



Saving Tomorrow's Agriculture Resources (STAR) Program Manager Description

Position Location: Remote, preferred location in the western U.S.

Position Term: Annual Contract Basis

Required for Consideration: Interested applicants should send a tailored cover letter describing their interest and qualifications for the role and annual compensation requirements, together with a resume and possible start date to info@STARconservation.org. We will only consider applicants who provide all requested information.

Position Posting Close Date: Position posting will remain open until filled. Applicants will be considered on a rolling basis.

STAR Overview

STAR is a national, non-profit organization established to develop and expand the STAR framework for conservation practice evaluation, implementation, and valuation, to create a standardized approach for STAR initiatives across the US, and to provide guidance and support for new and existing STAR Affiliates. The goal of STAR is to facilitate successful and sustained conservation practice adoption and implementation by farmers and ranchers at scale by providing STAR Affiliates a comprehensive toolkit and tailored guidance to empower producer success and to connect them to incentive programs. The STAR framework includes a simple, straightforward, and free tool developed by farmers and ranchers to increase voluntary conservation practice implementation on agricultural lands. The STAR 1 to 5 rating system is used to evaluate conservation practices on individual fields using a locally-driven, science-based approach to effectively and efficiently scale grassroots conservation efforts by incentivizing and rewarding the adoption of practices that have relevance to producers and their supply chain partners. STAR bridges the gap between producers' perceptions of sustainability and outcomes-based supply chain sustainability programs. Due to the growing interest in STAR, an expansion is underway for a variety of cropland and grazing production systems in the West and additional states in the Midwest. The national STAR organization will lead the coordination, development, alignment, and expansion of the STAR framework and STAR tool across the US by providing state STAR Affiliates a comprehensive toolkit and tailored guidance to empower producer success through conservation and to connect them to financial incentives for practice implementation.

Program Manager Overview

The STAR **Program Manager** will be responsible for supporting the establishment of new state-based STAR Affiliates and providing ongoing guidance and support for existing STAR Affiliates. There is a large amount of enthusiasm and interest in STAR in the Western U.S. and Midwest, so the Program Manager will work closely with state-based contacts to funnel their energies into the creation of strong, high-functioning STAR Affiliates that align with the (national) STAR guidelines. Activities will include the facilitation of Affiliate set-up and implementation components of the National STAR Program; guiding and supporting STAR Affiliate programs with a focus on the efficient startup of the STAR Affiliate to meet state level needs while aligning with the STAR organization guidelines; collaborating with STAR Affiliates and partners to develop innovative initiatives to strengthen and expand STAR and increase producer



participation across the US; and contributing to the development of an improved STAR field verification process and increased producer incentive opportunities. The Program Manager will work to ensure the credibility and standardization of National STAR and STAR Affiliates and work to track and evaluate state-based STAR results to inform the continued improvement and development of pragmatic STAR framework requirements. The ideal candidate will have significant experience in program management; familiarity with agricultural conservation initiatives, incentive programs, and market partners; a network of contacts in the Midwest and Western U.S.; and an eye for innovation and the energy to initiate new strategies.

Program Manager Responsibilities

- Support establishment of new state-based STAR Affiliates, including development and finalization of state-specific Affiliate agreements and tracking of state and local partner interest in STAR across the US
- Provide guidance and ongoing support to new and current state-based STAR Affiliates, including ensuring alignment with national STAR organization guidelines
- Consciously contribute to a positive, balanced and collaborative mindset while working with STAR Affiliates and the national STAR team
- Refine national STAR guidance documents and material templates for Affiliate use
- Facilitate a learning network of STAR Affiliate staff and supporting partners
- Support development of a STAR micro-credential training program for Affiliate staff and partner representatives
- Support national STAR Marketing, Verification, and Communication Committees and activities
- Maintain awareness and respond proactively to opportunities for producers within national, regional and local incentive and grant programs, including supply chain initiatives, ecosystem service markets, crop insurers, financial institutions, government programs, etc.
- Work with the STAR Team to develop innovative strategies for promoting the STAR framework, increasing enrollment, and strengthening the value STAR brings to farmers and ranchers
- Evaluate and implement goals, objectives, and operating structure and procedures for program effectiveness
- Regularly communicate with STAR leadership to report on projects, budgets, committee/partner updates, and prioritization of work
- Support the development of annual reports for national STAR and STAR Affiliates
- Assist team with grant management; grant proposal planning, development and submission; and completion of grant reporting requirements
- Represent National STAR at agriculture and conservation conferences and events, as needed
- Other duties as assigned

Program Manager Required Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in natural or environmental science, agriculture, economics, agronomy, or other relevant subject
- 4 years of relevant work experience (a Master's degree may substitute for 2 years of experience)
- Demonstrated experience in project management and well-developed organizational skills
- Experience developing program policies, procedures, implementation and communications strategies, and evaluation frameworks
- An understanding of producer perspectives and a passion for conservation agriculture
- An understanding of communications strategies specific to agriculture and ag producers



- Awareness of current economic opportunities for producers including those provided by carbon markets, ecosystem service valuation markets, crop insurance programs, and incentive and grant opportunities
- Demonstrated experience developing and maintaining cooperative and beneficial relationships with those in government, academia, nongovernmental agencies, agriculture, and business and community organizations
- Ability to think creatively and innovatively about implementation and communication strategies
- Ability to work independently and prioritize tasks
- A positive, problem-solving attitude
- Experience and appreciation for the importance of collaboration with team members and stakeholders to create optimal results
- Public speaking and written communication skills

Program Manager Preferred Qualifications

- Master's degree in natural or environmental science, agriculture, economics, agronomy, or other relevant subject
- Demonstrated experience establishing and/or managing a regional or national scale program in the area of conservation agriculture
- Expertise in agronomy, ag economics, and/or ag communications
- Familiarity with ag conservation metrics, measurement tools, and approaches
- Strong relationships and networks at a regional or national level in the agricultural and conservation industries

Compensation and Benefits

Full-time remote contract position funded through at least December 1, 2026. Compensation will be commensurate with education and experience.

Diversity & Inclusion Statement

STAR appreciates the talented and diverse people who help to meet its mission and goals. We are stronger, more credible, and more effective when our work includes highly qualified individuals with identities, backgrounds, cultures and traditions that reflect our rich human diversity and improve opportunities for all. This commitment is both a moral imperative consistent with a community that celebrates individual differences and diversity, as well as a matter of law.

STAR strives to create a company culture and working environment that is free of unlawful discrimination and harassment. STAR strictly prohibits and will not tolerate discrimination based on an individual's protected status, including but not limited to, persons of varying ages, ancestry, ethnicity, color, disability, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, national origin, political affiliation, socioeconomic and family status, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, protected veteran or military status, geographic region, or any other characteristic protected by local or state laws.

As an organization, STAR maintains a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination and harassment. This includes, but is not limited to: 1) providing a safe and trusted environment which protects anyone within our organization or anyone who we have contact with, including partners, grantors, and volunteers; 2)



having adequate policies, procedures and measures to protect people and ensure that they are shared and understood; and 3) having absolute clarity as to how incidents and allegations will be handled should they arise, including reporting to the relevant authorities, including STAR-designated points of contact, as appropriate.

The STAR organizational culture reflects our ongoing commitment to build and maintain a safe and accepting work environment that supports the efforts of all of our team members and those who we work with, to effectively carry out its mission.