



Position Title: Business Opportunities Manager

Reports To: Director of Growth & Support

Type: Full Time or Contract

Location: Chicago, IL

Compensation: Competitive Base Salary + Generous Communion Structure

As a member of the Charter Growth and Support team, the Business Opportunities Manager will lead the development and ongoing management of relationships with organizations that seek to do business with INCS and the 140 public charter schools we support throughout Illinois. The Business Opportunities Manager is primarily responsible for identifying and securing new business partnerships that serve the needs of our member schools, help them achieve cost savings, and improve the efficiency of their operations. Successful candidates will possess an entrepreneurial drive, exceptional relationship management skills, a track record of meeting ambitious goals, and a desire to help IL charter schools access a broader network of potential business partnerships. Your efforts will contribute to revenue growth for INCS while providing increased opportunity to secure commission funds.

THE ORGANIZATION

Twenty - three years ago, when educators and community members started the charter school movement in Illinois, people questioned whether students in low income communities could succeed at the highest levels. That debate is now over. They can, and they do, as evidenced by the high school graduation rates and post-secondary success of thousands of Illinois charter school students. The only remaining question is whether we have the will to make this happen for more families. That is the work to which we are committed.

The Illinois Network of Charter Schools advocates for the improvement of public education by creating the conditions that allow high-quality charter public schools to grow, thrive, and serve students and families well. We work toward creating positive conditions for charter schools by informing community members of the value of charter schools and supporting elected officials who enact laws providing equitable funding and accountability. We partner with education leaders to maintain fair and transparent charter school policies and practices. As a membership organization, providing charter school leaders with the resources needed to ensure student success is a critical feature of our mission.

The Charter Growth and Support Team engages regularly with member schools and provides direct support on pressing issues. The Business Opportunities Manager will be a key driver in this effort by building relationships with charter school operations leaders (Directors of Operations, Operations Managers, Assistant Principals, etc.) and serving as a liaison between schools and the entities that aim to do business with them.

OUR CORE VALUES

EXCELLENCE — The commitment to work hard, produce excellent work, and always demonstrate the highest level of professionalism.

INITIATIVE — The drive to identify organizational needs or challenges and step up to solve them.

SERVICE — The commitment to serve and strengthen our member schools to build a more cohesive, high-performing charter community.

COMMITMENT — The unwavering belief that all children should have access to a great school and that the charter model is an important strategy in increasing educational equity in this country.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- ***Identify the key needs and pain points for Illinois charter schools and their operations teams related to working with outside companies and organizations***
 - Assess member schools' needs and priorities to inform the design and development of an INCS Business Opportunities strategy
 - Identify opportunities where economies of scale and/or group purchasing would save charter schools money and possibly effort
 - Research what other charter support organizations have done to partner businesses with member charter schools
- ***Develop, manage, and expand relationships with organizations seeking to work with Illinois charter schools***
 - Build and nurture authentic relationships with charter operations directors and individuals who make purchasing decisions at different schools and networks
 - Research, cultivate, and negotiate with entities that are interested in working with INCS and charter schools
 - Solicit business sponsorships for planned events targeting charter school operations staff to increase the visibility of high-quality partners and generate income for INCS
 - Seek out opportunities for entities to sponsor and support programming across INCS teams
 - Continuously seek to expand the number of entities interested in working with charter schools
- ***Research, build, and propose a comprehensive new INCS Business Opportunities strategy***
 - Identify best practices used by other education non-profit organizations, higher education institutions, and government agencies for the purposes of joint marketing of offerings and increased awareness of resources available to charter schools
 - Vet the proposal with school operations directors and vendor partners
 - Support program development on the Growth and Support team as well as other INCS teams to support their initiatives
 - Determine the benefits for charter schools, the partner organizations, and INCS
 - Set short- and long-term goals for generating revenue for INCS and savings for the schools
- ***Execute INCS Business Opportunities Strategy***
 - Organize and implement a launch plan
 - Track milestones, successes, and areas of improvement
 - Develop protocols for evaluating the strategy
 - Review the strategy periodically and adjust as needed
- ***Facilitate learning and resource sharing among member schools***
 - Manage the INCS Operations Working Group, made up of operations managers at different charter schools and networks.
 - Host 3-4 convenings a year on high-interest topics, leveraging the expertise of for-profit and non-profit partners

- Plan additional member school convenings (as the need and interest arise) that provide networking, information sharing, and issue resolution on high priority topics for member schools

EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

First and foremost, candidates must believe that every child, regardless of socioeconomic factors or their academic starting point, has the potential to succeed in school, career, and life. In addition, candidates should have an awareness of how public education systems have historically and disproportionately disadvantaged certain communities and must believe that charter schools have the power to transform public education and the lives of students.

Ideal candidates will possess the following characteristics:

Required

- Undergraduate degree
- Demonstrate success in building strong relationships using a consultative, solutions-focused approach
- Proven ability to develop rapport and effectively work with a wide range of people and in a variety of environments
- Highly organized with excellent attention to detail and ability to independently manage multiple projects at once
- Strong affinity for feedback and open conversations
- Confident outlook and presence, sense of humor, relentless optimism, and calm under pressure
- Orientation toward customer service and problem solving
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- A commitment to embracing diversity and fostering an environment of inclusion and cultural competency (see our definition below)

Preferred

- Sales, business development, or related experience
- Two to five years of project management experience
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office tools to create written documents and presentations; additional media experience a strong plus
- Experience in a business or organization where school partnerships are/were present
- Education/charter school experience

CULTURAL COMPETENCY AT INCS

Cultural competency is a lifelong process of building the knowledge, mindset, and skills necessary to engage fully and effectively with students, colleagues, and stakeholders of different backgrounds. This process requires us to deeply understand our nation's history of injustice and its link to the persistent opportunity gaps that INCS and its member schools are focused on closing. It also requires us to strengthen our cultural competency by better understanding our own implicit and explicit biases and by reflecting on our words and actions through open dialogue.

INCS invests in building greater cultural competence and responsiveness across our team by supporting ongoing reflection, learning, skill-building, and positive actions. We know that culturally competent teams, especially when inclusive of individuals who share the racial, socioeconomic, and/or academic backgrounds (e.g., first generation college goers) of member schools' student populations, are best

equipped to take action to ensure fairness inside and outside of INCS. To that end, we believe in building a richly diverse and inclusive organization, including a mission-critical imperative for all staff to both model and contribute to the vision we hope to achieve.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

INCS believes it is critical for leaders to reflect the communities that they serve, and that diversity across multiple dimensions enables us to achieve our mission of transforming lives and communities through public education. We don't just accept difference – we celebrate it, support it, and thrive on it for the benefit of our staff, member schools, and the broader community. We are proud to be an equal opportunity workplace and seek and welcome a diverse pool of candidates in this search.

HOW TO APPLY

INCS will review candidates and their qualifications until the position is filled. To apply, submit a current resume and letter of interest to Jennifer Richardson, Human Resources Manager, at jobs@incschools.org. The subject for the message should be Business Opportunities Manager – First and Last name.