

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 regional cohort of Southwest Virginia communities (“Southwest Virginia Cohort”).

SolSmart is a national program funded by the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office that recognizes local governments for making it faster, easier, and more affordable to go solar. Municipalities and counties that meet SolSmart criteria receive designations of Gold, Silver, or Bronze. SolSmart provides no-cost technical assistants to help communities achieve designation.

SolSmart Advisors are temporary, program-funded and -trained staff who work in selected communities pursuing SolSmart designation for up to six months. By helping local governments cut red tape and streamline processes, Advisors can make a significant difference in local solar energy development.

The Southwest Virginia Cohort Advisor will help these communities address solar “soft costs” and local barriers to the use of solar energy. The Advisor will work with local government staff and other stakeholders (both internal and external) to apply industry-leading best practices that allow participating communities to achieve SolSmart designation.

Specifically, the Advisor will work with local government staff to meet SolSmart criteria ([SolSmart Application/Criteria](#)) that is required to achieve designation. These criteria are related to solar permitting and inspections, planning and zoning, construction codes, solar rights, utility engagement, community engagement, and market development and finance. 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 position based in Russell County, Virginia, which will last no more than six months.

Separately, SolSmart is hiring another Virginia Cohort Advisor for communities in the Northern, Central, Southwest, and Tidewater regions. The Southwest Virginia Cohort Advisor is a distinct engagement, but it may include collaboration with other Virginia communities and their Advisor.

Key Responsibilities

- Working with local government staff to reduce solar “soft costs;”
- Assisting participating governments in pursuit of solar goals related to SolSmart criteria;
- Tracking key metrics related to both solar energy in participating local government jurisdictions and progress toward SolSmart designation;
- Engaging in regular communication with 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;
- 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 the region) 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 Southwest 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 “SW VA SolSmart Advisor.” **Preference will be given to applications received by September 28, 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.