

USDA Readiness Project Manager for International Cultural Exchange Program

Position Summary

IFYE USA seeks a highly organized, collaborative, and results-oriented Project Manager to coordinate the organization's USDA Readiness Initiative to plan an international cultural exchange program proposal focused on agricultural sciences, food and nutrition education, and cultural understanding through placement with host families. Working under the direction of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors, the Project Manager will oversee multiple volunteer Readiness Team work groups, coordinate project activities, monitor progress toward deliverables, facilitate communication, and help prepare IFYE USA to compete successfully for USDA and other federal funding opportunities.

This is a contract position focused on project management, organizational development, and volunteer coordination. The Project Manager is not expected to serve as the primary grant writer but will help ensure that all components needed for competitive federal proposals are developed and maintained.

Primary Responsibilities

Project Leadership

- Develop and maintain the USDA Readiness Project Plan.
- Establish timelines, milestones, and deliverables for each Readiness Team.
- Coordinate work across all volunteer work groups.
- Monitor project progress and identify potential risks or delays.
- Facilitate problem-solving and recommend corrective actions.
- Ensure project activities remain aligned with Board priorities.

Volunteer Coordination

- Serve as the primary point of contact for all Readiness Team leaders.
- Schedule and facilitate work group meetings.
- Prepare meeting agendas and supporting materials.
- Document decisions, assignments, and action items.
- Follow up on outstanding tasks and commitments.
- Encourage collaboration among work groups.

Communications

- Develop a communication plan for the USDA Readiness Initiative.
- Prepare monthly progress reports for the Executive Committee and Board.
- Maintain a centralized repository of project documents.
- Coordinate information sharing among work groups.
- Ensure consistency of messaging and documentation.

Project Monitoring

Maintain and regularly update:

- Master project schedule
- Deliverable tracker
- Risk register
- Decision log
- Issues log
- Committee work plans
- Milestone dashboard

Provide bi-monthly reports summarizing:

- Completed deliverables

- Upcoming deadlines
- Resource needs
- Recommendations

Documentation Management

Maintain an organized electronic library of documents on Teams which may include:

- Evaluation frameworks
- Research summaries
- Grant templates
- Board-approved documents if needed
- Committee reports
- Meeting minutes

Support Grant Readiness

Coordinate preparation of organizational materials commonly required for federal grant applications, including:

- Organizational capacity documentation
- Governance materials
- Strategic plans
- Evaluation plans
- Data management policies
- Partnership documentation
- Readiness assessments
- Organizational narratives

Coordinate with grant writers and subject matter experts as funding opportunities arise.

Continuous Improvement

Assist the Board in:

- Monitoring organizational readiness
- Identifying gaps
- Recommending improvements
- Updating timelines
- Documenting lessons learned
- Preparing for future phases of implementation

Qualifications

Required

- Familiar with IFYE organization and people
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent professional experience.
- Five or more years of project management experience.
- Experience coordinating complex, multi-stakeholder initiatives.
- Excellent organizational and communication skills.
- Experience working with volunteer-led organizations.
- Strong meeting facilitation skills.
- Ability to manage multiple priorities simultaneously.
- Excellent written communication skills.
- Proficiency with Microsoft 365 and/or Teams.

Preferred

- Project Management Professional (PMP) certification or equivalent.
- Experience with nonprofit organizations or Cooperative Extension.
- Familiarity with USDA, federal grants, or public-sector funding.

- Experience supporting strategic planning or organizational development.
- Knowledge of evaluation, performance measurement, or continuous improvement.
- Experience coordinating remote volunteer teams.

Desired Personal Characteristics

The successful consultant will demonstrate:

- Exceptional organizational skills
- Diplomatic leadership
- Strong listening skills
- Initiative and follow-through
- Ability to motivate volunteers without direct authority
- Critical thinking skills
- Sound judgment
- Commitment to IFYE's mission

Expected Deliverables

The Project Manager will produce and maintain:

- Comprehensive project work plan
- Master implementation timeline
- Work group goals and action plans
- Bi-monthly progress reports to president and executive committee
- Document meeting notes through Teams
- Final USDA Readiness Report with recommendations for next steps

Estimated Contract

Term: 9–12 months

Estimated Level of Effort: Approximately 15–20 hours per week during the first six months, decreasing to 8–12 hours per week as systems become established, depending on Board direction and funding no more than 900 hours in a calendar year without prior approval from President/VP of Finance.

Reporting Relationship: IFYE Board President

Primary Success Measure: Completion of the USDA Readiness Plan on time, with all work group deliverables integrated into a comprehensive organizational readiness package that positions IFYE USA to pursue USDA funding confidently.

Compensation

Compensation is negotiable based on qualifications and experience. As this is a contract position, no benefits will be offered.

Submit Resume and two references to Carolyn Hansen at chansen@ifyeusa.org and Theresa Chambers at tchambers@ifyeusa.org