SolSmart Advisor

Job Description
The Solar Foundation, serving as the Technical Assistance Provider for the SolSmart program (solsmart.org) is seeking a highly-motivated, experienced self-starter to act as SolSmart Advisor to a cohort of Virginia communities ("Virginia Cohort"), including Town of Blacksburg, Fairfax County, James City County, Henrico County, City of Fairfax, Charlottesville, and Richmond.

SolSmart Advisors are temporary, program-funded and -trained staff who work for up to six months with selected communities involved in the SolSmart program. The Advisor for the Virginia Cohort will 1) help four communities achieve official SolSmart designation; 2) develop a model zoning ordinance for the Cohort; 3) review large, off-site energy opportunities; and 4) provide ongoing assistance to all Cohort communities as they pursue additional actions and higher designation tiers.

Specifically, the Advisor will work with local government staff to meet SolSmart criteria (SolSmart Application/Criteria) that is required to achieve designation. The criteria is related to solar permitting and inspections, planning and zoning, construction codes, solar rights, utility engagement, community engagement, and market development and finance. Through these efforts, the Advisor will help reduce solar “soft costs” and barriers to the use of solar energy in these communities. Additionally, the Advisor will conduct outreach to other communities and facilitate regional discussions about solar energy, including opportunities to harmonize solar processes across jurisdictions.

This is a temporary, contractual, teleworking position which will last no more than six months. While this is a teleworking position, the Advisor has the option to use workspace hosted by James City County or Blacksburg. The Advisor would be responsible for their own housing and transportation in the community. Additionally, it may be possible for the Advisor to have meetings or multi-day visits to central and northern Virginia.

Key Responsibilities
• Working with local government staff to reduce solar “soft costs;”
• Assisting participating governments in pursuit of solar goals related to SolSmart criteria, including solar permitting and inspections, planning and zoning, construction codes, solar rights, utility engagement, community engagement, and market development and finance;
• Tracking key metrics related to both solar energy in participating local government jurisdictions and progress toward SolSmart designation;
• Engaging in regular communication with the SolSmart Technical Assistance Provider Team;
• Conducting SolSmart program outreach to additional communities in the region; and
• Publicizing the communities’ achievements through speaking engagements, articles, social media, etc.

Qualifications
Candidates for this position will possess:
• A graduate degree or equivalent in public policy/affairs, planning, engineering, law, or environmental management, or related fields, and 2+ years of relevant work experience
  OR
  A Bachelor’s degree and 5+ years of relevant experience;
• Experience working for and/or with local, state, and/or federal government;
• An understanding of land use and related local priorities (i.e. rural vs. suburban vs. urban, commercial vs. residential, and special zoning districts);
• An understanding of the motivations and challenges for local governments attempting to make process or programmatic updates;
• Superb written and verbal communication skills;
Demonstrated facilitation skills;
Experience in the solar industry and/or local clean energy issues;
An ability to work well with limited supervision; and
Eligibility to work in the United States.

Compensation and Status
The Solar Foundation will provide a stipend of up to $1,250 per week for up to six months. All other costs (e.g. travel to and within Virginia and lodging) will be borne by the Advisor, unless otherwise stipulated in the final contract. Advisors are independent contractors and not employees of The Solar Foundation, the Virginia Cohort, or the U.S. Department of Energy.

The Advisor will be required to travel to Washington, D.C., for a training session in late 2018. The SolSmart program will cover all reasonable and necessary travel costs associated with this training session.

To Apply
Please submit a cover letter, resume, and writing sample – all of which should demonstrate your experience, qualifications, educational background, and your desire to succeed in this position – to Zach Greene at zgreene@solarfound.org with the subject line “VA Cohort SolSmart Advisor.” Preference will be given to applications received by September 10, 2018.

About SolSmart
SolSmart is a national designation and technical assistance program that recognizes leading solar communities and empowers additional communities to expand their local solar markets. Funded by the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office, SolSmart strives to cut red tape, drive greater solar deployment, and make it possible for even more American homes and businesses to access solar energy to meet their electricity needs. Learn more at solsmart.org.

About The Solar Foundation
The Solar Foundation® is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to accelerate adoption of the world’s most abundant energy source. Through our leadership, research, and capacity building, we create transformative solutions to achieve a prosperous future in which solar and solar-compatible technologies are integrated into all aspects of our lives. The Solar Foundation is considered the premier research organization on the solar labor workforce, employer trends, and the economic impacts of solar. Visit us at TheSolarFoundation.org.

The Solar Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against any employee or applicant on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any classification protected by federal, state, or local law. In addition to federal law requirements, The Solar Foundation complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location in which the company has facilities. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training.