



## **Policy Director Washington, DC**

The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) is seeking a passionate, experienced, strategic and collaborative policy leader who will build upon the Coalition's accomplishments over the past 30 years and help lead the charge to even bigger victories in the future. The Policy Director must be deeply committed to serving the sustainable agriculture movement and its federal policy work and to becoming an integral part of our high-performing, passionate, and diverse team. The Policy Director is a full-time, salaried position and is based in Washington, DC.

### **THE ORGANIZATION**

NSAC is an alliance of grassroots organizations that advocates for federal policy reform to advance the sustainability of agriculture, food systems, natural resources, and rural communities. For over 30 years, NSAC's stellar track record of policy accomplishments has been guided by a vision of agriculture where a safe, nutritious, ample, and affordable food supply is produced by a legion of family farmers who make a decent living pursuing their trade, while protecting the environment, and contributing to the strength and stability of their communities. Racial justice – an understanding and acknowledgment of historical and ongoing racial inequities and a commitment to actions challenging those inequities – is a core NSAC tenet we seek to embed in our structure, analysis, policy development, and advocacy.

### **POSITION SUMMARY**

The Policy Director, in conjunction with NSAC staff and member organizations, leads NSAC's public policy work. The Policy Director represents the Coalition to policymakers and to the media, coordinates and oversees the policy development and advocacy work of the Coalition, leads and staffs the Policy Council, oversees all policy campaigns, and manages the policy team (currently 7 full-time policy staff). The Policy Director shares in the leadership of the organization along with the Grassroots Director and the Coalition Director. The Policy Director and Grassroots Director work together to develop campaigns and help ensure coordination and cohesion between NSAC's direct and grassroots advocacy. The Policy Director and Grassroots Director report to the Coalition Director.

### **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### *Policy and Strategy Development*

- Stay abreast of developments in sustainable agriculture and food system research, including racial equity components.
- Develop careful analysis of policy perspectives, options, threats, and opportunities.
- Monitor and analyze relevant activity on Capitol Hill, in the executive branch, and in peer advocacy organizations.
- Guide day-to-day policy and strategy decisions of policy staff and Issue Committees, while also ensuring the organization has a long-range advocacy plan.
- Coordinate and manage NSAC's annual policy priority setting process, and help create a well-defined and well-designed policy agenda that integrates effective strategies, realistic goals, application of a racial equity lens, and performance measures.
- Chair and coordinate all meetings of NSAC's Policy Council.

### *Advocacy and Coalition Building*

- Advocate NSAC priorities and positions to top congressional and administrative decision-makers, and coordinate all direct advocacy by NSAC policy staff.
- Draft legislation, report language, testimony, letters to Congress and comments on federal rulemakings and program implementation decisions; and train and mentor policy staff in those activities.
- Lead the development and management of effective working relationships with key policymakers, member organizations' staff, and farm leaders that play an active role in policy work.
- In partnership with other staff, develop and engage in effective coalitions with other national and regional organizations, and build and strengthen relationships with organizations that serve primarily people and communities of color.
- Coordinate with the Grassroots Director to ensure consistency in strategy between direct and grassroots advocacy.

### *Communications and Fundraising*

- Provide general oversight for development and sign-off on all written policy communications to Congress or the Administration, as well as NSAC policy position papers, white papers, scoping papers, policy platforms, policy-related blogs, and other related policy publications.
- Speak and represent NSAC at meetings, conferences, symposia, etc.
- In coordination with other staff, help develop overall communications and media strategy, including framing and articulating advocacy related press statements and materials.
- As needed, assist the Coalition Director in raising funds for major policy campaigns.

### *Organizational Development*

- Support the development and implementation of organizational strategic plan elements directly related to policy campaigns.
- Assist the Coalition Director and the Grassroots Director with membership recruitment and membership capacity building needed to advance policy work.
- Assist the Coalition Director with the development of the annual budget, including especially staffing arrangements and policy campaign needs.
- Maintain a climate that attracts, engages, motivates, and retains a diverse, highly qualified and effective policy staff.

## **REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS**

- A strong understanding of sustainable food and agriculture policy – including federal policy related to conservation, environmental protection, beginning farmers, commodity, credit, and crop insurance programs, civil rights and underserved producers, rural development, agricultural research, food safety, climate change, local and regional food systems, and healthy food access
- 7-10 years of policy experience, including experience advocating on Capitol Hill and within federal agencies.
- Ability to lead and manage a team of seven policy specialists, and to work cooperatively.
- Ability to push incremental change with broader long-term goals in sight.
- Ability to work well with decision makers of all political stripes, and a willingness to develop deep and lasting relationships with stakeholders and decision makers.
- Strong experience writing policy papers, testimony, legislation, advocacy materials, and comments related to federal policy and rulemaking.

- Ability to distill the interests and priorities of farmers and NSAC's farm and food systems-based member organizations into a federal policy campaign, and to interpret policy language to understand how it will affect farmers on the ground.
- Experience with large, multi-organization grassroots coalitions or networks and experience with grassroots advocacy campaigns.
- Experience analyzing and advocating policy reform from a racial justice standpoint.
- Excellent written and verbal communication and public speaking skills.
- Obvious passion for NSAC's mission and work.
- Strong interpersonal skills, with strong ability to listen and to build trust among a wide range of constituents.
- Willingness to work around a demanding congressional schedule and administrative deadlines.
- Willingness to travel domestically several times per year.

## **PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS**

- Experience working within Congress or within the USDA, FDA, EPA or other relevant federal agencies.
- Experience cultivating donor and foundation relationships and crafting grant proposals for policy projects and campaigns.
- Experience and training as a facilitator to develop consensus among diverse stakeholders.
- Experience with long-term strategic planning as well as annual planning and priority setting.
- Experience with annual organizational budgeting and financial management.

## **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

NSAC offers competitive non-profit salary and benefits. Salary will be dependent on qualifications and experience, within the range of \$95,000 to \$110,000. This position is a full time, non-exempt position that offers excellent benefits (as per the employee handbook), including generous vacation and other time-off policy, health, dental, and long-term disability insurance, contributions after two years in a retirement plan, financial support for professional and personal development, and a pleasant, collaborative, professional working environment.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

Applications will be accepted until a suitable candidate is identified. Early applications are encouraged, and applications will be considered as they are received. All names and applicants will be held in strict confidence. All persons interested in being considered for the position must submit a resume, a recent writing sample, a cover letter highlighting their experience and skills relevant to the listed qualifications, and 3-5 references (whom we will not contact until after a final interview), as well as explanations of why you left any other position in the last five years. More information about NSAC can be accessed by visiting our website at <http://sustainableagriculture.net>.

Please [use this form](#) to complete and submit application materials.

*NSAC is committed to hiring and retaining a diverse workforce and strongly encourages applications from groups that have been historically under-represented, including but not limited to women and people of color. Please also see [NSAC's Statement on Racial Equity](#). NSAC makes hiring decisions without regard to gender, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, veteran status, disability, or any other protected class.*