

Move for America Fellowship

Position Description: West Central Initiative

Project Period: 2024-2025

Site Name: West Central Initiative

Location: 1000 Western Ave, Fergus Falls, MN 56537. WCI's work environment is hybrid and employees typically spend two or three days in the office or attending meetings in our region at large (9 counties of West Central, MN and White Earth Nation).

Host Site Organization Description

West Central Initiative (WCI) is a community foundation and the regional development organization serving 82 cities in West Central, MN. Community and economic development are at the heart of our work, and given that our organization has a philanthropy and planning arm, we work in a variety of areas guided by a commitment to equity and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Project Description

WCI seeks a Move for America Fellow to help lay the foundation of the Rural Democracy Project (RDP) network by establishing engagement for past, present, and future program participants. This includes working with the RDP staff and the communications team at WCI to establish a framework of communication for participants looking to strengthen democracy throughout the region.

The RDP is designed to engage the community on many levels and through various levels of commitment. The Fellow will engage in civic mapping to identify potential network members and participants, conduct outreach to new members, and assist in continuing relationships with program alumni to contribute to a centralized framework for the Rural Democracy Project network.

Goals of the Project

- Better understand the active civic groups in west central Minnesota
- Center shared values within our region to create a foundation for learning and understanding
- Make connections between RDP programming and potential participants
- Raise awareness of, and engagement in, civic participation
- Facilitate the growth of RDP alumni

Responsibilities

1. **Civic mapping.** As part of the team, the Fellow will engage in civic mapping to identify community groups working to strengthen democracy and improve community through democratic participation. This will require asynchronous research and in-person contact to understand civic infrastructure in the region.
2. **Establish a means of communication for RDP participants.** We invite the Fellow to brainstorm with communications and other members of the RDP to establish a means of continued conversation for past, present, and future RDP program participants.
3. **Engage RDP program alumni.** Through interviews, events, and other relationship building activities, the Fellow will follow up with program alumni to strengthen the RDP network.
4. **Conducting research for network resources.** The Fellow will gather information to format into resources for the Rural Democracy Network.
5. **In-person outreach.** The Fellow will assist in helping the RDP with outreach, activities, and event planning & support.
6. **Pre and post meeting communication.** Help coordinate, prepare for, and facilitate conversations. This will come in the form of scheduling and outreach, planning the structure of meetings, and helping to host and moderate external meetings related to the Rural Democracy Project.
7. **Lean in to other WCI work.** To understand and prepare for conversations, the Fellow will be encouraged to explore and support other WCI programming that fits their project and interests.

Qualifications

We seek candidates who:

- Understand and/or are willing to explore the complex nature of diversity in rural, less populated places.
- Are not afraid to be wrong, while working alongside a team that believes in trend-testing to find the right interventions and resources.
- Have strong interpersonal communication skills, including the willingness to learn conflict resolution and diffusion techniques.
- Are self-starters and comfortable in a hybrid working environment • Have a strong interest in qualitative research with a quantitative twist

For Move for America Fellowship qualifications and program information, please visit: www.move4america.org/projects