

## USDN 2021 Equity Diversity Inclusion (EDI) Fellowship Program

### Overview

The Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) is pleased to offer summer 2021 fellowship opportunities with local governments. Fellows will receive a valuable learning experience while helping local governments advance sustainability and inclusion goals.

2021 fellowships are available with the City of Lancaster (PA), Miami-Dade County (FL), the City of Minneapolis (MN), the City of Newark (NJ), and the City of Richmond (VA). We are accepting applications on a rolling basis, with priority given to applications received by April 11.

Fellowships will be fulltime for 12 weeks, beginning in May or June and concluding in August or September. USDN and host sites will work with selected candidates to finalize start and end dates. While all fellows will begin working remotely, some may transition to in person work as safety permits.



*2019 USDN EDI Fellows presenting their work at the USDN Annual Meeting*

### All fellowship positions include:

- A living wage or higher for the fellowship location
- Full-time employment for 12 weeks
- The experience of working in a local government sustainability program on a well-defined project that advances a community's sustainability and equity goals

- A project that is inclusive of underserved and under-represented communities and responsive to their needs and priorities
- Mentorship from Desiree Williams-Rajee and participation in a national learning cohort of USDN EDI fellows
- Access to all USDN member discussions and products
- Membership in an informal network of past and current EDI fellows

### **Requirements**

Broad requirements for all fellowship projects are listed below. Each local government project also has specific requirements.

- Be passionate about sustainability and/or the environment
- Be new to the sustainability field of work or interested in exploring a career in sustainability
- Have the skills required to match the needs of the projects for which you apply
- Have excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to relate to, communicate with, and learn from racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse communities
- Have experience working with multiple communities, including communities of color
- Have experience considering the impacts of projects on multiple communities, including communities of color
- Commit to working for the entire duration of the fellowship
- Commit to participating actively in the cohort learning and mentoring programs
- Commit to maintaining the privacy of cohort and USDN discussions
- Complete a one-page summary blog post and program evaluation form at the conclusion of the fellowship to reflect on your experience
- Make a presentation on your work to USDN members

### **To Apply**

Applications should be sent to the Urban Sustainability Directors Network at <fellowship@usdn.org>. Please include the name of the community or communities with which you are seeking a fellowship in the email subject line. People of color are encouraged to apply.

Applications should include:

- Completed and signed application form available for download [here](#)
- Current resume

Application review will occur on a rolling basis, with priority given to applications received by April 11. All applicants will be notified of selection decisions.

Thank you for your interest!

# **USDN Fellowship with the City of Richmond VA**

## **RVAGreen 2050 Equity Fellowship, Office of Sustainability**

### **Fellowship Title**

RVAGreen 2050 Equity Fellow

### **Fellowship Summary**

The Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) Equity Diversity Inclusion (EDI) Fellows program addresses an existing disparity in representation of people of color in sustainability fields and the USDN member network. This summer fellowship program advances equity, diversity, and inclusion by supporting the network members to work toward the following goals:

- Prioritizing diversity, develop a pipeline of talented, high skilled professionals to serve in local government sustainability programs;
- Assist USDN members to dismantle the cultural and systemic barriers to inclusion for people of color in sustainability positions while completing important sustainability projects that are responsive to diverse community needs;
- Use what is learned through USDN member and fellow experiences to increase diversity in recruitment, hiring, and retention across the network.

### **Project Background**

The Fellowship will support RVAGreen 2050, the City of Richmond's equity-centered climate action and resilience planning process. This process is currently in underway, and the second phase of public engagement will take place in April 2021-May 2021. The central advisory group in this planning process is the Racial Equity and Environmental Justice Roundtable (Roundtable) consisting of residents representing neighborhoods in Richmond that are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and that are often underrepresented in public planning processes.

The RVAGreen 2050 Equity Fellow will support RVAGreen 2050, specifically in the areas of elevating the voices of Richmond's frontline communities and educating the broader community on the necessity of a focus on equity within this work. This work is vital to advancing equity-centered climate action in the city, especially with and for communities often underrepresented in city planning processes in Richmond – namely, those who are low-income, Latino or Hispanic, and/or Black or African American.

### **Team Description**

The Fellow will be a member of the City of Richmond Office of Sustainability team along with six additional full-time staff. Led by a Sustainability Manager, the Office works across the city government and community on equitable climate action and resilience initiatives. Team members have a diverse range of backgrounds including urban planning, law, policy, and science, along with a diverse set of professional skills and experiences. The Fellow will report to the Community Engagement Coordinator but also work with other members of the team.

## Job Description

- Participates in, provides input on, and supports activities of the RVAgreen 2050 Roundtable, such as focused outreach to marginalized communities, connecting climate action and resilience to community priorities such as affordable housing and health, and incorporating community feedback into the development of the RVAgreen 2050 action plan.
- Develops a project that accomplishes the connected goals of:
  - Providing education on equity and climate change to the broader Richmond community;
  - Highlighting the lived experiences of marginalized communities;
  - Incorporates community feedback collected during the April 2021 community-wide engagement activities for RVAgreen 2050.
- Completes other tasks as needed to support the work of the Community Engagement Coordinator, whose duties include outreach and engagement programs and projects to involve city employees and all community sectors in RVAgreen 2050 equity-centered climate action and resilience planning and implementation with a focus on equity-centered, inclusive community engagement programs and projects.

## Timeline

12 Weeks (June 1, 2021 – August 20, 2021)

- Week 1: 6/1-6/4
  - Onboarding to include:
    - Meet and greet with the Office of Sustainability team.
    - Reviewing background materials on RVAgreen 2050 and the City of Richmond.
    - Review community engagement feedback from engagement phase two – April 2021.
- Weeks 2-8: 6/7-7/23
  - Participate in preparation and facilitation of RVAgreen 2050 Roundtable meetings.
    - June 15<sup>th</sup>
    - July 27<sup>th</sup>
  - Participate in RVAgreen 2050 Working Group meetings.
    - June 25<sup>th</sup>
    - July 16<sup>th</sup>
  - Develop the community education and outreach project on equity and climate based on meeting feedback, community feedback, and partner projects.
- Weeks 9-11: 7/26-8/13
  - Develop and launch the community education and outreach project and assisting with community engagement activities for the third phase of RVAgreen 2050 community engagement – August 9th-October 10th.
  - Engagement activities will be both virtual and in-person.

- Community education and outreach project details will be based on community feedback from the second phase of community engagement in April 2021.
- Week 12: 8/16-8/20
  - Wrap-up activities and final presentation to the Office of Sustainability team and potentially additional partners.

### **Desired Knowledge and Skills**

The ideal candidate will have a combination of lived, work, volunteer experiences that support the following skills and abilities:

- Ability to flex communication style to multiple cultural environments
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, and ability to present to diverse audiences, specifically racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse communities
- Experience incorporating the perspectives of multiple communities, including Black and Latino communities, in consideration of impacts and outcomes of decision-making processes
- An understanding of the concepts of institutional and structural racism and bias and their impact on underserved and underrepresented communities
- Familiar with the communities in Richmond, VA

The following skills and experience are also desirable, but not required:

- Experience with ArcGIS
- Ability to speak Spanish
- Interest or experience in:
  - Communications and/or marketing
  - Graphic design
  - Public health
  - Environmental science/studies
  - Urban planning
  - Public policy

### **Professional Development and Support**

- The Fellow will gain knowledge and experience in serving in a local government sustainability program.
  - Weekly virtual staff meetings and other team conversations and programming where interested
  - Informal virtual meetings with each team member to learn more about the various positions and roles within the office
- The Fellow will have access to formal guidance and informal mentorship throughout the fellowship from Office staff and Office partners.
  - Weekly virtual check-ins with mentor(s)
  - Weekly virtual informal meetings on career goals and guided professional development

- Connection with community partners
- The Fellow will use and develop creative thinking and soft skills to produce a final project.
- The Fellow will serve in an important team role as part of our overall efforts to center equity in the climate action planning process.
- The Fellow will gain experience working remotely. The City of Richmond's Office of Sustainability is currently working remotely, but opportunities for in-person engagement are available depending on local health guidelines and comfort levels of all participants.
  - The Fellow is required to have:
    - Access to a computer
    - Access to the internet

**Pay Rate**

- Wage per hour: \$15.65
- Total or 480 hours over 12 weeks