

- Request for Proposal -
Managing Director for Local First Project

Local First, an alliance of locally-owned, independent businesses and organizations in La Plata County, will contract with an individual to coordinate its Local First project from March 2010 to March 2011. The group's mission is to help locally-owned, independent businesses work together to create an economy that values people, the planet and prosperity for everyone. Currently a project of the Sustainability Alliance of Southwest Colorado, Local First is in the process of incorporating as its own non-profit organization.

Local First has over 150 members and for the past two years has published the *Be Local* Coupon Book as part of a broader Look Local First campaign organized in cooperation with the Durango Chamber of Commerce, La Plata Economic Action Development Partnership (LEAD), and Healthy Lifestyles La Plata.

The Managing Director will work closely with the new Board of Directors to guide this emerging organization. The successful candidate will enjoy the challenge of helping a new organization to take on larger and more meaningful projects. The Director will have a passion for community-building and a strong belief in supporting locally-owned, independent businesses. We expect this person to place a premium on timely, honest, and constructive communication, which includes listening carefully to concerns and helping the Board find consensus on issues facing the organization. The Director will facilitate effective teamwork among and between staff, board, interns, volunteers, member businesses and organizations.

We are looking for someone who is creative, optimistic, and enthusiastic, while at the same time being practical and clear-sighted. This person will be an expert in time management and be able to set priorities and meet deadlines. Flexibility and comfort with adapting to changing circumstances is especially important as Local First establishes itself as an independent organization.

The Managing Director will initially be independent contractor and will provide his or her own materials, tools, and equipment to complete work and will seek the approval of the board for the purchase of and reimbursement of supplies, postage, advertising, and other related expenses. The contract will be with the Sustainability Alliance of Southwest Colorado. Once Local First becomes an organization, the new Board and the Managing Director can maintain this contractual arrangement or change the position to a formal staff position. While the initial contract is for one year, we are hoping to establish a longer-term arrangement.

Expected Overall Outcomes:

- Publication of the 2011 *Be Local* Coupon Book – This includes: tracking expenses and managing the project budget; facilitating the choice of theme for the book, drafting content for the book, coordinating the collection of donated photos and illustrations; coordinating publicity and advertising for sale of the book, and providing oversight for any outside contractors. For the past two years, Local First has retained a Project Manager to handles sales for this project, but the Managing Director will have primary responsibility for meeting all publication deadlines.

- Expanding Benefits for Local First Members – This includes developing marketing opportunities beyond the *Be Local* Coupon Book for member businesses and organizations, such as window stickers, website promotions, cooperative advertising, and community events. This also potentially includes trainings, cost cutting opportunities, and sponsorship opportunities for members.
- Creation of a strong organizational foundation that ensures long-term success - This includes helping the Board with strategic planning, establishing an office, fundraising, and helping the Board research potential projects for 2011.
- Conduct operations within budget and achieve a net growth in revenue so that the Managing Director position can become a full-time position as quickly as possible.

Specific deliverables:

- Work with the Board to create and revise a long-term strategic plan for the organization
- Finalize and implement an annual work plan for the 2010 and establish a work plan for 2011 to achieve milestones set forth in the strategic plan
- Provide clear and current information in a timely manner so the Board can make decisions (e.g. quarterly financial reports, budgets, notice for meetings)
- Plan, organize and execute Local First projects and programs (e.g. events, products, services) as outlined in the annual work plan
- Manage day-to-day operations of the organization, including responding to e-mails, answering phone calls, and paying bills
- Identify program opportunities and funding options for organization
- Hire, supervise, and, if necessary dismiss other staff, interns, volunteers, and contractors
- Represent Local First at events and meetings and serve as Local First’s primary spokesperson
- Network with local, state, and national organizations and agencies
- Build positive relationships with and between members through meetings and regular communication
- Oversee necessary updates and changes to the website
- Work closely with team leaders and other committee chairs to ensure effective meetings and decision-making
- Create and execute fundraising strategies for the organization, including fundraising events, grant writing, and fee-for-service activities
- Contribute leadership that helps the organization to grow and thrive

We anticipate additional responsibilities that support the overall outcomes for the position will emerge during the contract period.

Desired Qualifications:

- Proven ability to facilitate a diverse group of individuals to achieve a common goal
- Relationships with business owners and organizations representing the diversity of La Plata County’s population
- Knowledge of the concerns of small business owners
- Knowledge of diverse approaches to community and regional economic development

- Demonstrated strong written and verbal communication skills
- Demonstrated networking skills
- Demonstrated skill with community organizing and education strategies
- Successful experience with fundraising, marketing, and public relations
- Success with strategic planning and launching new organizations and/or businesses
- Success with organizational management, especially in the non-profit sector

What to Include in Proposal:

- Cover letter addressing specific strengths related to the qualifications listed above
- Résumé or CV that demonstrates the ability to successfully complete the assigned tasks
- Cost for the completing the work described above over the next year, including an overall, not-to-exceed figure. With the assistance of the Coupon Book Project Manager, we anticipate this position initially to take the equivalent of 20 to 30 hours per week, but we are open to alternative staffing proposals to achieve the responsibilities outlined above and meet the needs of the candidate.
- Contact information for at least three references

Proposals should be sent to: renner_m@fortlewis.edu. Questions on the project should be directed to Marcus Renner, the chair of the Local First Steering Committee at renner_m@fortlewis.edu or (970) 247-7091.

Deadline: Proposals must be received by 12 noon on Tuesday, February 16th, 2010

A subcommittee from the Local First Steering Committee will arrange interviews and recommend their selection to the full group. We expect to finalize a contract in early March.

Local First Guiding Statements

Mission

To help locally-owned, independent businesses work together to create an economy that values people, the planet and prosperity for everyone.

Vision

We envision a thriving, self-reliant, and resilient community investing in locally-owned, independent businesses and organizations that join together to enhance everyone’s quality of life.

Values

It’s bigger than me – The well-being of each person is connected to the well-being of others, the local economy, and the environment.

Collaborate creatively – Finding creative ways to work together makes work more valuable, more productive, and more fun.

Capitalize on hidden wealth – The greatest economic opportunity exists in the knowledge, skills, and abilities of local residents

Earn our way – Having members willing to pay for our services is a measure of the value we provide

Everyone adds value – Everyone should have the opportunity to participate in our local economy

Be consistent – We do not play favorites

Love your home – We help members enhance the environment

Generosity Pays – Individuals and business that give to our community deserve recognition and support

Do what works – We are solutions-based organization that seeks information so we can learn from our mistakes

Meet people where they are – We approach conversations about our community and economy with an open mind

Trust the community – We believe in people’s ability to make informed decisions that support our community

Plan ahead – To achieve our vision we focus on the future of our community and our organization

Cultivate leadership – We seek to develop the leadership capacity of members and volunteers

Assumptions of Local First

- we’re all in this together
- we all contribute to the future of this community, this place, and the local economy
- we depend on each other to thrive
- our quality of life, community, and environment is the ultimate source of wealth and requires renewal and investment
- there is untapped economic potential in enhancing this quality of life and this should guide for local economic development

Goals

- Awareness - Shift local spending to locally-owned, independent businesses
- Business support - Help locally-owned, independent businesses thrive by providing training, resources, and support
- Networking - Facilitate collaboration among local businesses and organizations
- Economic development - Help creative enterprises succeed that increase the self-reliance and resilience of our local economy