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Western Colorado Business Development Corp. dba Business Incubator Center

Innovation and Labs Manager - MakerSpace (Full-Time)

About the Business Incubator Center (BIC):

The Business Incubator Center (BIC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1986. BIC is a key pillar of economic development in Mesa County and the surrounding region. BIC aims to diversify the economy through its nationally and internationally award-winning programs geared toward fostering innovation and supporting entrepreneurs, startups, and small businesses. Our mission is to support the launch, growth, stabilization, and long-term success of business enterprises in Mesa County and the surrounding region. We measure our success by our ability to guide entrepreneurs through sound business decisions and our positive influence on economic growth in the region.

Position Description:

The Innovation and Labs Manager at the Business Incubator Center (BIC) is responsible for leading and implementing the operations and strategic development of the GJ MakerSpace and innovation programs. This full-time, on-site position is ideal for an individual with a strong background in prototyping, engineering, or innovation, combined with a passion for fostering creativity, entrepreneurship, and hands-on learning. The Manager will oversee daily operations, manage Makerspace equipment, ensure safety compliance, build the MakerSpace base, and mentor entrepreneurs and startups. They will also develop and deliver programming, support community outreach efforts, and track and report on program impact. The ideal candidate is an energetic, detail-oriented leader with excellent communication skills and a commitment to cultivating a collaborative and innovative environment. This position reports to the CEO and plays a key role in advancing the mission of BIC to stimulate economic growth and support local entrepreneurs through innovation and creative technology.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- The Manager should be able to build, regrow, and maintain membership and have a strong innovation/prototyping/engineering/entrepreneur background and be curious with numerous types of equipment. This is a fast-paced, diverse environment that requires a lot of energy, attention to detail, and dedication. The day-to-day operations will be the responsibility of the Manager.
- Develop and implement innovation strategies with high-performance environment for facilitating & hand-holding entrepreneurs in all phases.
- Good understanding of Need-Gap Analysis & build capacity towards validation of entrepreneur's product / process for innovations.
- Coach & mentor entrepreneurs in their innovative product positioning.

- Fundraising and grant writing for programmatic needs.
- Nurturing the entrepreneurs to develop innovation mindset & drive linkages to industries for business collaborations. Encourage entrepreneurial thinking and innovation among users by providing guidance and support for their ideas and projects.
- Meets with potential clients and administers application, approval, and admissions processes; coordinates services within the BIC for business incubation and accelerator clients; advises clients in business development, strategic planning, marketing, and other areas; monitors client progress toward business goals; develops training for clients; researches and develops new programs and special projects.
- Adheres to and operates within the business standard of best practices and the principle of client graduation to stimulate economic growth, business sustainability, and a lasting and vibrant regional entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- The Manager will have the responsibility of collecting the member fees, maintaining the records of member accounts, responding to member inquiries, training new members on the equipment, inspecting and maintaining the equipment, delegating maintenance and repair assignments so that the space is properly cared for.
- The Manager will review all equipment with all new members and will assess the member's ability to use equipment on their own and without supervision. If the Manager determines that the member needs additional instruction on any or all pieces of equipment, that instruction shall be provided by the Manager or someone appointed by the Manager.
- The Manager will be responsible for tracking data, preparing required reports, and advocating for the BIC. This person should want to actively grow the program in the community.
- Promote the Makerspace and its offerings through various channels and ensure effective communication within the Makerspace community.
- Develop and deliver Innovation and Makerspace programming, including workshops, training sessions, and events, to promote use and engage the community.
- Manage the Makerspace budget, including purchasing supplies and equipment, and track usage and cost-effectiveness.
- Create community projects in relationship with big industries.
- Oversee the Workforce Innovation Project (WIP) in partnership with Mesa County Department of Human Services Workforce Center.

Required Skills/Abilities:

- Must be a passionate advocate for Colorado's Western Slope and the mission of the Business Incubator Center (BIC).
- Must exhibit a high level of energy, drive, and a proactive, "make things happen" approach, with a focus on achieving impactful results.

- Must have a personal value system that aligns with BIC's values and culture, including integrity, commitment to quality, a strong sense of mission, and a dedicated work ethic.
- Ability to maintain discretion and confidentiality with internal and external communications.
- Flexibility, and a positive attitude, with a sincere desire to help small businesses and entrepreneurs succeed.
- Strong project management skills with the ability to prioritize and coordinate multiple tasks, deadlines, and stakeholders effectively.
- Expertise in health and safety regulations within a Makerspace environment, with a keen ability to enforce and uphold safety standards.
- Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to engage and work effectively with diverse groups, including innovators, prototypers, and external partners, including startups and entrepreneurs.
- Strong leadership skills, including the ability to have tough conversations when necessary to ensure adherence to safety protocols and operational procedures.
- Strong communication skills with the ability to express ideas clearly through various methods including: written, oral, web, video, and social media.
- Must be comfortable presenting programs at events in the community.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite. Salesforce experience a plus. Ability to learn and use a variety of tools and software.

Education and Experience:

- Bachelor's degree (or equivalent experience) in a relevant field such as Engineering, Technology, Architecture, or a related discipline. Alternatively, equivalent entrepreneurial experience and/or certifications in makerspace-related fields will also be considered.
- Experience in economic/business development and entrepreneurship is a plus.
- Demonstrated knowledge in a makerspace, prototype and fabrication lab, or similar creative/technical environment, with proficiency in equipment such as 3D printers, CNC machines, woodworking tools, electronics, screen printing, sewing and embroidery, laser cutters, vinyl cutters, and other related technologies.
- Deep knowledge of design thinking and prototyping processes, focusing on hands-on learning and innovation.
- Experience managing interdisciplinary teams, including innovators, staff, alumni, entrepreneurs, artists, designers, and other members of the BIC ecosystem.
- Experience with fundraising and/or grant writing.

Physical Requirements:

- Physical Demands - stand or walk for extended periods, lift up to 30-50 pounds, reaching for materials, have good dexterity for operating computer equipment and

tools. Additional physical demands might include frequent bending, twisting, stooping, squatting, pushing, and pulling.

- Ability to travel within Mesa County and occasionally out of state.
- Onsite position, no remote.

Other:

- Full-time, exempt position that may require mornings, evenings, and weekends based on organizational needs.
- Salary range is \$55,000 to \$60,000 per year, with an excellent benefits package including health insurance, dental insurance, paid time off, sick leave, and retirement plan.
- Please note this job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee for this job. Duties, responsibilities and activities may change at any time with or without notice.
- Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. Please submit a resume, cover letter, and contact information for three professional references to hr@gjincubator.org.

The Business Incubator Center is committed to providing a safe and productive work environment. We conduct background checks for all final applicants, including reference checks, a criminal history record check, and a financial history check. The Business Incubator Center is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.