

Conservation Associate

Reports to: Land Access Program Manager

Classification: Exempt

Status: Full-time

Organization Description: Southside Community Land Trust builds a fair and accessible local food system in Rhode Island by offering access to land, training, resources and support to community and backyard gardeners, beginning farmers and young people.

SCLT was founded in 1981 when residents of South Providence and newly arrived Hmong refugees worked together to grow culturally familiar, nutritious food in the area's first community garden. Somerset Garden not only improved residents' diets and economic self-reliance, it stabilized a neighborhood weakened by arson, neglect and crime. Today, the most significant obstacle to accomplishing our work is the racial injustice that denies Black, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous and all people of color equal access to fresh, healthy and affordable food.

SCLT leases land to 31 farmers who supply fresh fruits and vegetables to 13 farmers markets, roughly 100 food businesses and restaurants and six CSAs. We support a network of 60 community gardens and farms, feeding over 15,000 people every year. We operate three production farms in Providence and Pawtucket where we practice, demonstrate and train others in bio-intensive, small-scale agricultural production. We helped found three farmers markets as well as three growers' collaboratives that enable individual farmers to bring their produce to market.

Position Description: Reporting to the Land Access Program Manager, the Conservation Coordinator will act as a Liaison to the Leadership and Learning Advisory Group and the Northern RI Conservation District while working with producers, conservationists, and the future generation to foster and shape NRCS programs and practices.

Job Duties:

- Gain working knowledge of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs, processes and grant or contract documents through hands-on experience in the field and office.
- Gain working knowledge of climate smart agricultural practices and conservation best management practices (BMPs) and assist farmers to implement these on their farms.
- Work with SCLT's Farmer Training & Services team to promote NRCS programs and conservation practices with small scale and urban producers.
- Assist SCLT Farmer Training & Services team in providing technical assistance to farmers and other land-users on implementation of conservation BMPs and related topics.
- Facilitate a Leadership and Learning Advisory Group of historically underserved producers tasked with developing their understanding of federal services including NRCS and its practices.
- Support members of Leadership and Learning Advisory Group to advise NRCS and Conservation Districts on changes and enhancements to practices and programs.

- Participate in local NRCS and Rhode Island Food Policy Council Working Groups/Committees.
- Participate in urban agriculture mapping project with the Northern RI Conservation District.
- Work with youth program staff to develop a USDA/NRCS leadership module to promote conservation career opportunities while also preparing a diverse, next generation of producers and conservationists.
- Performs all other duties as assigned.

Desired Experience, Education, Knowledge, and Skills

- Experience, knowledge and interest in agriculture, forestry, biological and environmental science. Some experience working farm or forest lands.
- Experience with tasks like installing irrigation, repairing fencing, gardening, carpentry, tree work/landscaping as well as usage of tools and equipment associated with those tasks.
- Strong organizational and communication skills.
- Experience in sales and customer service.
- Must be able to work within a team including co-workers, youth and farmers.
- Proficiency in Excel, Word, Google Drive, Gmail.
- High School Diploma, GED or relevant work experience.
- Providence, Pawtucket or Central Falls area resident.
- Demonstrated experience with, and commitment to, work that advances race equity and social justice.
- Valid driver’s license and clean driving record.
- Skills in any of the following languages including Spanish, Swahili, Kinyarwanda/Kirundi, Portuguese, Cape Verdean Creole, Hmong, French, Kunama, Burmese, Haitian Creole, Khmer, and Lao. Or any language spoken by under-resourced communities in South Providence, Pawtucket and Central Falls.

SCLT welcomes your application even if you do not possess all of the attributes listed above. The organization values both life and on-the-job experience and we consider these in all hiring decisions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee must have the physical ability to occasionally move and lift heavy objects up to 50 pounds and the ability to work outdoors in varying weather conditions. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Schedule is an average of 40 hours per week. This position requires occasional weekend and evening availability.

Compensation for this position will be \$42,000 - \$55,000 and set based on prior relevant experience. In addition to paid holidays that occur during your regular work schedule, the position receives 22 paid days off per calendar year. This position also qualifies for health and

dental insurance through SCLT; if the employee has medical coverage elsewhere, they will be offered \$400 of benefit pay per month to offset premium costs.

SCLT is an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to providing an environment of mutual respect where equal employment opportunities are available to all applicants and teammates without regard to race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy (including childbirth, lactation, and related medical conditions), national origin, age, physical and mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, military and veteran status, and any other characteristic protected by applicable law. We are committed to building a team that includes leadership from the communities that we serve and that represents a variety of backgrounds, perspectives, and skills. Bilingual applicants are strongly encouraged – see above list of desired languages.

Interested candidates should submit a resume and cover letter to jobs@southsideclt.org. Please indicate “Conservation Associate” in the subject line of the email. Interviewing of qualified applicants is planned for the week of May 20, 2024. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.