plan that includes the metrics that will be required to achieve success.
- Driving awareness of the Council's work, to inspire deep commitment to the actions that will be required to improve educational attainment across the Land of Sky region. This will include managing the Council's public relations and marketing campaigns.
- Catalyzing and supporting local initiatives: Identifying, mapping, and supporting partners who are leading existing and emerging initiatives. Sharing effective practices, lessons learned, and recommendations with myFutureNC.
- Establishing and leveraging funding relationships at the local level that are supportive of cross-sector attainment goals and high-impact strategies identified by the Council.
- Researching avenues and/or funding sources for future sustainability of the Council.
- Developing research and data to support policy and program changes. Coordinating with research-based organizations and individuals to attain data and research to support proposals for policy and program changes that will improve educational attainment.
- Analyzing (a) the high-demand, high-wage jobs that are unfilled in the Land of Sky area, (b) which credentials students will need to be qualified for those jobs, and (c) articulation agreements/academic pathways that could be created in the interest of training students for the unfilled jobs.

Qualifications

The ideal candidate will have the following:

- A passion for increasing educational attainment to improve individual outcomes and support the growth of local communities and the Land of Sky Region's economy
- Commitment to equity and closing gaps in educational outcomes, including by income, race, gender, ability, and geography
- A proven track record and earned reputation working in the Western North Carolina education or workforce space
- Previous experience leading a non-profit organization, education agency or business organization that set and achieved ambitious goals using organizing skills
- Experience working with accomplished individuals
- Experience leading successful efforts for a social impact organization
- Established relationships and credibility within the P-12 and higher education communities
- Experience working across the P-12, higher education and workforce sectors to align efforts and foster collaboration
- Superb relationship management skills with an ability to delicately handle sensitive political issues
- Significant experience brokering relationships between employers and education leaders;
- Excellent communication, public speaking and presentation skills;
- A high-level capacity to use data to drive decision-making, set strategy and build collective buy-in
- An undergraduate degree, preferably in business, economic development, or educational leadership; advanced degree heavily preferred

Travel

This position requires extensive travel within the four-county Land of Sky region, and occasional travel for participation in myFutureNC meetings and events. Reliable personal vehicle and valid driver's license are required. Mileage will be compensated at the state rate.

Salary

This will be a full-time, approximately 40 hours per week with the Land of Sky Regional Council, benefits package. Rate of pay negotiable; commensurate with professional experience.

Application Process

To be determined. Will be managed by fiscal agent Land of Sky Regional Council. Review of candidates will begin immediately and continue through the **application deadline of July 9, 2021**.