

GoodCitizen

The Lemelson Foundation
Program Officer, Climate Action
Location: Portland, Oregon strongly preferred, or Pacific NW/West Coast based

About The Lemelson Foundation

The Lemelson Foundation harnesses the power of invention to improve lives and address some of the world's most pressing economic and social challenges. Established in the early 1990s by U.S. inventor Jerome Lemelson and his wife, Dorothy, and guided today by the Lemelson family, the Foundation believes that invention and innovation can be a transformative force for good and drive positive change across the globe. At the heart of The Lemelson Foundation's mission is the belief that invention and innovation are not only about creativity and problem-solving but also about making the world a better, more equitable place for all.

With an endowment of approximately \$400 million and an annual budget of \$30 million, the Foundation continues to make strategic investments that foster a robust economy in the U.S. while improving the lives of underserved communities in countries around the world. With the establishment of the Climate Action Fund in 2023, the Lemelson Foundation is now deploying its innovation toolbox to address the global climate crisis.

About The Climate Action Fund

As a response to the increasing urgency of the climate crisis, The Lemelson Foundation announced a new climate action fund in 2023. With a focus on innovation, justice, and learning, this new Fund seeks to leverage historic federal investments in the United States related to issues such as methane emissions, Tribal energy transition, and industry decarbonization, while seeking opportunities to accelerate a just energy transition and protect the natural carbon stored in the forest of the Global South. Fund-supported strategies include the development and commercialization of technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, advocacy and movement building, and policy research. Grantees range from incubators to Indigenous organizations, seasoned communicators to youth organizers, with the intent to target climate problems from multiple angles and at multiple scales when possible.

The goal of the Climate Action Fund is to combine the tools of innovation, invention, and climate justice to blaze and widen the pathways to drawing down emissions by 2030 and attaining net zero emissions by 2050. This aligns the Foundation's work with the global imperative to reach net zero, though the strategic focus is, on the front end, drawing down emissions by 2030. The Foundation's deep-rooted commitment to innovation as a mission, not a tactic, brings a new perspective to climate action, and allows for a deeper examination of systemic change in climate-adjacent sectors. Climate justice is at the heart of the strategy: Lemelson strives to ensure that historically marginalized communities are not left behind in the transition to a cleaner future. Strengthened by this dedication to equity and climate justice, they believe innovative and inventive approaches can successfully draw down greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the threat posed by the climate crisis.

The Opportunity

The Program Officer joins the Director, Climate Action in contributing to the ongoing development and implementation of the Fund together with grantees, funding partners, and

community members. In partnership with the Director, the Program Officer will develop, manage, and monitor a portfolio of grants and program-related activities, as well as public events that support other program and organizational goals. The position reports to the Director, Climate Action, and works closely with Foundation colleagues, advisors, and Board members.

Key Responsibilities

The Program Officer's specific areas of responsibility include, but are not limited to:

Organizational Leadership

- Support the implementation of a grantmaking strategy for climate change mitigation, leveraging the Foundation's historic investments in innovation, a growing network of partners with deep climate expertise, and unprecedented levels of domestic public investment in climate action.
- Provide insight and expertise to enable the growth and expansion of the Climate Action Fund portfolio in the US, India, Latin America, and the African continent with an emphasis on innovative approaches, risk tolerance, and urgency.
- Serve as a liaison with outside climate change experts and decision-makers.
- Represent the Foundation's interests, affirm its reputation, and enhance its credibility among current and potential partners in the philanthropic and grantee communities, and within other sectors contributing to climate change research and action.

Portfolio Management

- Implement, expand, help manage, and monitor a \$10M annual portfolio of grants, programs, contracts, and Program-Related Investments (PRIs).
- Partner with the Director to target emerging opportunities and adapt the Fund strategy to a rapidly changing climate context in the US and abroad.
- Collaborate with fellow program officers in other program areas to identify and develop emerging and potential opportunities for portfolio alignment, integration, and mutual program advancement.
- Help grantees access networks, funding, data, and other resources and opportunities to enhance their relevant capacities and capabilities, including their ability to provide quantitative and qualitative data relevant to the Foundation's theory of change and impact.

Foundation Culture and Performance

- Participate in the Foundation's evaluation and communication initiatives; engage with Foundation colleagues and partners to develop, understand, and communicate the impact of its collective portfolio.
- Contribute to strategic planning and other Foundation-wide initiatives, including efforts to make the Foundation increasingly accountable to its values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice.
- Contribute to the Foundation's culture of 'inquiry, learning, and collaboration' to ensure prompt, accurate, and meaningful information is available to others in the organization.
- Participate in refining and implementing operational processes especially as they relate to grantmaking and management.

Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate for the Program Officer role will be a highly skilled and innovative professional with advanced experience in building and executing complex, collaborative climate

programs. They will bring a strong enthusiasm for the role of innovation, justice, and risk in addressing climate change. This individual will be adept at evaluating grant-making opportunities with a strong technical lens while also being comfortable seeking expert feedback when necessary. They will be able to see patterns and opportunities in a wide array of subject areas, examine the linkages among seemingly disparate priorities, and move from one subject area to another with ease. The ideal candidate will possess the ability to manage multiple tasks with precision, maintain composure in high-pressure situations, and work effectively with a wide range of stakeholders, bringing a culturally sensitive and inclusive approach to their work.

In addition to their programmatic expertise, the candidate will demonstrate advanced skills in critical analysis and relationship management. They will excel in communicating complex ideas to diverse audiences, both in written and verbal formats, and will be capable of translating technical and complex reports into actionable strategies. Strong strategic leadership skills are essential, as is the ability to effectively manage time and meet deadlines. The ideal candidate will exhibit professionalism, courtesy, and a conscientious attitude when representing the Foundation while fostering collaborative relationships within the team and with external partners.

Qualifications

With the understanding that no person will offer every desired skill and characteristic outlined below, compelling candidates will offer much of the following:

- 10+ years of professional experience with one or more complex organizations, networks, or systems
- 5+ years of recent experience working on climate-related issues, including two or more of the following: mitigation strategies, climate finance, Indigenous knowledge, resilience, climate philanthropy, climate diplomacy, methane abatement, renewable energy, climate science, movement building, and fossil fuel phaseout
- A record of public speaking at invited engagements and/or a record of publication (print or online) in areas of relevant expertise
- Conversant with issues, concerns, and perspectives of the climate justice movement
- Strong interpersonal skills to effectively build and maintain equitable, trusting funding relationships with community-based, state, regional, national, and international organizations, as well as other foundations.

Location & Compensation

The salary range for this position is \$130,000 - \$160,000, commensurate with experience. The Lemelson Foundation offers employees an exceptionally generous benefits package including fully paid health care coverage for employees and dependents, a 401(k) plan with a generous employer match, and 20 paid vacation days per calendar year during the first year of employment, increasing over time.

It is strongly preferred the Program Officer be based in Portland, Oregon. Relocation assistance will be provided should the successful candidate reside outside the Portland Metropolitan area. Candidates located in the Pacific Northwest and West Coast will be considered. While employees are welcome to work in the office on any day of the week, The Foundation has official 'Core Days' (administrative support present) on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Note: Employees in this position should anticipate traveling 10-20% of their time annually. The percentage of travel will increase for those not based in Portland.

The Lemelson Foundation's EEO Statement

At The Lemelson Foundation, we believe diverse perspectives drive the inventive spirit behind our work. We are committed to an inclusive environment where people from all backgrounds can contribute to advancing invention and innovation. We do not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status. We encourage candidates from diverse backgrounds to apply.

Reasonable Accommodation

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty and physical demands satisfactorily with or without reasonable accommodation. The Lemelson Foundation is committed to the full inclusion of all qualified individuals. As part of this commitment, we will ensure that persons with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodation. If reasonable accommodation is needed to participate in the job application or interview process, to perform essential job functions, and/or to receive other benefits and privileges of employment, please contact celene@goodcitizen.com.

To Be Considered

Please submit your resume and cover letter expressing your interest in the position and fit for the role via the "[Become a Candidate](#)" button. Letters may be addressed to Martens Roc

Applicants applying by December 20th will be given priority consideration, with the position open until filled.

GoodCitizen has been exclusively retained by The Lemelson Foundation to lead this search. For questions, please contact:

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