



Position: Farmland Access Program Manager

Organization: The Land Connection - Champaign, Illinois

Reports to: Executive Director

Employment Status: Full Time, Exempt

Salary: \$40,000 - \$50,000; based upon experience and qualifications

Benefits: Full time, exempt employees of The Land Connection receive health insurance, vision insurance, dental care reimbursements, and life insurance, as well as vacation, sick, holiday, and paid parental leave. We also provide compensatory time for time worked beyond normal full-time expectations.

Background and History

For more than 20 years, The Land Connection has actively worked to build a more just and equitable food and farming system for Illinois. As we head into the next iteration of our organization's history, we have identified the need to establish a statewide farmland access program. With the average farmer age in Illinois at 58 years old, and with 37% of principal operators over the age of 65, we know that a large turnover of farmland ownership is imminent for Illinois. In addition, non-operating farmland owners, who own 60% of Illinois farmland are an average of 69 years old. To continue to sustain Illinois' agricultural legacy, it is imperative that we actively support the transition of these acres from the current generation of farmers and landowners to the next generation of farmers. Since there is currently no single source for farmers and landowners in Illinois to access the resources and assistance needed to sell, purchase, or lease farmland, we have created a new collaborative effort called the [Illinois Farmland Access Initiative](#).

Summary Job Description

As an integral part of this program, The Land Connection seeks an enthusiastic program manager to develop and coordinate the initiative's growth and expansion in a way that instills equity and collaboration in every element. This position will lead the work to implement the initiative, including growing the network of organizations, agricultural service providers, and individuals participating in the work; guiding the training and work of four regional land access navigators; assisting with the transition of [illinoisfarmlink.org](#) to a statewide resource for farmers, landowners, and agriculture service providers; and leading the development of strong land access and transfer education programs to aid farmers and landowners throughout the state. The successful candidate will shape the evolution of the [Illinois Farmland Access Initiative](#).

Primary Responsibilities

- Cultivate, facilitate, motivate, and coordinate strong relationships with and among a diverse network of partners participating in the Illinois Farmland Access Initiative
- Coordinate communications, programs, and events related to the Illinois Farmland Access Initiative
- Provide training, direct assistance, and ongoing support to regionally located navigators



- Connect farmland seekers, transitioning farmers, and non-operating landowners to regionally located navigators through electronic communications, phone calls, and in-person meetings
- Assist navigators and partners in the development and implementation of statewide educational events and resources to reduce barriers to land access, ownership, and transition
- Keep the Illinois FarmLink website up to date with statewide events, services, and resources, as well as with current property and farmland seeker postings
- Ensure the values of diversity, equity, justice, and belonging are integrated into this initiative
- Facilitate meetings with initiative partners
- Represent The Land Connection and the Illinois Farmland Access Initiative at public meetings, conferences, workshops, and trainings
- Work collaboratively with staff and initiative partners to identify and secure funding support for this program
- Work with Executive Director to develop annual program and budget goals
- Participate in weekly staff meetings, staff member check-ins, project meetings, etc.
- Other duties as assigned

This is not necessarily an all-inclusive list of job-related responsibilities, duties, skills, efforts, requirements, or working conditions and this job description in no way states or implies that these are the only duties to which will be required in this position. Management reserves the right to revise the job or require that other or different tasks be performed or assigned.

Qualifications

Candidates must have 3+ years of experience in a field focused on agriculture, environment, conservation, or food systems. Candidates with higher education and no experience will **not** be considered for this position. Candidates with only experience and no higher education are strongly encouraged to apply.

The candidate must be:

- Passionate with an eagerness to learn more about farming, farmland access, and farmland transfer issues
- Experienced in building and managing collaborations
- Excellent at communicating including a high level of comfort regularly interacting with a diverse audience of farmland owners, farmers, agricultural service providers, and other industry professionals
- Deeply committed to building an inclusive farmland access movement in Illinois
- Experienced in technical assistance, education, or community engagement
- Equipped with strong research, writing, and data analysis skills, and the ability to convert high level concepts into understandable information
- Willing to learn, outgoing, organized, and energetic
- Capable of managing projects independently and as part of a team



- Able to use standard Windows computer programs and Google Suite tools, as well as able to work with web platforms like Drupal
- Able to occasionally work in the evenings or on weekends, as well as travel throughout Illinois
- Able to remain in a stationary position for the majority of a workday

Depending on the candidate, remote work may be considered. Candidate must be based in Illinois.

The Land Connection is committed to creating a diverse environment and is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age, or veteran status.

To Apply

Send a letter of interest and resume with three references to careers@thelandconnection.org or visit our website and apply using the applicant form at www.thelandconnection.org/employment/. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis.