

(This search ended in April, 2004, with the appointment of Summer Whitford, director of operations at the Sherman Fairchild Foundation.)

Job Announcement

Media Access Project
(Washington, DC)
Director of Operations

(Posted: March 16, 2004)

The Media Access Project in Washington, DC, has retained Slesinger Management Services to recruit a highly organized person with financial management skills to serve as director of operations. This is an exceptional opportunity for a person with the skills to serve as a hands-on financial and administrative director of a small, fast-paced, nonprofit public interest law firm.

Applications will be accepted until the job is filled.

The Organization

The mission of the Media Access Project (MAP) is to enhance democracy in the United States by protecting and fighting for the public's First Amendment right to a diverse marketplace of ideas. On behalf of consumer groups and citizens at large, MAP advocates media and telecommunications policies that facilitate the free flow of information and increase the number of independent voices available in all media. Founded in 1972 with roots in the civil rights movement, MAP advocates before Congress, the Federal Communications Commission, and in the court system. Recently, for example, MAP has opposed new FCC rules that would allow large media corporations to merge, thereby decreasing the number of companies that control the airwaves, and has encouraged policies to ensure emerging technologies that will serve all citizens, focusing particularly on spectrum allocation and broadband Internet policies.

A nonprofit organization structured as a law firm, MAP has an operating budget of \$900,000, most of which comes from grants from foundations such as Ford, MacArthur, and Open Society Institute. MAP's staff consists of three attorneys (President and CEO Andrew Jay Schwartzman, Harold Feld, and Cheryl Leanza), the new director of operations, and an administrative assistant. In the near future, MAP plans to create at least one mid-management position to strengthen its organizational capacity.

To learn more about the Media Access Project, see <http://www.MediaAccess.org>.

The Position and its Principal Responsibilities

The Director of Operations will serve as MAP's financial and administrative director, overseeing the organization's accounting and financial management, information technology, human resources administration, and office management. By creating and managing systems to insure that all of these areas function efficiently and effectively, the director of operations will enable the three attorneys to focus more of their time and energy on litigation and other programmatic activities that advance the organization's mission.

Reporting directly to the president and CEO, but also working closely with the two other attorneys, the director of operations will be responsible for:

1. Coordinating the development of an annual operating plan that is consistent with MAP's new three-year strategic plan.
2. Creating and tracking the annual operating budget and cash flow.
3. Managing financial operations, which includes overseeing the bookkeeping (currently outsourced to an accounting firm), preparing monthly financial reports for the senior staff and board, and creating systems to track expenditures against project grants and provide financial reports to donors.
4. Directing human resources management, including the administration of employee benefits.
5. Overseeing office management, including procurement of equipment and supplies, office space, and relations with vendors.
6. Managing the logistics for periodic events such as press conferences, board meetings, and receptions.
7. Promoting the effective use of contemporary information technology, including management of the computer network, telephone system, and database or contact management software.
8. Supervising administrative staff.

Desired Skills, Experience, and Characteristics

As the person leading the financial and administrative management of Media Access Project, the Director of Operations should be:

1. Able to bring crisp management skills to an organization that functions as a small law firm, but is driven by a social mission that often compels it to engage in projects and activities that cannot be anticipated in planning processes.
2. Capable of producing and analyzing financial information related to the operations of the organization.
3. Eager to take advantage of relevant, emerging information technology to improve internal operations and strengthen communication with constituents and other stakeholders.
4. Familiar with office management, human resources, and facilities management.
5. Interested in a broad-based senior management position in a small but growing organization.
6. A relentless desire to bring projects to completion—on time and within budget.
7. Attentiveness to detail and consistent follow-through.
8. An ability to take initiative and work effectively without close supervision.
9. A willingness to take a hands-on approach to the job since there are no fulltime staff to whom significant tasks can be delegated.

10. A working understanding of the principles of strategic planning and evaluation.
11. The capacity to motivate professional peers and support staff, as well as the ability to work collaboratively with them.
12. An ability to manage and guide outside consultants who may be needed to bring more technical expertise in areas such as accounting and financial reporting, human resources, and information technology.

Desired Experience

Essential:

- At least five years experience in a wide-ranging operations role at a nonprofit organization or law firm.
- A track record of successful financial management.
- Experience introducing change, especially process improvement, in a growing organization.
- Strong support for MAP's mission (especially given the strong interaction among the small staff).

Helpful but not required:

- Familiarity with telecommunications or media policy.

Compensation

Salary will be commensurate with experience and qualifications, and competitive with director of operations positions at other Washington-based nonprofit organizations of comparable size. MAP offers a very generous benefits plan and makes efforts to respond flexibly to employees' personal needs.

To Apply

Please e-mail (or mail): 1) cover letter, 2) resume, and 3) three-year salary history (which will be held in strict confidence) to:

Larry H. Slesinger
 Slesinger Management Services
 5016 Westpath Terrace
 Bethesda, MD 20816
 Tel.: 301-320-0680
 E-mail: Larry@SlesingerManagement.com

(Please include "MAP" in subject line; attached files in Microsoft Word or PDF only)

(This job announcement can also be found at <http://www.SlesingerManagement.com>.)

*The Media Access Project is an equal opportunity employer
 that particularly welcomes applications that will increase our staff diversity.*