



ADVOCATES for URBAN AGRICULTURE

Position: Soil Health Organizer

Status: Hourly, contracted

Rate: \$40 per hour

Time Expectation: 15-28 hours per week

Email your resume and answers to: jobs@auachicago.org by August 7th, 10am CT

Expected Start Date: August 21st, 2023

Organization Description: Advocates for Urban Agriculture is an advocacy organization centering growers, farmers, earth stewards, land and water. In partnership with and guided by growers we provide funding, technical assistance, advocacy and education as resources to reimagine our relationships to land and the local food system while honoring indigenous sovereignty, black liberation, and immigrants' rights.

AUA acknowledges that we all live and work on stolen land. Our region consists of settler colonial towns and cities which many of us came to as uninvited guests. The Chicago region is the ancestral home of the Council of Three Fires: The Ojibwe, Bodéwadmi (Potawatomi), and Odawa Nations as well as the Myaamia (Miami), Peoria, Ho-Chunk, Kiikaapoi (Kickapoo), Sac, Meskwaki (Fox), and Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Sioux) Tribes. Despite past forced removal from these lands and on-going colonialism, Zhigaagong (Ojibwe word the name Chicago is derived from) is home to the 6th largest urban indigenous population in the USA, many of whom continue to practice their heritage and care for these lands and waterways we all call home. As agriculture practitioners and earth stewards, we honor their legacy in this place. We invite you to learn more about on whose land you reside by searching: <https://native-land.ca/>

AUA's organizational model incorporates accountability, transparency, and horizontal decision-making to create a more democratic and sustainable organization. We practice these values by having Circles - considered working groups - with collaboration and teamwork as core elements in their function. The following circles comprise our internal operations:

- The Communications Circle is composed of the Communications and Outreach Steward
 - with rotating staff. This team takes the lead on AUA's communications needs, support and outreach.
- The Development Circle is composed of the Development Steward and Co-Operations Stewards with rotating staff. This team leads the organization funder & donor stewardship, grant writing and reports, and fundraising campaigns.
- The Team Circle is composed of all staff members. This body discusses major decisions, provides feedback, delegates decisions and activities to appropriate program circles, and approves creation of circles.
- The Operations Circle is composed of the Co-Operations Stewards and staff. This circle is charged with making sure that the day to day operations of the organization run smoothly. informs policies and HR support for the organization. It is the most administrative of the circles and is key to making sure that the organization is able to stay fiscally solvent, that an equity analysis and accessibility practice is implemented across the organization, and that the staffing needs of the organization are met.
- The Programs Circle is composed of the Programs Steward with rotating staff. This team takes the lead on developing AUA program key programs: Specifically, this team manages and directs the Mentorship and Capacity Building Grants program. It is intended to incorporate the Water Access and Soil Testing programs as well.
- The Organizing & Solidarity Circle is composed of Co-operations Stewards and Program Stewards. This team helps staff reflect on their priorities, intersectionality and their impact on issues and people.



ADVOCATES for URBAN AGRICULTURE

Position Description:

AUA is seeking a **Soil Health Organizer** to facilitate the collaborative restructuring and implementation of the Soil Health Program, previously called the Soil Testing Program. AUA launched a Soil Testing Program in Fall of 2022 focused on providing soil testing services to Chicago area growers. In 2023, AUA is seeking to redesign and implement feedback from growers to strengthen and sustain the program now called the Soil Health Program.

The **Soil Health Organizer** will manage the restructuring and implementation to meet the vision and goals of the program. After a redesign phase, the Soil Health Steward will take lead on the administration and coordination of the program.

In addition, the **Soil Health Organizer** will also support technical assistance and education with the Soil Education Steward and Technical Assistance Specialists (TAS). The Soil Health Steward will support the administrative aspects of providing data for grant reporting with the Co-Operations Stewards as well as the Development Steward as needed.

Technical assistance will focus on the implementation of conservation practices related to soil and water using the 9-step NRCS Conservation Planning Process and the NRCS provided Conservation Technical Assistance.

Key Responsibilities include:

- Work with AUA's Soil Circle team to redesign the Soil Health Program.
- Manage the administrative and coordination aspects of the program in a timely manner.
- Coordinate and schedule soil samples and distribute results in a timely manner.
- Organize soil assessments with growers and Soil Scientists.
- Plan logistics for soil amendments, supplies and implementation.

Summary:

The **Soil Health Organizer** will manage the strategic development of the Soil Health Program funded by NRCS. The **Soil Health Organizer** will coordinate the logistics of soil assessments and facilitate technical assistance with the support of the Soil Health Team. The **Soil Health Organizer** will take the lead of the administrative aspect of the program team during a period of growth and expanding impact to support soil health for growers in the Chicagoland area.

This person is responsible and accountable for decision making and associated tasks in the following areas of work:

Program Management (60%)

- Implement program priorities and timelines based on feedback from stakeholders.
- Generate management & logistics plans for collecting soil samples, distributing lab results, and coordinating soil assessments with growers and Technical Assistance Specialists (TAS).
- Meet regularly with the Technical Assistance Specialists, AUA's internal staff, and community partners in a timely manner to maintain program goals.
- Manage the creation and review of all customized program materials such as: intake forms, feedback forms, PowerPoint slides, lab results, etc.



ADVOCATES for URBAN AGRICULTURE

- Organize file storage of all program materials in Google Drive and frequent maintenance of files, checklists, tracking as it pertains to the program.
- Identify program gaps and needed resources to improve team capacity and ensure ongoing high quality program delivery.

Assessment and Site Visits (30%)

- Coordinate meetings between sites and Technical Assistance Specialists (TAS) to review soil assessments
- Plan logistics for soil amendments purchases and distribution of soil amendments to sites based on needs.
- Coordinate site visits throughout the growing season to support sites in implementing their individualized soil assessment plan as recommended by the TAS.
- Coordinate soil sampling meetings, attend meetings to record sample codes and send samples to labs.

Program Reporting & Internal Communication (10%)

- Oversee collection of quantitative and qualitative program data (data, stories, testimonies, etc) for grant reporting.
- Collaborate with the Development and Communications team to communicate updates and progress of the program.
- Develop, implement, and streamline processes, procedures, and systems to support the growth of the program and have cohesion with other AUA programs.

Qualifications

Note: We encourage you to apply even if you do not feel that you meet 100% of the listed qualifications. Specifically, we encourage people of color, trans, queer, gender non conforming, women, veterans, individuals with non-traditional educational backgrounds to apply. If this job excites you and aligns with your values and goals, we strongly encourage you to apply.

Skill-based

- Two or more years of demonstrated ability to develop and implement program visions and strategies in a collaborative manner.
- Two or more years of experience creating program structures and management.
- Three or more years of working with soil in an urban setting focused on organic soil remediation and amendments practices. Or equivalent years of experience practicing Indigenous Science /Traditional Knowledge, community-based urban conservation, or environmental justice with strong interest in growing the skill set in western science, organic soil remediation and amendment practices.
- One or more years of experience gathering program feedback, supporting reporting requirements, data tracking and collection.

Collaborative

- Experience and/or ability to participate in collaborative meetings that require active participation.
- Experience and/or ability to participate in a collective decision making process that requires input, feedback, and accountability.
- Experience and/or ability in providing and receiving feedback in a collaborative environment for growth and development.



ADVOCATES for URBAN AGRICULTURE

Other

- Ability to work independently, effectively manage projects, and meet deadlines.
- Computer skills including fluency with Word, Excel, Powerpoint, and Google Suite applications.
- Access to a car is preferred.
- Bilingual skills -- Spanish/English
- A commitment to the purpose and philosophy of AUA is required.

Physical Demands:

- Physical ability to use computers, cellphones, and other office equipment.
- Physical ability to perform tasks that may require prolonged standing, sitting, and other activities necessary to perform job duties
- Regular visits to local farms and gardens during the growing season.
- Physical ability to engage in farm tasks (e.g using hand tools, shoveling, planting) on an occasional basis.
- Minimally must lift 25 pounds without assistance; may lift over 25 pounds with or without assistance.
- Reasonable accommodations are made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Deadline: August 7th, 10am CT

Expected Start Date: August 21st, 2023

Compensation: Due to the nature of funding this position is contract based, \$40/hr from August 2023 to the end of March 2024. 15-28 hours weekly with flexibility depending on schedule and need of the project. Depending on funding this position can be extended beyond March 2024.

How to apply: Email your resume and answers to the following three questions to

jobs@auachicago.org ideally in a PDF form by August 7th by 10am CT.

Contain your answers to one page if possible.

1. What is your relationship to Chicago's soils?
2. Describe your experience in program administration and/or program management.
3. What is your approach in incorporating feedback and action steps that is inclusive and collaborative across all stakeholders?

Equal Opportunity Hiring: AUA works affirmatively to provide equal opportunity among its workforce and does not discriminate in the selection of its staff and/or contractors, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability, chronic illness, income, marital status, parenthood or any other dimension of identity. We strongly encourage applications from diverse candidates, particularly individuals from groups that have been historically under-represented, including but not limited to women, people of color, and immigrants including individuals who were formerly detained, incarcerated, undocumented, or who have navigated the immigration legal system.