



Program Director (*Director of Food Strategy*)

To be considered for this position, candidates must submit a cover letter along with a professional resume

The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation, as the official economic development arm of the State of Rhode Island, works to drive prosperity in the state and help Rhode Island businesses and residents thrive. A quasi-public agency, the Commerce Corporation serves as a government and community resource to help boost business expansion in, and relocation to, Rhode Island. We are a passionate, innovative, driven, and resourceful team inspired by the belief that we can expand opportunities so that more Rhode Islanders are able to succeed. We enjoy working for an administration that is truly invested in making change happen. People skilled at advancing strategic change in a fast-paced, dynamic environment thrive here.

Statement of Duties

The State of Rhode Island embarked on the bold work of creating a statewide food strategy in 2016. Called Relish Rhody, the strategy outlines five critical areas of focus to promote strength of the state's food system. The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation in collaboration with its state agency partners, seeks an experienced professional with strong business development skills as well as deep knowledge of the food economy to lead the state's implementation of Relish Rhody and deliver on the State's food and beverage business attraction, expansion, and retention goals. Specifically, the Director of Food Strategy will be responsible for:

Responsibilities

- Ensure maximum utilization of CommerceRI's business development and support services are brought to bear in support of the State's food-related goals.
- Define and build core strategies to enhance the climate for food and beverage businesses in Rhode Island; preserve and grow agriculture and fisheries industries in Rhode Island; and sustain and create markets for Rhode Island food and beverage products.
- Work across state agencies to develop policies, including state procurement strategies, that grow local food, agriculture and seafood businesses, improve the resiliency of the RI food system, and support the growth of quality food-related jobs.
- Lead an interagency working group to monitor, evaluate, and refine existing state programs to ensure they meet food strategy goals, align government functions, identify

areas for new investment, and provide leadership on multiple activities and initiatives related to food system development in Rhode Island.

- Liaise with local businesses in the food industries as well as local governments and community groups in order to coordinate programs, gain their assistance or assist them in initiating, developing, and implementing projects
- Launch a food strategy industry cluster, including research, planning, and program development for the purposes of coordinating programs and ensuring efficient realization of the state's food strategy.
- Work with the CommerceRI marketing team to develop materials and collateral
- Develop new and foster long-term relationships with food and beverage stakeholders to grow a pipeline of food and beverage business opportunities and overcome any pipeline barriers that are identified
- Assess current and future industry needs and launch and manage strategic initiatives to build a food business ecosystem in Rhode Island, attract out-of-state businesses to RI and assist in-state companies with expansion
- Perform consultative and technical assistance services including market and industry research, financial analysis, permitting, licenses, and connectivity to the current food ecosystem in support of recruitment and retention activities, and prepare related proposals and presentations
- Evaluate food market trends and develop plans to best capitalize on high-growth, high-impact food-based strategic efforts, expanding, modifying, or eliminating programs in view of changing needs and impact
- Identify and secure funding for the state's local food system through federal grants and private philanthropy. Interface with Federal government on regulatory and federal legislative barriers and opportunities.
- Coordinate the Interagency Food and Nutrition Policy Advisory Council (IFNPAC). Develop and maintain working relationships with leadership and key staff in IFNPAC member agencies to ensure engagement of member agency stakeholders in the State's food policy agenda.
- Draft annual and as-needed progress reports to Relish Rhody leadership committee, comprising of the RI Department of Health, RI Department of Environmental Management, Department of Administration, and Governor's Office, as well as CommerceRI

Key Competencies

- **Strategic skills:** Job requires the ability to determine opportunities and threats through comprehensive analysis of current and future trends. Comprehends the big picture.
- **Resourcefulness:** Job requires problem solving and finding ways over, around or through barriers to success. A bias for action. A results-oriented "doer."
- **Leadership** - Job requires a willingness to lead, take charge, and offer opinions and direction.

- **Initiative** - Job requires a willingness to take on responsibilities and challenges
- **Achievement/Effort** - Job requires establishing and maintaining challenging goals for self and others and exerting effort toward mastering tasks.
- **Written Communications:** Ability to work with the marketing team to develop materials and collateral.
- **Dependability** - Job requires being reliable, responsible, and dependable, and fulfilling obligation.

Qualifications and Skills

- Bachelor's degree required; MBA, MPH, or advanced degree in a food-related field preferred.
- Relevant professional experience or demonstrated high level of success related to business development, or a related area in government or private sector.
- Significant client/ stakeholder interaction and experience, particularly showing the ability to develop strong and influential relationships.
- Ability to manage multiple competing priorities in a fast-paced work environment.
- Self-motivated, creative, organized, and deeply committed to personal and organizational success.
- Ability to communicate clearly and accurately and to interact with professionals at all levels in all business units.
- Strong analytical, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills with attention to detail.

In order to be considered for this position, candidates must submit a cover letter along with a professional resume via email to:

Rhode Island Commerce Corporation
315 Iron Horse Way – Suite 101
Providence, RI 02908
job.opportunities@commerceri.com

Rhode Island Commerce Corporation is an at-will employer; no employment contracts exist.

The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (the 'Corporation') is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The Corporation does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, non-disqualifying physical or mental disability, national origin, veteran status or any other basis covered by applicable law. All employment is decided on the basis of qualifications, merit, and business need. The Corporation will not tolerate discrimination or harassment based on any of these characteristics.