

MRN Policy Manager

The Mississippi River Network is seeking a qualified candidate to serve as Policy Manager. The candidate will work collaboratively among the small MRN staff team and 71 member organizations on federal, state, and local policy priorities related to the health of the Mississippi River.

Who We Are

The Mississippi River Network: Headwaters to Gulf (MRN) is a dynamic, energetic, learning non-profit organization working towards a just, healthy, resilient Mississippi River system that includes communities, watersheds, and wildlife. The MRN is a collaborative effort of 71 organizations that have joined together to protect and restore the Mississippi River. The MRN has several initiatives: 1) a public communications program, 2) improved and amended policies that restore and protect the River, and 3) promoting communication and collaboration among the MRN members and partner organizations. MRN's work is rooted in principles of equity and inclusion. We believe that a diversity of people and ideas strengthens our work, our workplace, and our communities. We celebrate this diversity and are committed to advancing practices that create an equitable and inclusive workplace. We take equal opportunity seriously and welcome and support all applicants and team members.

What You'll Do

The Policy Manager will report to the Executive Director and oversee MRN practices related to federal, state, and local policy and advocacy work. The Policy Manager works collaboratively with MRN member organizations and the MRN Education and Outreach Director. The position is responsible for the following:

- Create bi-annual policy priorities and strategies to make progress on priorities
- Partner with Mississippi River stakeholders with an emphasis on grassroots supporters on policy solutions
- Analyze federal and state legislation and communicate the potential impacts with our MRN member organizations and River Citizens
- Create an annual targeted list of decision-makers
- Communicate with MRN members and River Citizens on Mississippi River-related issues, including legislative updates, original comment letters, and other pertinent activities or media coverage via newsletters, social media, webinars, print materials, webinars, action alerts, tool kits, etc.
- Educate decision-makers, MRN members, and River Citizens on MRN policy priorities, including those related to nutrient pollution from agriculture, the protection and restoration of floodplains and wetlands, and bedrock legislation by conducting in-person meetings, events, writing fact sheets, tool kits, blog posts, etc.
- Plan annual DC fly-in summit, including logistics
- Coordinate state-level policy work among MRN members and decision-makers
- Develop metrics to measure the impact of policy work and provide tracking of all policy activities
- Travel throughout the ten-state Mississippi River region and Washington, DC, to meet with partners and other stakeholders

- Represent the MRN in relevant policy meetings and workgroups
- Identify advocacy opportunities to educate River Citizens and MRN members about MRN policy goals and related issues
- Work with other MRN staff to support the integration of the policy work with the public campaigns and inform and communicate effectively

Who You Are & Keys to Success (the must-haves)

To be successful in the job, you will excel in five areas:

- **Relationship-building:** You develop and maintain strong, collaborative working relationships with team members in the program, across the organization, and with a diverse group of stakeholders. You know how to build alliances with marginalized communities, such as people of color, people with disabilities, low-income families, military veterans, and immigrants, and find points of collaboration even when there are competing interests.
- **Drive to achieve results:** You have a track record of accomplishing ambitious goals and getting results even when there are obstacles. You set a high bar and meet it because you think three (or 30) steps ahead to anticipate hurdles and develop pragmatic solutions. You plan backward and involve constituents and partners appropriately.
- **Inclusive leadership and management:** You approach leadership with a collaborative mindset, a mindset of "power with" rather than "power over" and regularly include others in decision-making. You seek out those with the experience to guide, advise, and plan how you approach the work.
- **Setting and managing priorities:** You have experience managing multiple projects and keeping tasks from slipping through the cracks. You use resources wisely and can provide clear direction to staff, partners, consultants, and volunteers to leverage time and talent for impact.
- **Commitment to racial equity and social justice:** You recognize the role of race, income, age, immigration status, and other identities in addressing disparities, and you consistently amplify community voices to advocate for more equitable policy solutions. You recognize how your own identities show up in the work and welcome, reflect on, and act on feedback with an eye toward continuous learning about race, ability, and other lines of difference.

If you were here right now, you would be:

- Hosting regular meetings with the MRN policy committee and IRA Implementation Hive to develop strategies that meet program priorities and work plan goals
- Using your advocacy skills to influence key policy-making decisions
- Providing clear communications to various audiences through comment letters/sign-on letters, blogs, advocacy alerts, and opinion pieces you researched and authored
- Building relationships with vital stakeholders, partners, and grassroots constituents
- Meeting with and educating elected local, state, and federal officials and their staff to promote policy priorities

You have experience with the following:

- Experience with and understating of how policy is made and changed at federal and state levels
- Familiarity with issues related to the Mississippi River, specifically the current status of federal legislation and appropriations (Farm Bill, Water Resources Development Act, FEMA's Flood Insurance Program,

Clean Water Act, Justice40, IRA and BIL) and federal programs (EPA's NPDES program, targeted USDA River Basin initiatives and US Army Corps of Engineers programs)

- Experience with managing several projects at the same time
- Excellent written and oral communication skills and attention to detail
- Computer skills, including proficiency in Microsoft and Google software suites, Every Action experience a plus
- Creativity and the ability to quickly adapt to new situations
- Passion for and a belief in the legislative process
- Bachelor's degree or an advanced degree, or appropriate experience is equally important
- Excellent interpersonal skills; ability to collaborate and communicate with internal and external stakeholders
- High level of attention to detail and ability to problem-solve strategically
- Strong organizational, planning, and time management skills
- Can work effectively with diverse groups of individuals and values differences of race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and socioeconomic circumstances
- Willingness to travel to various sites in the 10-mainstem states and across the country, as needed

What Else You Should Know:

This is a full-time, non-exempt position with a dispersed team. The work location is remote and can be located in one of the ten mainstem states the Mississippi River flows through. This position has a salary range of \$55,000-\$73,000 and is negotiable, with top-notch benefits that have a cash value of \$10,000 to \$29,500, depending on family status and tenure with MRN: a 97% employer-paid family health insurance that includes a contribution to a Health Savings Account, 6% employer matching contribution to a retirement plan, a fantastic Employee Assistance Program, 12 paid holidays plus paid time off between Christmas Eve and New Year's Day, Friday Summer Hours, and vacation and sick pay.

The requirements in our job descriptions are guidelines, not hard and fast rules, and if you have 75% of the qualifications listed, we encourage you to apply. Your experience refers to paid and unpaid experience, including volunteer work, which helps build the competencies, knowledge, and skills that translate directly to our openings. Applying allows you to be considered.

The Mississippi River Network is an Equal Opportunity Employer and participates in E-Verify, is committed to the full inclusion of all individuals, and takes steps to ensure that individuals with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodations.

Application Instructions

Interested individuals can apply by sending their resume, cover letter, and three professional references to kmcginnis@1mississippi.org. The position will remain open until filled.