Canada Policy Manager
June 2024

General Description
The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative seeks a Canada Policy Manager to support our policy efforts in Canada and engage with Ontario members to develop and implement pilot programs. The Canada Policy Manager reports to the Chief Policy Officer and will also work closely with the Member and Government Relations Director and the Chief Operations and Programs Officer. This is a full-time, remote position.

The Canada Policy Manager will help cultivate relationships across all orders of government, support the development and implementation of our policy agenda and facilitate Canadian members’ policy engagement, including via our three mayor-led commissions.

In addition, the Canada Policy Manager, in coordination with the membership and program teams, will support the establishment of new programs for Ontario members that respond to municipal needs across our strategic focus areas. We will be applying for a series of small federal and provincial grants to support the pilots, with the goal of leveraging lessons learned to secure additional funding.

Major Responsibilities
Policy and Advocacy
- Build a sound knowledge of government actors, policies and programs at the federal and provincial levels that impact the Cities Initiative’s strategic pillars
- Establish and maintain relationships with government actors and key stakeholders in Canada and Ontario in close coordination with the Chief Policy Officer and Member and Government Relations Director
- Help manage our three mayor-led commissions – the Mayors Commission on Economic Transformation, the Mayors Commission on Coastal Resilience and the Mayors Commission on Water Equity – and formulate and execute effective advocacy strategies to strengthen their policy influence with the Canadian federal government and Ontario provincial government
- Develop key messages and actionable recommendations – including via annual federal priorities, member resolutions and commission policy agendas – to advance our policy goals
- Provide support to key organizational events, including the Annual Conference, the Mid-Year Meeting and regular Board of Directors meetings
- Contribute to external policy communications, including via newsletter articles, webinars, press releases and social media

Member Engagement
- Serve as the lead for policy engagement with our Ontario members, including by facilitating their active participation in our three mayor-led commissions
- Support our Ontario Advisory Council in close coordination with the Member and Government Relations Director
- Stay informed of Ontario members’ policy priorities through regular communication with key mayors and staff, especially the Board of Directors and commission leadership
- Collaborate with the Member and Government Relations Director to support recruitment and retention efforts of Ontario members
Canadian Programs

- Liaise with the Chief Operations and Programs Officer and Canada team to develop and socialize programming to support our Ontario members:
  - Facilitate member roundtables to ensure program direction aligns with member needs
  - Support the scoping of pilot programs in Ontario, including process, outputs and fit with cultural/regulatory context
- Work with the Chief Operations and Programs Officer to:
  - Launch and showcase pilot programs in Ontario
  - Support the development of funding proposals
  - Ensure the completion of deliverables from funder-supported projects, including project management

Key Qualifications and Competencies

- 3-5 years of experience in politics and/or public policy in government, a non-profit or a similar organization
- Substantial knowledge of government policies relating to one or more of our strategic pillars – climate change and costal resilience; water equity and infrastructure; economic transformation and ecosystem and source water protection
- Demonstrated ability to analyze policies and implement advocacy strategies
- Effective communicator with experience briefing executive-level stakeholders (e.g., elected officials, senior bureaucrats and/or senior organization staff)
- Sound judgement and strategic decisionmaking
- Strong interpersonal skills and evidence of teamwork
- Ability to multi-task, prioritize and deliver on multiple demands under tight deadlines
- Self-discipline to work at a virtual organization
- Eagerness to learn and grow from direct mentorship
- Eligible to work in Canada
- Fluency in English is required; intermediate level in French is preferred

Salary and Benefits

$60,000 to $80,000 CAD annually contingent on qualifications with a comprehensive benefits package, including a supplemental health benefits plan, RRSP contributions and three weeks of paid vacation plus time off during our annual holiday shutdown

Work Location

This position is fully virtual. Candidates must be based in Ontario, with a preference for candidates in Toronto or the National Capital Region.

Diversity Statement

The Cities Initiative is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees.

Application Process

Send a cover letter, a resume and three professional references to Travis Wheeler, Chief Policy Officer, at twheeler@glslcities.org. The subject line should read “Canada Policy Manager – First and Last Name of Applicant.” Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and accepted until the position is filled.

About the Cities Initiative

The Cities Initiative is a multinational coalition of local governments, led by more than 260 mayors and chief elected officers, working collaboratively to safeguard the economic, environmental and social health of communities in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. The organization is committed to stewarding the basin’s freshwater and ensuring that all residents have access to clean, safe and affordable water as the foundation for sustainable, vibrant, inclusive and resilient communities.