



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

GENERAL INFORMATION

Status:	Full-time	Reports to:	Workforce Development Director
Compensation:	\$75,000-85,000 Salary is commensurate with experience	Location:	Chicago, IL (Both in-person and virtual work required)
Role structure:	This role works collaboratively across Current's team and with a range of external partners, including members of the six-state Great Lakes RENEW coalition. Will manage contractors and interns. Significant room to evolve the role with increasing responsibilities and leadership as Current and Great Lakes RENEW grow and mature.		
Benefits:	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		

Applicants must be legally authorized to work in the U.S. without sponsorship. Please note that Current is not able to provide visa sponsorship.

Current provides equal employment opportunity as required by law to all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy (including childbirth and conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth), age, marital status, physical or mental disability, veteran or military status, citizenship status, order of protection status, or any other protected classification. This policy applies in all aspects of employment, including without limitation recruitment, hiring, training, evaluation, promotion, demotion, discipline, compensation, benefits, and termination.

Application deadline: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2026 at 11:59 PM, CT

[APPLY HERE](#)

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Job Description:

Current's **Workforce Development Manager** will support implementation of the workforce development strategy for Current and Great Lakes RENEW. Reporting to the Workforce Development Director, this role manages day-to-day relationships with training providers, employers, and local partners across our six-state region of service. The Workforce Development Manager will work closely with RENEW's local Hubs in other Great Lakes cities.

The role will also strengthen training partnerships with community colleges and trades programs and connect students and trainees to the blue economy through awareness building and work-based learning experiences.

The Workforce Development Manager will focus mainly on adult training and employer partnerships, and will also support our K-12 STEM education and higher education work.

The ideal candidate has firsthand experience building and managing workforce programs and enjoys working with partners across sectors. Experience in the water sector is not required. Our region of service includes Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota and Indiana.

Key Responsibilities:

- **Local Hubs:** Serve as Current's day-to-day contact for the RENEW Local Hubs, beginning with their launch in December 2026. Support each hub in developing a workplan and metrics. Review hub reports and invoices, and flag concerns to the Workforce Development Director. Convene the hubs regularly to share progress and lessons learned.
- **Training Partnerships:** Manage relationships with community colleges, trades programs and other training partners across the region, including new water and wastewater programs in development. Work with partners to integrate water-focused curriculum supplements, online operator courses and hands-on learning into existing programs. Support the design and implementation of pilot programs, and help evaluate which programs to expand.
- **Employer Engagement and Work-Based Learning:** Work with utilities, industry partners and members of the Current Industry Consortium to arrange site visits, internships, externships and job shadows for students and trainees. Gather employer input on skills gaps and share it with training partners.
- **Data, Reporting and Compliance:** Track program outcomes and support reporting to the National Science Foundation, other funders and Current leadership. Support subaward management, including scopes of work, milestones, invoice review and compliance. Help maintain the Water Careers Resource Hub and labor market dashboard.
- **Convening and Coordination:** Help run the RENEW Workforce Development Working Group and related partner meetings. Support K-12 STEM education and higher education partners as needed.
- **Cross-Functional Collaboration:** Work with the R&D and Commercialization teams to connect RENEW research projects, startups and testbed sites to workforce programming, including internships, work-based learning, and student and postdoc engagement. Gather input from researchers and companies on the skills needed for emerging water technologies, and share it with training partners.
- **New Opportunities:** Respond to inquiries from current and prospective partners. Assess whether new opportunities align with Current's priorities, and recommend next steps.
- **Communications and Representation:** Draft talking points, presentations, and one-pagers about Current's workforce development work. Represent Current at regional and national events.
- **Resource Development:** Help identify funding opportunities and write proposals for federal, state, and philanthropic workforce dollars.
- **Strategy:** Contribute to how Current's workforce strategy grows and changes as we learn what works.
- **Other tasks as assigned:** Current is a highly matrixed team of 10–15 full time employees. Staff are expected to support work across the team and across reporting lines.

SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS

What we're looking for...

Skills and Experience:

We know that successful candidates may not meet every qualification listed below, and encourage candidates of diverse backgrounds and experiences to apply.

- **Bachelor's degree and a minimum of 3 years of professional experience** in workforce development, program management, or a related field. Internships and coursework do not count toward this.
- Direct experience with the public workforce system, such as workforce boards, WIOA-funded programs, or community college workforce divisions, is strongly preferred.
- Familiarity with workforce development and/or K-12 STEM education or higher education policy is a plus.
- Strong project management skills and experience, including leading beyond reporting lines and with cross-functional teams.
- Experience managing grants, subawards or contracts, including budgets, milestones and reporting.
- A track record of building partnerships with employers, training providers, and community organizations. Experience working with regional coalitions is a plus.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to explain complex topics to different audiences.
- Comfort with data, including labor market information, outcomes tracking, and basic analysis in Excel or Google Sheets.
- Experience managing contractors, interns, or coalitions.
- Willingness to travel about six times a year within the region and to conferences.

Values and Attributes:

- **Passion for Current's mission and values** - You have a deep, shared commitment to the things we are passionate about: environmental stewardship; economic opportunity; technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Creative approaches to problem solving** - 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.
- **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.
- **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.

ABOUT CURRENT

Our Workforce Efforts

The water sector needs workers. Across six major Great Lakes states, the blue economy supports about 6.9 million jobs, including 900,000 jobs in the water cluster. About three-quarters of these jobs do not require a bachelor's degree, and many offer good wages and room to advance. Still, few people know these careers exist, and training programs have not kept pace with new technology in the field. Great Lakes RENEW addresses this through a "K to Gray" approach. We build pathways into water careers for people at every stage, from K-12 students to college students and postdocs to adults entering or advancing in the workforce.

[Click here to learn more](#) about who we are, our values, partner promises, and more.