



Where Innovation Flows

## ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS MANAGER

- Status:** Full-time
- Location:** Chicago-based employee with both in-person (office location is 200 W Madison St. in the Loop) and virtual work required.
- Compensation:** Salary range \$65-85k commensurate with experience
- Role Structure:** Reports to Current’s Executive Director; works collaboratively across Current’s team and with a range of external partners, including members of the six-state coalition for our NSF Engines: Great Lakes Water Innovation Engine (Great Lakes ReNEW). Will work closely with Current’s Executive Director (CEO of Great Lakes ReNEW), and with Current’s external resources, including consultants and vendors. Significant room to grow and evolve the role with increasing responsibilities and leadership as Current and Great Lakes ReNEW grow and mature.
- Benefits include:** Health/vision/dental plans, unlimited PTO, parental leave, life insurance, retirement match (1:1 employer match up to 5% of salary), flexible work-from-home opportunities, including summer hours, and a dynamic and supportive work environment.
- Application Deadline** **April 15, 2024**
- To apply:** Please complete our online application [HERE](#).

**Do not forget to upload your CV/resume!**

## JOB DESCRIPTION

Current seeks a full-time **Administration and Operations Manager** to support Current’s administrative and operational excellence. As a key member of Team Current, this role supports the Executive Director/CEO, Leadership Team operations, and management of Boards and Advisory Committees.

The primary goal for this role is to help strengthen Current’s operational and administrative foundations and performance at a time of significant growth: over the next two years, Current will grow from a \$2M organization to a \$10M+ organization because of a major new opportunity with our NSF Regional Innovation Engine, Great Lakes ReNEW. The ideal candidate will be an excellent administrative manager with experience supporting mission-driven and innovation-oriented organizations. Strong candidates will be able to work both independently and collaboratively, and will effectively manage and balance competing priorities and deadlines. While support for strategic direction will be provided by the Executive Director and Leadership Team, we are looking for a



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professional who is comfortable with independence and highly motivated to both setting and achieving goals that will contribute to organizational success.

As a collaborative organization, Current has many different audiences that need to be engaged—community-based organizations, research institutions, government agencies, students, corporations and industry partners, entrepreneurs, and investors. We are looking for someone comfortable speaking on behalf of the Executive Director and team across a wide variety of leaders and partners.

*All responsibilities below apply to Current as well as Great Lakes ReNEW, our largest initiative. Please note that Great Lakes ReNEW has separate boards and advisory groups, brand standards and guidelines as a major funded initiative of the National Science Foundation.*

### **Key Responsibilities:**

#### **Executive Support**

- Completes a broad variety of administrative tasks for the Executive Director, including managing an active calendar of appointments and travel and juggling competing priorities, and ensuring solid preparation with logistics and details for events and speaking engagements.
- Communicates directly, and on behalf of the Executive Director with Board members, donors, staff, and other leaders.
- Supports and participates in Leadership Team meetings, including assisting in scheduling, setting agendas, and preparing advanced materials.
- Provides a bridge for smooth communication across the Current and Great Lakes ReNEW teams.
- Works closely and effectively with the Executive Director to keep her well informed of upcoming commitments and responsibilities, following up appropriately. Acts as a valued adviser and "barometer," having a sense for the issues taking place in the environment and keeping her informed and updated.
- Provides leadership to build relationships crucial to organizational success and manages a variety of special projects, many of which may have organizational impact.
- Prioritizes conflicting needs; handles matters expeditiously, proactively, and follows-through on projects to successful completion, often with deadline pressures.

#### **Board and Advisory Committee Liaison Leadership and Support**

- Serves as the liaison to Current's 17-member board of directors, maintaining strong, positive relationships with board members while ensuring discretion and confidentiality. Also serves as liaison to Great Lakes ReNEW boards and advisory bodies, when constituted, and supports a variety of other programmatic working groups (for example, Current's Research Consortium and Industry Consortium).
- Ensures the timely preparation, publishing and distribution of materials (e.g. requests, agenda, schedules, grant docket, notices, resolutions, etc.) for the Board and Board Committee meetings, using Board Effect board management software. Coordinates with staff to provide approved content.

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- Oversees the Board and Board Committee calendars; helps determine and plan the frequency of meetings. Manages complex calendars and logistics for meetings, retreats and site visits for Board members. Takes notes and summarizes key points discussed at these events.
- Serves as board governance coordinator, ensuring adherence rules and regulations set in bylaws regarding board and board committee matters, including advance distribution of materials before meetings in electronic/paper format.
- Manage board demographics and develop a dashboard to support board decision making; ability to develop and administer surveys to board. Leads new member board orientation.
- Work with Leadership Team to provide administrative support for board and committee meetings including agenda and presentations or other supporting documents

## Operational Excellence & Project Management

- Collaborates with the Executive Director and Leadership Team on reporting, designing and/or compiling reports, ad hoc presentations, briefings and communications for internal/external stakeholders. Inclusive of development across a variety of platforms including Microsoft and Google.
- Supports the Executive Director and Operations Director with budgets and select centralized general administrative expenses for the entire organization, e.g. office expenses, tech stack, memberships, subscriptions, etc.
- Partners with the Operations Director to recommend policies to improve efficiency, management and drive cost savings.
- Serve as the project manager to a variety of special projects that benefit the organization including but not limited to annual employee events and meetings; volunteer engagement activities and ad-hoc community-based programs and events in partnership with program staff.
- Leads development of briefing documents, fact sheets, org charts and organization-wide communications and other documents in partnership with the Executive Director and Leadership Team.
- Supports general upkeep of Current's CRM (currently using Copper, but no prior experience with this platform is required).
- Supports the Operations Director by coordinating office facilities, staff and office supplies & equipment, guest access & registration.
- Commitment to continuous improvement in the operations of the Leadership Team, the Board of Directors and the Internal Communications across the organization.
- Actively contribute to Current's overall growth and strategic direction as we evolve to meet the changing needs of our community.

## **Work Schedule:**

Monday – Friday, 9:00 am-5:00 pm, with general practice that Mondays and Fridays are remote and Tuesdays-Wednesdays-Thursdays are in person in the office (200 W. Madison). This position may require work on some evenings and weekends. Work schedule may vary depending on organizational needs.



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### Work Environment:

The work environment includes offices; the noise level is usually moderate. Movement requirements include walking, stooping or kneeling. There may be a need to reach, lift or move objects, such as packages, supplies and computers. Normal (or corrected) vision range; ability to see color and to distinguish letters, numbers and symbols are necessary to the work, which may require close viewing. Occasionally may need to lift and/or move up to 30 pounds. Communication needs include seeing, hearing and speaking. While in the office, there will be periods of sitting, holding a telephone and using computers. Reasonable accommodations may be made for an incumbent to meet the essential responsibilities of the position.

### What we're looking for - skills and experiences:

- **Accountability:** Effectively manages own work, and work of teams when relevant, ensuring delivery of high-quality work.
- **Diverse Communication Skills:** Uses effective written and oral communication with internal and external stakeholders, including Board of Directors; demonstrates empathy and active listening. Ability to compile board presentations, reports, meeting agendas and minutes.
- **Critical Thinking:** Consistently identifies, gathers, and applies relevant information to work.
- **Partner and Community Service Orientation:** Recognizes needs of diverse stakeholders and approaches relationships with a service-orientation, to ultimately maximize impact.
- **External Relationship Builder:** Invests in and builds strong, trusted relationships with partners. Builds market position by locating, developing, defining, and closing business relationships.
- **Strategic Thinking:** Considers the future of the organization proactively and responsively; weighs diverse inputs to inform strategies; identifies innovative opportunities when relevant.
- **Growth Mindset:** Views growth as important for personal and professional development; seeks out opportunities to expand skills, even if change is required.
- **Development Planning:** Breaks down projects and tasks into process steps, while considering appropriate stakeholders, and executes them effectively; adjusting timelines and prioritizing as necessary.
- Confident, authentic and agile in deciding and acting in situations that require an immediacy that excludes consultation with leadership
- Strategic scheduling management expertise (technical and the “art of scheduling”)
- Excellent writing and verbal communication skills, with the ability to translate and distill complex concepts to many different audiences
- Track record developing, managing, and communicating about mission oriented organizations and initiatives, independently with clear results
- Experience communicating with diverse audiences, and prioritizing equity and inclusion
- Proven collaborator and team player with a strong learning orientation, willing to dive in and tackle new challenges with enthusiasm and determination
- Meticulous detail-orientation, and ability to manage complex projects and competing deadlines
- Experience creating high-quality communications materials, using Microsoft Office, Canva, or other tools. Experience with design tools like Adobe Suite a plus, but not required.
- Ability to independently assess multiple potential pathways to achieve a strategic objective, consult the team and incorporate feedback, and move to execution.



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### What we're looking for: values and attributes:

- Positive and collaborative work ethic. You have a drive to succeed for and with our team and partners and to lift up the people, organizations, and businesses that share our goals. You perform your responsibilities with strong interpersonal skills: approachability, compassion, and openness to diverse perspectives and new ideas.
- You are team and partner oriented, responding to requests for service with enthusiasm and a sense of wanting to be helpful and responsive to our communities.
- You are methodical and insightful in project planning and execution, agile in response to shifting priorities, and unflustered by managing concurrent tasks and deadlines.
- Creative approaches to problem solving. You relish opportunities to tackle challenges and solve problems in a positive, innovative, creative way. You know that the first idea isn't usually the best, and you know how to push yourself and your team to come up with new approaches.
- Network orientation. You value relationships beyond one-off transactions and understand that in this long-term, system change work, effectiveness depends on the breadth and depth of our relationships.
- Curious and learning oriented. You want to understand your successes as well as your failures, and you're fueled by curiosity about the unknown. Everyone on our team is constantly asking questions about how the world works and how we can improve it.
- Comfort with ambiguity. You have a flexible and agile approach to big and small challenges and understand that progress is often nonlinear. You're willing to adapt and help Current adapt to be more resilient to our changing landscape.
- Accountability and humility. You're comfortable owning responsibility for a project's execution, but happy to share credit for the final team product. You are motivated by your team's opportunities and successes, and to support the whole team in tasks that contribute to individual and team goals.
- Empathetic leadership. You understand that our diverse partners across government, community, university, and industry face diverse challenges in their own work, and you listen to understand and build bridges.
- Results orientation. You find ways to track and measure what matters in your work, and in Current's work. You're rigorous about sharing those results with the team and when appropriate, our partners.
- You share a passion for Current's mission and values. You have a shared commitment to the things we are passionate about: environmental stewardship; economic opportunity; technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship.



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### WHO WE ARE

Current is a Chicago-based nonprofit water innovation hub. Our mission is to grow an inclusive blue economy, accelerate adoption of innovative water technologies, and solve pressing water challenges. The world's persistent water problems — from floods to contaminants like lead and PFAS to decarbonization of water treatment — won't be solved by any one government, scientist, or company. And, unfortunately, people are not rallying fast enough behind new technologies and ideas to protect our health and environment. Founded in Chicago in 2016 in partnership with the City of Chicago, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, World Business Chicago, and the region's research universities, Current builds collaborations among cross-sector leaders to develop solutions that would be too risky or even impossible for any one group to undertake alone. While Chicago is our home, it is not our only market. Current exists to help export our region's home-grown solutions to help solve the world's water challenges and bring the best ideas from around the world to solve ours. In 2024, Current was awarded one of ten inaugural National Science Foundation Regional Innovation Engines for our six-state consortium, Great Lakes ReNEW. This award accelerated our ambition to serve as the hub for Great Lakes water innovation and will provide significant scale-up resources for us to deliver on our broader mission.

### **What do Current's team members love about working at Current?**

- Working on high-impact projects and knowing that our work is contributing solutions to major environmental and economic challenges
- Opportunities to connect with high-level leaders across multiple industries. Valuable network building and learning
- Collaborating with others who share a passion for water, the environment, and creating economic opportunity
- Flexible working hours and environment and respect for life-work balance
- A culture that is welcoming, curious, collaborative, collegial, and committed to continuous improvement
- The start-up energy of our organization, fluid and dynamic and evolving with significant opportunity to advance and grow from within.

### **Our values:**

Our values build the foundation of our organizational culture; our values ground and support us and our efforts to deliver on Current's mission.

- **Collaboration.** Current knows that reaching consensus and building trust are key aspects of maintaining and improving our access to clean water. This requires diplomacy and communication to gain the needed insights from a wide variety of project partners. Our work is powered by partnerships. Collaboration begins with listening and setting tables where diverse views, perspectives, and needs can be shared safely in the spirit of developing common solutions.
- **Creativity and Innovation.** Creativity and innovation require environments where diverse perspectives and ideas can be freely shared and debated. Everyone on our team should feel the freedom to question, to learn, to experiment, and to fail.

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- **Inclusion.** To solve persistent water challenges and build a stronger blue economy, we need diverse perspectives on both problems and solutions. We value diversity in our team and among our partners, at our tables and in our audiences. We strive to ensure that our work benefits our community.
- **Expertise:** Current maintains a sophisticated understanding of the state of the art in water technology. This field of study changes every day, requiring both deep knowledge and a willingness to adjust our understanding based on new discoveries.
- **Independence:** Current is a nonprofit that is not beholden to any stakeholders but rather has established a mission of advocating for sustainable water solutions that help the public at large.
- **Justice.** We acknowledge that justice – racial justice, social justice, economic justice, gender justice – is fundamental to our work of building a healthier economy and environment. We aim to identify the injustices that create barriers to our work, and to make diligent strides to remedy them.
- **Risk-seeking:** Current is not an advocate for the status quo. It's an advocate for the wise use of water to sustain the Earth's population — a mission that requires us to think big and act aggressively to see what works and what doesn't. If we're waiting for guarantees that a new approach will work, we'll never try anything different. Rational risk-taking is part of our ethos.
- **Sustainability.** Through our work and in our daily practices, we strive to conserve and reuse our natural resources, to meet present needs with minimal cost to future generations.

## PARTNER PROMISES

- We promise to discover and promote new approaches and technologies that help solve water challenges. A combination of well-defined mission and professional curiosity drive us to find and share the best answers for difficult problems.
- We promise to challenge old thinking. One of Current's primary missions is to build trusted partnerships to help achieve breakthroughs that go beyond the status quo.
- We promise to keep an open mind: Current believes that attitude and outlook are important. Being receptive to new ideas and constantly seeking new sources of information are the only ways to stay at the forefront of our fields.
- We promise to be a strong partner. Current takes a hands-on approach to the projects it chooses and makes long-term investments in them.
- We promise to take care of our environment. Current is in the sustainability business. We never forget the fact that today's decisions can have major impacts in the world that people encounter decades from now.
- We promise to be an unbiased advocate for the best water solutions. While we work with many partners, our greatest duty is to the public at large and their quality of life. We will always be an honest broker.